

Content Adjustments and Dissemination Strategy Optimization for Mainland Reality Shows Targeting Hong Kong Audiences

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, due to the deepening of cultural exchanges between Mainland China and Hong Kong, many Mainland reality shows have begun to enter the Hong Kong market. As a heavy Western pop culture-centrist audience, Hong Kong has difficulty in crossing the trans-boundary of Mainland productions into her dissemination silo due to cultural background and aesthetic tendencies. It is hoped that this paper can provide empirical reference for how reality show production teams within the Mainland should adjust and optimize content and disseminated channels in response to this specific Hong Kong audience structure. In content with the multiculturalization, enriched entertainment & innovation program should be designed, between emotion sympathy, social experience link building to positively attract the audiences in Hong Kong. For channels for dissemination, it is proposed to leverage social media actively, make cross-platform distribution possible, strengthen the combination of online engagement and offline interaction, creatively adopt new media technologies and open up copyright linkage mechanism between Hong Kong and mainland. These mainlands relieve the Hong Kong audience, improve the strategic influence of reality show market and also promote cultural exchanges and mutual recognition between Hong Kong and mainland China.

KEYWORDS

Cross-cultural communication; social media; cultural identity

1 Research Background

With the increasing cultural exchanges between Mainland China and Hong Kong, Mainland Television and media programs are being introduced into the mainstream market in Hong Kong and these programs are gaining popularity. For Hong Kong as an international community, cast of western media and more domestic focus as well, there are different demands for entertainment than such as the Chinese audiences. This consequently pressures the program makers to adapt the mainland reality shows content and improve its programming strategies in view of the multicultural contexts. Mitigating the social values of Hong Kong audiences, especially the younger population, western culture becomes more prevalent in everyday life, ergo the expectations for entertaining programs grow for people in terms of originality, inventiveness, and globalization. In the same context, many Chinese programs are very based on the Chinese culture and will require some changes to suit the Hong Kong consumers.

In this day and age, with the exposure to new forms of media, passive consumption has become boring as audiences can take part in the act themselves. In today's world, specifically the younger

generation, who would rather prefer being active along the shows they view by the help of social media platforms as opposed to any other type of sitting. Therefore there was a need for these shows in mainland China to use social media in a way that it would help them communicate with the Hong Kong audience like no other as if that mode can increase their patronage and viewership. And, Inside every reality show program contends the notions; they are not only just empty entertainment products but avenues where cultural exchanges can be achieved. These end results can be achieved by boosting the program content and the dissemination strategy, thus helping the residents of Hong Kong to accept the culture and society of the mainland more comfortably and easily, which will in turn facilitate the cultural exchange and mutual understanding between the two regions.

There is a proposition that Mainland style shows, like other productions, should have the content and dissemination models optimized to meet the local audience's preferences in order to achieve their aim of having a deep-rooted impact on the audience in Hong Kong and eventually contribute to the purpose of cultural exchange and societal integration between Hong Kong and mainland China. Identifying the current environment of communication and the challenge of the market in Hong Kong is the first crucial step towards creating strategies that can be used to enable and promote the growth of Mainland reality shows in Hong Kong as well as to ensure that there is a better mutual understanding and recognition of cultures that exist in both regions.

2 Literature Review

Many researchers have conducted research on the content and re-stratifying the dissemination of Mainland shows made to target the audience in Hong Kong. A cross-cultural communication approach asserts that in different cultural environments, customized communication content must be developed in consideration of the uncommon cultural apprentice and value between different audiences. Early studies in cross-cultural communication (Schramm, 1964) stated that since people who live in different cultures have different reactions towards information, their understanding and feedback about the content would be significantly different. Communicators should vary their communication methods depending on the cultural background individuals, languages, and values. Lin Weiqiang (2017) states that though Hong Kong audiences have Western influence, they have cultural distinctions from the Mainland audiences in aesthetic preferences and value judgments. This means that the contents of Mainland programs should not be ignored to meet the needs of Hong Kong audiences with different cultural backgrounds. Li Haiyan (2019) looked into the appropriateness of the use of Mainland entertainment programs in Hong Kong, arguing that reality shows should harmonize Mainland and Hong Kong cultural features. As a result, in Hong Kong, the introduction of local celebrities together with the inclusion of subtitles in Cantonese would enrich the cultural inclusion of the shows in Hong Kong viewership.

