

Research on Challenges and Transformation Strategies of Chinese news TV Program Hosts

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ABSTRACT

With the rise of new media, great changes have taken place in China's media environment, especially for TV stations, which were regarded as strong media in the traditional media, are facing great pressure of transformation. In this context, the transformation of Chinese TV news program hosts has become a natural move. This paper will take the Chinese TV news show host human stance, and turned to specific how to be the host personalization, and how traditional media platform through incentives to stimulate innovation potential of the host, how the host and TV news program integration development, thus promoting the comprehensive rating of TV news programs. In this article, through the interview research method, respectively, the two have a certain working experience in TV news programs of TV host department leadership and new presenter, are modelled in the present work, not clear and the positioning of the personalized programs preparing low participation problem, put forward to develop personalized assessment standards, To refine the incentive mechanism and promotion channels to try to bind the sense of honor and responsibility between the news program and the host, and summed up the TV news platform and the host's own two-way transformation and promotion strategy, and strive to provide effective help and support for the future development of Chinese TV news program host.

Keywords: News, TV program, Hosts

1. INTRODUCTION

China's media environment has undergone earth-shaking changes, from the traditional media, namely TV, radio and newspaper, to the strong rise of new media, such as the Douyin, Bilibili, TenCent video and other media platform of user groups, makes the self-sustaining traditional media showed a trend of decline in advertising revenue. And then the economic benefits of the traditional media become a thorny problem to be solved.

As a strong mainstream media in traditional media -- TV station, the current program categories can be roughly divided into news, variety shows and life services. Among them, news programs have the most solid mass base and the largest audience rating. According to data, news programs covered 86.02% of TV audience in 2020, the highest among all types of programs [1]. However, with the diversification of news communication channels and the change of audiences' viewing habits of fragmentary information receiving, the audience market share of traditional TV news programs is increasingly narrow. Moreover, many local TV stations focus on news programs, and the market income of news TV programs

directly or indirectly affects the survival of the entire TV station. Therefore, many TV stations have faced the dilemma of staff integration or even layoffs. On September 15, 2016, The Legal Channel of Shenzhen Radio and Television Group announced that it would suspend broadcasting; On October 1, 2016, the cultural channels of Jinjiang Radio and TV Station were shut down. At the end of April 2017, Shandong Provincial Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television Bureau issued a notice to shut down most district-level radio stations. Since January 1, 2019, several channels under Shanghai Radio and TV have undergone major adjustments, including Shanghai Dragon TV directly cutting two channels in order to reduce expenditure [2]. Among China's more than 4,000 TV stations and more than 24,000 channels, many TV channels are still struggling to support, and many TV stations even break out the "wave of asking for salary". Therefore, the working environment and state of Chinese media employees have also encountered a new node of forced transformation and development [3].

In this context, many TV programs began to transform, and so did the hosts. Many local TV stations

have carried out reform and innovation, holding staff mobilization meetings for many times, encouraging people to find sponsors to invest in advertising to create new programs, and reintegrating staff, trying to reduce the inherent expenditure share of TV stations. Moreover, the host was advocated to be the producer of the column, and the host public account was set up to enhance the sticky interaction with the audience. However, most of the actual implementation effect was not good, and most of them ended up with no result.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the changes in China's media environment at the present stage, many scholars have analysed the advantages and disadvantages of current news TV programs. Chen Huixin mentioned in Her Research on the Role Change of Hosts in the Era of Fusion Media that traditional TV media have authority and credibility that new media cannot match. When reporting major news events, news usually appears on Weibo, WeChat, Douyin and other new media platforms after broadcast by TV media [4]. However, in the era of new media, the diversity of information transmission channels has gradually weakened the power of TV media. Now people can get real-time news reported through Weibo and WeChat on mobile phones. In addition, people can express their opinions and attitudes in a timely manner while watching the news, which cannot be achieved by TV news [5]. For example, it's impossible for a TV set to receive viewer feedback during a TV news broadcast, on the contrary, network new media news is different. Once news information appears, some audiences will react violently, which intensifies the orientation of network new media public opinion and weakens the orientation of TV news [6].

