The Undercurrents of Media Convergence and Development of
Viewers' Gratification to News Consumption

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Abstract
A transform to digital television (TV) has the significant impact on news consumption and production where the media convergence is considered influencing to Thai media landscape. The research was thus aimed to explore gratification development of the youth to news consumption. Three possible ways to develop the gratification include adaptation (i), shaping (ii) to existing environment and selection (iii) of new environment. Conditioning factors are news consumption, news content and gender. The quantitative research was employed with a five-point scale based on the means differences and the analytical statistics of correlation coefficient.

Three prominent findings are that the youth performs a high level of gratification when consuming news through the converged TV, the adaptation is mostly taken, and that sport news is most potential to the gratification development, especially in shaping approach. Among a variety of news content, life & entertainment is most viewed while business and economy is least accounted. Moreover, adaptation and selection approaches are statistically significant to the youth's gratification development. Both life & entertainment and sport news show the statistical significance to the shaping approach of news gratification. Gender is also reported as the significant factor, with 99% confidence, to identify the gratification to news consumption and content of climate & environment, politics and world news. In conclusion, news professionals are challenging for a flow of media convergence which is behind the increase of uses and gratifications to news consumption.

Keywords: Media convergence, Media gratification, News consumption. TV-Internet

Introduction

In digital age, people are all surrounded by a variety of converged media. All mainstream media within a market; TV stations, radio stations and print publications, are diversifying into a so-called medium of new media or multimedia by incorporating the Internet with media advantages. The real media convergence provides an era that all kinds of media are used in relation to one another. Media will be everywhere so everyone can transmit information across channels, with a fast and convenient pace [1-3].

1.1 Media convergence. Media convergence is an ongoing process. It occurs at various intersections of media technologies of computers, the Internet, audiences and related-media industries, such as content, programs, studios and equipment services, and so on. Internet news is not only a one-stop source for all aspects of information and entertainment, but also keeps traditional media survived in the recessional period [4, 5].

In Thailand, a transform of TV media from an analog device to a digital system, which has started since 2012 and switches over by 2015, becomes a powerful catalyst to the changes of media landscape. Coupled with the 2014 data about a high percentage of broadband penetration and the increases of mobile subscribers and Internet users [6], a need for media convergence is importantly situated in Thai media industry.

After five decades with only 6 free-TV stations, there has been a big change in TV broadcasting. The frequencies acquisitions of broadcasting services throughout nation have been reallocated by the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) who is an independent regulator under the latest telecommunication and broadcasting law. A total rises to 48 stations, including some 800 satellite-and-cable pay TV operators [7]. All 48 free-TV stations are classified into 3 aspects; 12 channels for public purpose, 24 channels for commerce and the rest targeted for community. A variety of emerging markets is considered highly potential for digital-TV business as soon as the newness of broadcasting law is effective. By convergence, the mainstream media are driven to the Internet media so that they can be away from any business loss [1, 8]. There exist for 'thaitv3.com', 'CH7 Online', 'MCOT 9.com', 'NewTV' 'Thairathonline', 'Nation TV', 'Manager Online', 'TVPool Online', 'Bangkok Post E-paper', and so on.

According to the Five Forces Model, business value of TV broadcasting is declined in due [9]. Among the forces are too many players, short supplies of program producers and increasing power of viewers due to many choices. There are many opportunities for new comers to TV industry but not for withdrawal. The last force is a wide variety of substitutes, with multiplatform and the Internet property. Eventually, structural changes in media competitiveness and in value chain are challenging for Thai media professionals [10].

1.2 News consumption. In general, news content can be categorized for breaking news or hot news, politics, economy, sports, climate & environment, live & entertainment, art and cultural and world news. Due to a wide variety of news story, news reporting is a popular program designated for almost all converged media [11-13]. Internet and brand journalism are considered influential to increasing news

consumption [4]. They are delivering a wide variety of news story and social movements in life, as at sources and within the journalism aspect [14]. The Internet brings the effective communication across all barriers and gives way to a means of communication. When viewing broadcasted news, the audience can be shaped by news type and techniques of news delivery [15]. They are melodramatic animation, news talk, and frequency and time period of broadcasting. It means that many converged media are shaping our lives and the world around us with a conducting environment [5, 16].