In an era where the internet and social media are prominent, traditional one-way communication models are giving way to more interactive approaches. Media convergence has become a key topic in modern communication studies. Castells' (2009) network society theory suggests that we have entered a new 'networking' age, where audiences move beyond being passive recipients of information to becoming active producers and discriminators. Social media enables audiences to engage in content creation and sharing through comments, shares, and re-posts, transforming the conventional communication landscape. In his research on how Mainland reality shows connect with Hong Kong viewers, Zhang Kai (2020) examined the role of social media in program dissemination. He noted that platforms like Weibo and WeChat serve as both promotional tools and vital channels for audience interaction. For younger viewers especially, social media is their main platform for watching and discussing programs. Guo Xin (2021) further showed that engaging with

audiences via social media can significantly enhance a program's influence in Hong Kong while boosting viewer engagement and loyalty.

Blumler and Katz's (1974) "Uses and Gratifications" theory suggest that audiences actively pick media content based on what they need and like, instead of just passively taking it in. Different groups of viewers have different preferences for programs because of their cultural backgrounds, social identities, and psychological needs. Research by Zhang Xiaohong (2018) shows that young people in Hong Kong tend to enjoy programs with lots of entertainment value, innovation, and interactivity—things that set them apart from Mainland viewers. Hu Xiaojing (2022) also pointed out that Hong Kong audiences look for emotional connection and cultural identification along with their high expectations for entertainment and interactivity. This means that Mainland programs should really focus on emotional expression and real-life issues by adding authentic elements to better connect emotionally with viewers in Hong Kong.

Li Jianming (2018) research on how Mainland reality shows are making their way to international audiences, noting that while these programs often learn from successful global production models, they also have to juggle local cultural nuances with what's expected internationally. For the Hong Kong market, Chen Yiwen (2020) suggested that Mainland reality shows should really pay attention to the cultural background of Hong Kong viewers, especially their unique identity shaped by both Eastern and Western influences. These programs need to tweak their content and format so they're better received in this market. When it comes to dissemination strategies, Zhu Yi (2021) looked at several popular Mainland reality shows in Hong Kong and found that boosting influence could come from sharing across platforms and organizing events in different regions. For example, mixing new media technologies with offline activities lets audiences engage in both virtual and real-life experiences, which helps strengthen their connection with the program.

Although the existing literature lays a solid theoretical and empirical foundation for this research, there are still some gaps to address. Primarily, most studies examine cross-cultural communication at a general level without delving deeply into how Mainland reality shows tailor their content and distribution strategies specifically for Hong Kong audiences. While many researchers emphasize the importance of social media in promoting these programs, they often overlook what viewers truly require on a psychological level—particularly how program content can fulfill their emotional needs and aid in cultural identification. Therefore, despite the valuable insights provided by current literature, further investigation is essential to explore specific adjustments in content and dissemination strategies, especially regarding leveraging new media platforms to foster emotional connections with viewers.

3 Analysis of the preference of Hong Kong Local Audiences

When it comes to the strategy for getting Mainland reality shows out to Hong Kong audiences, it is important to really understand what local viewers want. These needs come from Hong Kong's unique history, social scene, and cultural background, plus influences from globalization and Western pop culture. Unlike Mainland viewers, Hong Kong audiences have their own specific expectations and tastes. To attract this audience effectively and keep them engaged, Mainland reality shows should tweak and innovate their content to meet these particular demands. As a place where Eastern and Western cultures mix together, Hong Kong viewers are exposed to cultural products from all over the world, especially influenced by Western film and TV culture. Because of this exposure, they often look for high creativity levels, entertainment value, and good pacing in programs—preferring formats with tight narratives, rich story-lines, and lots of interactivity. For Mainland reality shows to connect with Hong Kong audiences better, they need to focus on being

innovative in program design by adding more entertaining elements and interactive techniques that satisfy viewers' craving for something new. Given Hong Kong's special history, there can be some cultural distance between local audiences and Mainland culture—especially among younger viewers who might not fully understand the details of how things work in Mainland society or may even have some misconceptions about it. So when promoting Mainland reality shows in Hong Kong, it's key not just to focus on entertainment but also gradually build those cultural connections through meaningful content. By showcasing the diversity within Mainland culture as well as its modernization journey—and touching on topics that interest young people in both regions—programs can help close the psychological gap between Hong Kong audiences and the Mainland while sparking their curiosity about understanding more.

Hong Kong's younger generation, influenced by Western liberalism, values personal expression and self-realization. Consequently, Mainland reality shows should emphasize individualistic elements and create opportunities for showcasing talents.