Although some researches have paid attention to the unshakable authority advantage of TV news, when facing the impact of new media news, the disadvantages revealed by TV news are the problem that scholars urgently want to solve. As the final presentation window of a program, the quality of the host directly affects the audience rating of the program. When it comes to the problems existing in the current TV news program hosts, it is pointed out in the literature that the existing TV news programs often lack characteristics in the selection of content and have the same broadcasting and hosting style, which not only fails to attract young audiences, but also causes the aesthetic fatigue of the original audience [7]. Therefore, facing the challenges posed by new media, in order to further improve the ability of news TV hosts in the fierce competition, many scholars have also carried out research on the transformation strategies of TV news hosts. Some scholars point out that in the era of new media with increasingly fierce media competition, the personal charm of hosts has an increasingly obvious impact on TV program ratings. For TV hosts, according

to their own professional quality and hosting style, explore unique development paths and gradually build personal brands, which is conducive to the promotion and expansion of the influence of the program [8]. As for how to improve personal media, Liu Jiayu, a scholar, mentioned in her research that only by enabling TV news hosts to continuously learn knowledge and improve their abilities can they achieve better development and attract people's attention at the same time [9]. At the same time, in the face of the intervention of new technology, there are also studies that show that the host should strengthen the application of new media technology, break the limitations of the studio, actively increase communication with the audience, strengthen the study and research of policy theory knowledge, continuous exploration and innovation, and promote the promotion of news vitality and freshness. So as to realize efficient cooperation between new technology and TV news program hosts [10]. The study also pointed out that although "intelligent host" can present a high level of broadcasting art, but mainly through "replication" to complete, rather than artistic creation, not to show the artistic aesthetic ability. The host should pay attention to improving their own comprehensive quality, especially to invest more energy in artistic experience, so as to create works that let the audience get aesthetic enjoyment [11].

To sum up, although many scholars have conducted corresponding studies on challenges and transformation strategies faced by TV news program hosts, most of them are conceptual and theoretical. For example, in the Analysis of challenges and Countermeasures of News Broadcasting in the Era of all Media, it is also mentioned that the initiative to cater to the development trend of the era of all media has attracted more and more employees' attention and attention. In addition to regular job training, TV media also take the initiative to carry out various types of learning activities, which can help TV news program hosts quickly master the latest theoretical knowledge [12]. Liu Wei repositioned the style of news TV host in the new media era in the Role Positioning of TV Host in the Era of Integration of Media. News host should become "kind and lovely" in the eyes of the audience, because the stereotypical news host style is slightly backward. Audiences are more likely to see hosts who are "concise and comprehensive with frequent eloquent sentences" and more "personalized" so as to form a host style with personal characteristics [13].

In the above research, it is only generally proposed that we should constantly learn theories, enhance personal charm and create personalized style. However, how to do it is still a research blank. Such as the establishment of incentive assessment mechanism, national scale theory training and so on. At the same time, there are few literatures that take Chinese news TV programs as the starting point to do comprehensive and specific research on the challenges and transformation

strategies faced by hosts. Under the impact of new media, news TV hosts can constantly break through and find the existence and development mode suitable for the current development trend, so as to further solve the career crisis and obtain professional happiness, and solve the current crisis faced by traditional media by solving the problems faced by presenters, So that more audiences return to TV news programs, improve TV ratings. In this regard, this paper will study the challenges and transformation strategies faced by Chinese news TV hosts.

3. METHODOLOGY

In the research process, this paper adopts the way of interview, respectively interviewed two representative TV news anchors in the industry. The first interviewee is the head of the host department of a local TV station with nearly 30 years of front-line TV news experience. He is mainly responsible for the daily work arrangement of TV hosts, participating in the formulation of staff salary assessment standards and rules, guiding and supervising the improvement of the host's business ability, therefore, it is easier to grasp the overall state of the host from a global perspective. We had an interview for nearly an hour through an online video link. The second interview guest was a new host who had just graduated from college and been on the job for less than six months, as a new employee, the solid working mode has not been formed in a short period of time, and the working state will be more active, and the willingness and ability to accept new things will be stronger, and the perception of the new platform will be clearer. We did a 90-minute offline interview in a cafe.