Based on news production, there are many different kinds of news stories and articles and many different ways to write them both. The journalists reveal the certain social movement as well as facilitate public discourses those uplifting the situation as well as contributing to human development. New generation is seemingly declined to newspaper reading in the morning[17]. Their pattern of news consumption is alternated by those in line with the multimedia, including subscription of news and content service through social media [3, 18, 19]. Several reports on media consumption among Thai youth indicate that mobile internet is the popular device for internet use. Smart phone is most used as their communication tool. The likely format to view TV program is smart TV on social media application and multiplatform. Finally, the Internet is considered most necessary for their educational progression. News consumption becomes a proxy indicator for many new possibilities. This includes the literacy in media exposure where its direct and indirect consequences are substantially concerned. It would say that news consumption not only satisfies a need to be inside the mainstream behavior, but it also represents as to how people are literate in media uses and gratifications to news story [18, 20, 21]

1.3. Gratification Development. The reasons for media uses and gratification are different. They vary from a companionship, social interaction, information seeking, interpersonal learning, entertainment and occupied-time when nothing better to do. These cover four directions: to identify, to educate, to entertain, and to have a social interaction[21, 22]. Public actions for social issue may increase if the message content and message delivery is effectively communicated [23]. Media gratification is on the one hand reconciled with the experience of social life and the pursuit of pleasure [3, 14]. On the other, the way of gratification development becomes a reflection of media literacy [20, 22].

Referring to the concept of wisdom in information literacy [24], there are three stages of gratification development to information in life: adaptation, shaping, selection. The scale that people can modify themselves to fit existing environment reflects the ability of adaptation (i: adaptation). In case, the audiences try to modify environment to fit what they seek of it, they are shaping it in a way that makes them go over the stage of adaptation (ii: shaping). If failing in adaptation and shaping to existing environment, they may perform a selection of new environment (iii: selection).

In psychological view [25], the stages of covert and overt activities and experiences that individuals engage in their behavioral patterns are conceptualized for an interplayed set of thought and action. Behavioral pattern might be inconsistent with the attitude. This manner is eventually regarded as a difference of thought and the real actions indicating the gap between the areas of action and the readiness to act. According to communication process, audiences can reach the indirect experiences in

all aspects with full imagination that are known to be affecting to the gratification development [8, 20]. As with Sze' s statement, human beings are actually shaped their lives on social action in order for a greater adaptation to existing environment [26]. Consequently, a change to new environment, which requires the different inputs, is less considered for the stages of thought and action [24, 27-29].

Thus, this study is conducted to present the evidence-based evaluation for a more understanding of gratification development to news consumption in the realm of converged-TV media. The questions are about what and how are the youth's practices in news consumption? Which type of news content and how is related to viewer's gratifications? Is there any correlation between news consumption and gratification development? Does the gender create the differences of news consumption and gratification development?

Methodology

2.1 Scopes of study. First, an internet-TV was referred to as the medium of news consumption in this study. The research framework is based on the three stages of gratification development to news consumption. The development include (i) adaptation to existing environment, (ii) shaping to existing environment, and (iii) selection of new environment. Seven types of news content stated in alphabetical order in this paper are the conditioning factors those covering *breaking news, business & economy, climate & environment, life & entertainment, politics, sports* and *world news*. The coeducational schools were determined to represent a reality of gender factor.

2.2 Population and sampling. Population is the high-school students. According to Yamane formula of sampling method, the significance level is based on more or less five percent (±5%), at population over 100,000 units. The study was thus conducted with four hundred students randomly selected from private and public coeducational schools located in Bangkok city.

2.3 Procedure. A set of questionnaires was first prepared by separating to two parts. The first part dealt with the youth's interest in news consumption by new content. The other was assigned for the differences of gratification development. Questions on a five-point scale were employed for both parts. The range value of 0.80 was used for interval distribution. Level determination began with the lowest scale, followed by low, medium, high and the highest, respectively.

To ensure validity in the questions, the expert agreement was used to address the adequacy and representativeness, which brought about item editing before distribution. The response rates of four hundred sets were targeted. Any invalid and wasted responses were replaced, accordingly. When finishing collective data and screening, the statistics of the mean, the standard deviation (S.D.) and the F-test were used to interpret the correlation, with 95% confidence. The t-test was also assigned for a nominal variable of gender.

Results and Discussion
3.1 News consumption. As the data in Figure 1, the overview of news consumption among the youth is at the high level (3.51). The most favorite news content to be

consumed belongs to *life & entertainment* at the high level (4.02), while *business & economy* captures the lowest level (1.80). Most respondents moderately consume *breaking news* (3.18)*, climate & environment* (3.01) and *world news* (2.91). *Sports* and *politics* are at low level. The results is concurrent to the statement that news story are marked by a simplicity and directness of expression of a factual story that is deemed significant to public interest. Actually, news can flow to the receivers at any time, through several channels, and by their own decision in which they keep interested [1, 11]. Similarly, a study about Thai students' behavior towards the Internet revealed that they were likely to consume news via digital media, and that the Internet was their major factor to finish the assignments from schools [10].

Figure 1: The use of converged-TV media for news consumption distributed by news content and in a five-point scale from the lowest to the highest level.