Programs can also incorporate contemporary popular culture and global trends to highlight diverse lifestyles and fashion, enhancing their appeal to young Hong Kong audiences. Additionally, inviting local celebrities to participate in reality show recordings can strengthen emotional connections with the audience.

Even in Hong Kong, where connections to the internet and social media are already abundant, users – especially youths, are increasingly passively obtaining information and interacting with content through social media channels. Therefore, reality shows from Mainland should explore the use of social media in engaging the citizens of Hong Kong. Through platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, reality shows can have the outtakes, updates of the guests, trailers, and other promotional materials that will increase the anticipation among the people. Moreover, audiences should also be allowed to participate in the show by engaging in discussions on the show and results as well voting and having debates and discussions of issues that are of importance to the subject matter thus they will be more attached and perhaps watch the program more.

Reality shows shall aim to change and adapt their approach by including elements of the Hong Kong art and culture practices hence promoting affectionate object-views among them. Additionally, via social media, community can relate to and increase their impact into the local culture, directing their efforts toward the audience and cementing warm reception from viewers in Hong Kong.

4 Content Adjustment Strategies for Reality Shows

In order to meet Hong Kong viewers expectations it is important for mainland reality programs to make necessary changes to the content of these programs so that they are able to capture the uniqueness of the market. These content changes require not only to tailor the content to the Hong Kong audience's cultural orientation but also cater for the communication and social quarters that are enjoyed within the Hong Kong society. Locally, such audiences also cherish a variety of cultures and practices within that culture. Therefore, it is advisable that Mainland reality shows present their culture in Hong Kong's light in order to help their audience to get to know and appreciate it very well. It is crucial to utilize these linguistic means since it welcomes Hong Kong viewers by recreating an atmosphere of comfort this part of the world. Language act, i.e. the use of Cantonese in the foreign host regions. Use of popular celebrities from the region. Another way to integrate artistic representations and cultural practices in to a region entails bringing the two regions together. This is done through communication and event management. For instance, the 'eventing and promotion of cultural exchange' between the Mainland and Hong Kong.

Making shows target Hong Kong viewers more enchanting and original is yet another strategy that will make the local viewers, particularly their younger counterparts to like the programs. Contemporary television in China is somewhat sobering. Consequently, innovation revival must occur, and introducing novel, entertaining and interactive segments is a must. Instead of just converting Chinese version of other international branded shows, it is crucial that producers bring out their unique voice by offering some hybrid games and missions. Also, owing to the hectic lifestyle of Hong Kong residents, shows must be delivered at a reasonable pace without overindulgence in the storyline and placed in a more compacted format, focusing on the project in order to sustain the interest in the good and minimize the deniability of interpersonal relationships.

Mainland producers plan to expand their understanding of the audience, the selection of television programs in Hong Kong, for example, will extend beyond entertainment, registering the wishes for affect even expectancy (Wills and Ryan, 2015). However, when it comes to Mainland reality shows, its emotional content should be focused on the creation of emotional attachments with the different program ideas characters and their real life experiences, tales of struggles in mainland of China and the, while importing, abiding by the concealed customs, which can elicit emotions from the viewers. Moreover, the program can focus on inviting Hong Kong youths working or living in the Mainland or any other Hong Kong person working in the Mainland and showcasing their wonderful development and emotional ventures in the Mainland. This form of cultural expression allows the audience to associate with the participants better and infuse more emotion to Mainland society and culture.

In today's era of advanced social media, the audience tends to have more and more expectations in terms of the interactivity and the engagements. To target Hong Kong audiences, such efforts of reality shows made in the Mainland to create interactive mechanisms are highly recommended. For instance, some elements of the programs can include voting by the viewers, which can be done on some estate websites, or it can incorporate the use of Facebook in its air-wave programming, as well perhaps with an extra focus of live interactive session that will require the audience to part with the show. Similarly, the programs can promote viewers to provide feedback or even discuss their take on the show referred to as the experiences of Facebook, Xiao Hong Shu, and YouTube. These endeavour are useful for engaging the audience and get the audiences to participate in the show.