The content of the interview is roughly from the working state of the host; The host's personalized positioning; The host communicated with the audience rating of the program as well as the methods of improving work skills and the establishment of salary assessment mechanism.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Through interviews, this paper explores the problems that news TV program hosts encounter in their work at the present stage and how to deal with them. The first problem summed up in the interview is that TV news programs are solidified and hosts have little space to play. The main reason may be limited by the information transmission function of news programs. News TV programs have always been an important window for government departments to transmit information, that the overall type of programs is serious and standardized. In the traditional program form, it has always maintained an accurate and objective starting point, focusing on the influence of the program broadcast and the transmission power of the content, rather than the novelty and changeability of the program style. As a result, over time,

the format of the show has become a little more rigid, and it is hard to avoid stereotyped self-restraint. Secondly, in the creation of TV news programs, the host's voice is weak. When a news program is broadcast, the host is the final product output person on the screen and plays a crucial role in the overall effect of the program. But in practice, the work focus of Chinese TV news program hosts is mostly positioned as broadcasting and reading manuscripts, therefore, as long as we can accurately broadcast and read the edited text by the behind-the-scenes team of the program, it can be regarded as a complete completion of our own work. Therefore, in the early stage of the program, the actual participation in the topic selection, interview and arrangement is low. As a result, the whole team is usually regarded as a "human reading machine" by colleagues, and the role is not valued enough, so the host's right of speech is not obvious. Thirdly, it is also manifested in the aging of the audience. In the 1950s, TELEVISION was born in China. For the audience who grew up with Chinese television at the same time, watching TV is not only a habit, but also a kind of feelings. Therefore, until the 21st century, with the rapid development of the Internet, the predecessors of that generation still regard the broadcast content of TV news programs as the most authoritative broadcast and interpretation of real life, and also maintain high enthusiasm and attention to TV. However, with the passage of time, the gradual aging of the audience also makes TV news programs intentionally or unintentionally have to take into account this part of the relatively stable main audience, resulting in a relatively low proportion of the overall innovative content of the program.

The second question concerns the weak innovation of news TV programs and the serious problem of program modelling. The main reason can be attributed to the mutual learning and imitation of various TV platforms, with relatively stable program forms and lack of innovative reference. When the audience turns on the TV, it is not difficult to find that from CCTV to provincial SATELLITE TV and local TV stations, the broadcast types of TV news programs are basically divided into several categories, such as current political news, news flash, and people's livelihood news assistant. For the audience, visual fatigue will inevitably appear in the viewing effect. On the other hand, the slow renewal of personnel and the difficulty for fresh blood to enter are also the main reasons for the lack of innovative ideas. In traditional media, the main creators of TV news programs are mostly senior professionals with certain qualifications. In the program creation, in order to ensure the smoothness and accuracy of the program broadcast and avoid false news and other missteps, the selection of themes and the method of getting to the point are slightly conservative. Therefore, if things go on like this for a long time, the fixed thinking of making programs will be more deep-rooted, and it is difficult for innovative

thinking to completely reverse the overall situation through temporary efforts.

The third problem is the stylization of the host's working mode, which is mainly manifested in the overall work flow. The reason for this is that after decades of polishing, the production process of news TV programs has been sufficiently complete and mature, which also leads to the completion of all links in accordance with the existing rules and templates, and the system of reproduction is relatively high. At the same time, the division of labour between different positions is clear, and the host's responsibility is more defined in front of the screen. Therefore, no matter for live broadcast or recorded TV programs, the host only needs to participate in the program according to the time flow formulated by the program team. In addition, the approval standards of TV broadcasting platforms tend to be unified, and the requirements on hosts are more inclined to ensure the integrity of the program broadcast, which also leads to the restriction, standardization and modelling of the overall work mode of hosts in the actual work.

The fourth problem is that the host's personalized positioning is not clear, mainly reflected in the host's personalized expression characteristics are not distinct. The reason for this is that universities are very similar in the cultivation of hosting talents. The overall state of the host reserve force is the same. Secondly, TV news programs are obviously stylized, so it is difficult for the host to have too much space to show personality in the program. This also leads to the convergence of the overall temperament from the external image to the internal expression of the TV news program hosts in various TV stations. Thirdly, the relatively stable role in the program also makes the host's sense of crisis competition weak and lacks the driving force of active innovation and change to enhance the personalized brand symbol.