3.2 Gratification development. The data in Table 1 show that a total for the gratification development to news consumption among the samples is scaled up to the high level (3.55). The gratifications to news content capture only high and medium levels. The stages of shaping to existing environment (3.01) and selection of new environment (3.28) are at the same medium level while the adaptation is highly performed (4.10). As the results, it can say that words, images and sounds delivered through the converged media in a format of a one-stop source are shaping our lives and the world around us. Referring to the statement about digital media power [11, 18, 27], consumers who considered themselves as a high awareness of media impact probably behaved contradictory to attitude. That's because humanities are likely to perceive things that can satisfy the sense of fulfillment associated with the experiences of social life and the mainstream behavior [11, 19, 20, 30].

In identifying the value of gratifications to news content, the descriptions are based on four datasets regarding each stage of gratification and a total. The samples are highly adaptive to nearly all types of news contents, excluding contents of *business & economy* and *life & entertainment* those corresponding to the medium level. In case of

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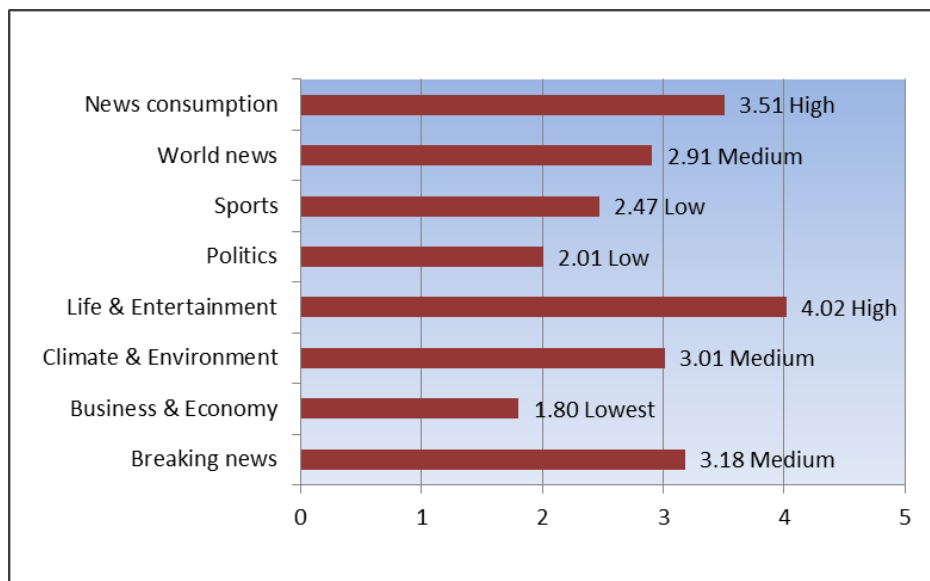
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shaping, the low and medium levels are most taken. Only *life & entertainment* news can gratify them at the high level. The lowest is for *sport* news. For the stage of selecting new environment, *political* news is highly influential. The contrary is *climate & environment*. The others share the same medium level. The fourth dataset deals with a total gratification development. In most case, the gratifications are high for *breaking news, world news, politics* and *business & economy*. The rest are average. The results are concurrent to the fact that people want to be inside the mainstream behavior in society [20, 31]. Figure 2 and 3 are drawn hereunder displaying sensitivities of the youth's gratification to news consumption associated with news content.

Table 1: Level of Total Gratification and Individual Stage to News Consumption Distributed by News Content