5 Optimization Strategies for Dissemination Channels

Optimization of dissemination channels is as necessary, when to expand Mainland reality shows into the HK market. Besides adapting the content, usage of New media and digital platforms are growing rapidly that demands more than traditional one-way communication methods to keep pace with modern audiences, particularly in a highly digitalized city like Hong Kong – where it boasts an extremely high rate of social media usage. Chinese reality shows should adopt a multi-channel dissemination strategy in order to increase the influence of their programs and thus maximize the viewing time of their viewers. The younger local audience in Hong Kong, for example, is far more about up the social media backbone of Facebook and Instagram as well as YouTube. The improvement of interactions between programs and viewers can also be realized by adopting a multi-channel communication approach by mainland reality shows. Especially in the case of younger Hong Kong viewers, they appears to consume information largely through interaction and sharing on platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Mainland reality shows can open official accounts on these platforms to release show-related teasers, behind-the-scenes content, or news of the guests so as to draw more eyeballs from Hong Kong audiences. Also, both the hosts and guests have the opportunity to speak directly with a digital audience online by sharing personal

stories, or off-the-set moments from upcoming episodes through their own social platform promoting the show even further. Apart from that, branded hashtag is a great way to get the audience involved and increase engagement as well as program loyalty by encouraging viewership with more hashtags, comments and discussions.

Hong Kong viewers have diverse and flexible viewing habits and tend to use multiple devices to enjoy entertainment content. Instead of a binding to the whole single broadcast channel, as mainland reality shows they should be able to use more ways on multimedia platform. Such as being available on the streaming services or short video platforms to release cuts or highlights of the full shows, and providing an easy way for the audience to watch it whenever and wherever they might be available. For example, YouTube, and other platforms which are internationally-used with sizeable user communities in Hong Kong should be utilized to broadcast the show in HD quality and special cuts. It will effectively scales the influence of the shows into the market of Hong Kong.

Mainland reality shows can hold a range of cross-regional interactive activities, including live online interaction and fans meetings, or offline promotion. The efforts are meant to deepen the bond between the audience and the show as well as reducing some of the emotional distance between Mainland China-based viewers and Hong Kong audience. For example, while filming a program, viewership can be increased by providing live streaming whereby the audience has the opportunity to interact in real-time, voting on segments or adding comments. This hybrid of offline-online engagement drives higher audience involvement, while it also provides instant feedback to maximize the show reach and influence. Additionally, the producing team should carry out fan meeting or fan sharing events in Hong Kong, which will go a long way in drawing the local audience more to the show and increasing its sphere of influence accordingly.

Optimizing copyright access for Hong Kong audience by allowing more top-quality Mainland content is imperative among focus areas regarding dissemination. Hong Kong audiences cannot watch popular and outstanding content, because of the existing terms and conditions relating to copyrights, affecting both variety shows, entertainment and talent based programs as well as films and dramas produced within the mainland. Confronted with the challenge, however, reality shows can take a wholehearted initiative to assist and go to the extent where Hong Kong IP addresses are granted the copyright conditions as enjoyed by those in the mainland. This primarily because Hong Kong is not considered as part of the same copyright territory as mainland China. The mainland should remove copyright barriers between the two sides of the river. The first possibility opens up more opportunities of integrating the spectator with the program. The one idea of integrating the viewer with the program is the possibility of putting the content generated among, into the action about which they were viewing. Those new imageries on what one should see rather than what the realistic perspective of the viewer, would be valuable in which the producers of the content, in this case the mainstream channels, should come in to enhance the quality of their television programs in cultural context as we have them today of a very low grading.

6 Conclusion

Challenges exist in the successful distribution of Mainland reality television content in the Hong Kong market due to numerous reasons, which include mainly differences in culture, different viewer needs, and the changing methods of communication in the new media era. This is why content adaptation and proper selection of distribution is crucial to effectively appealing to Hong Kong viewers in any given arrangements. Evaluating the whole dynamics involving peculiarities of the local audience in Hong Kong will help them come up with gripping episodes that would include cross-cultural communication, higher levels of edutainment and progressive components,

emotional engagement, and participation in social networks. On the other hand, omnichannel development which includes social function of new media technologies, distribution of the content on various products, blending online and offline activities, exploiting experimental media and approaches new media tools, establishes Hong Kong-Mainland cooperation in distribution and shares copyrighting can definitely enhance widening the audience base and the levels of interaction available to Hong Kong citizens.

These tactics encourage the audience in Hong Kong to become more loyal customers of Mainland products and embrace Mainland culture. Hence, the project, given the highly adaptive nature of its narrative, can succeed in the Hong Kong market. This includes all the components of an effective communication program, except that the adjustments are made in order to reach the audience in another country. This raises customer satisfaction by promoting two way flow of services and products and engaging customers in a more participatory manner.

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