The fifth problem is that the incentive mechanism of salary is insufficient, and the host's willingness to actively participate in the program is not strong. The main reason lies in the assessment standard quantization is not meticulous enough. Most of the salary evaluation standards of TV news programs are quantified by doing or not doing and how much they do, without comprehensive evaluation of the programs, specific time audience rating and grading by experts in the industry, which makes the evaluation standards fuzzy. At the same time, the promotion channel is not clear, so the incentive mechanism is not strong enough. In most TV news programs, the staff of each position is relatively stable, and there is generally no large-scale personnel transfer. In this way, it has a relatively stable working environment and ensures the safe production process of the program. At the same time, there will be hidden dangers of personnel inaction and brain drain.

The influence of the above five problems on the current Chinese TV news programs and presenters, first

of all, traditional TV news programs are not innovative enough, and the overall ratings decline. In the long run, this will lead to a vicious cycle, with the participation of hosts in the program becoming weaker and weaker. On the contrary, the sense of separation from the program will be more obvious, which leads to the personalized symbol of the program host is difficult to have space to outstanding performance in the program. In addition, the lack of incentive mechanism leads to the loss of talents and the difficulty of injecting new forces, which further shows that the backup force of Chinese TV news programs is prone to fault.

In view of this situation, this paper proposes the following solutions on how to solve various problems faced by hosts in news TV programs. First lifting platform advantage, traditional TV news programs to use new media platform, understand the young audience attention hot spot and access to news and information, more inclined to through what type of new media platform, and can find and breakthrough point of traditional television news programs, further enhance the highlights and advantages of TV news itself. At the same time, traditional TV news programs can effectively make use of the convenience of new media platforms to transmit and receive information. By opening accounts on new media platforms and combining with the intervention of new technologies such as big data, they can push real-time news and current affairs closely related to the target audience on new media platforms. First, expand the scope of audience groups, and then transfer the audience from the small screen of new media to the big screen of TV through the absolute advantage of authoritative information release by traditional media. On the other hand, as the branding symbol of a news program, the host is an important part of the program's publicity and promotion of attention. Therefore, the host is helped to create a multidimensional personalized style, dare to break through and innovate, and create the host brand TV news program according to the host's own advantages. At the same time, it is also necessary to formulate personalized audit standards for different types of programs more clearly, enhance the awareness and weight of the presence of hosts in the program, and improve the participation of hosts in the early stage of program production. For example, the host and the program editor have a division of labour to complete the manuscript writing work, enhance the binding responsibility of the host and the program and the sense of shared happiness and shame, and carry out data analysis of the specific time period when the program ratings are low, find out the causes of the problems and break down one by one. Finally, clear salary assessment standards and promotion channels should be formulated, and quantitative salary assessment should be made on specific audience ratings and participation of hosts in each period of the program. At the same time, skills training and business competition in the industry should

be held regularly to determine the survival of the fittest and enhance the crisis awareness of hosts.

5. CONCLUSION

At present, China's media environment is both a challenge and an opportunity for news TV hosts. In order to cater to the changes of the media era, corresponding adjustments need to be made in time to cope with the current development and changes, and it is extremely urgent to actively find transformation strategies. In this study, it is found that there are some problems in Chinese TV news programs, such as lack of innovation, serious problems in program modelling, unclear quantification of host evaluation criteria, low integration of host and program, and brain drain of news TV programs. As a result, young audiences shift their way of obtaining news and information, the presence of hosts in traditional TV news programs is weakened, and the overall ratings of the programs are gradually declining. In this regard, this paper also puts forward corresponding transformation strategies, such as formulating detailed personalized assessment standards according to the characteristics of the program and clarifying promotion channels, so that more young hosts can see their future development trend in traditional media and enhance their sense of professional gain and honor. At the same time, by regularly holding professional skills training and business ability competitions for hosts in the industry to increase their awareness of career crisis, stimulate their potential innovation vitality, and gradually create personalized brand programs for hosts, and comprehensively improve the comprehensive competitive strength and audience influence of the program. Thus, the transformation and development of Chinese TV news program hosts will be smoother.

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