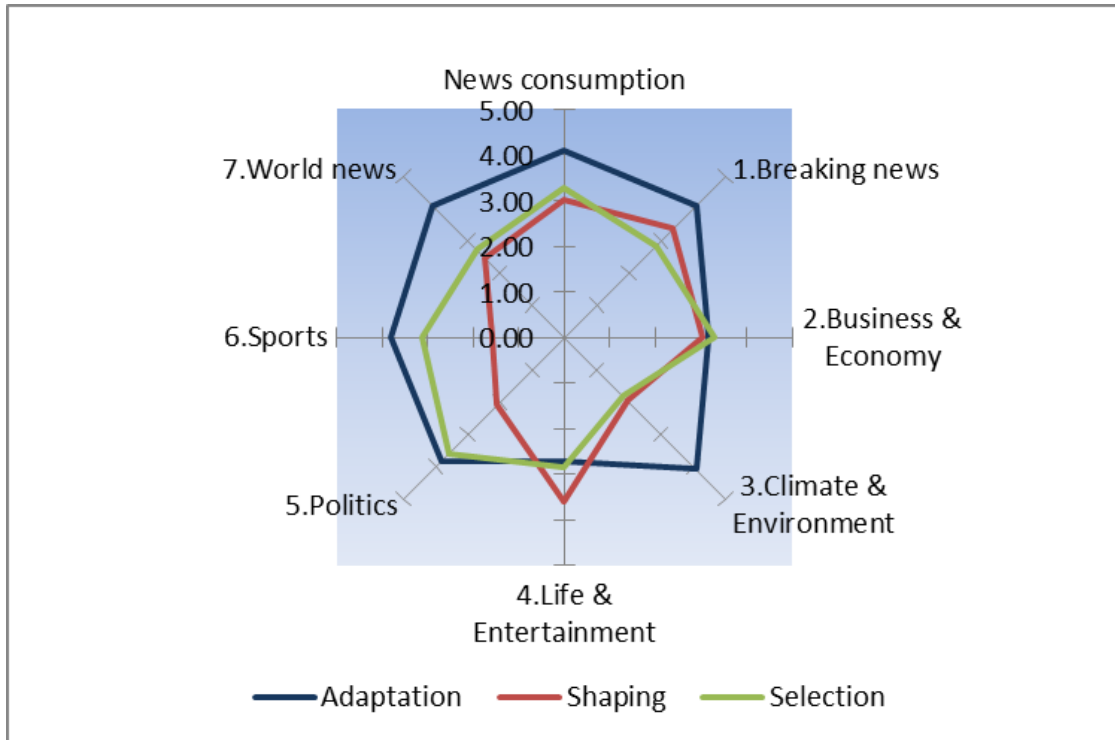| News content	Gratification Approach							
	Adaptation		Shaping		Selection		Total Gratification	
	Mean	Level	Mean	Level	Mean	Level	Mean	Level
Breaking news	4.10	High	3.37	Medium	2.85	Medium	3.76	High
Business & Economy	3.17	Medium	3.03	Medium	3.29	Medium	3.51	High
Climate & Environment	4.08	High	1.95	Low	1.82	Low	2.95	Medium
Life & Entertainment	2.71	Medium	3.59	High	2.84	Medium	3.37	Medium
Politics	3.83	High	2.09	Low	3.58	High	3.50	High
Sports	3.82	High	1.57	Lowest	3.13	Medium	3.17	Medium
World news	4.09	High	2.47	Low	2.72	Medium	3.42	High
News consumption	4.10	High	3.01	Medium	3.28	Medium	3.55	High

Figure 2: Sensitivity of gratification development to news content in three stages; adaptation, shaping, and selection.
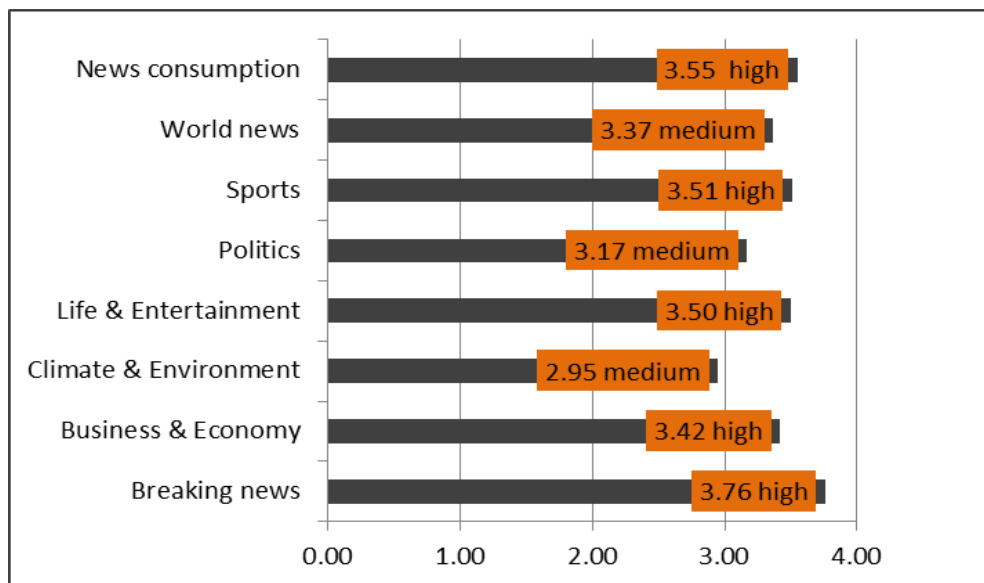

Figure 3: Youth's gratification to news consumption and to each type of news content in a five-point scaling.

3.3 Significance tests. According to Table 2, the results reveal that news consumption is statistically significant to the gratification development with 95% confidence (.015*). The similar confidences are also contributed to individual approaches of adaptation (.021*) and selection (.032*). *Sport* news is only one in seven types of news content that reflects a statistical correlation to gratification development, with the

99% confidence (.000**). There are two types of news content: *life & entertainment*, *sports*, exhibiting a statistical significance to the shaping approach, with 95% and 99% confidences, respectively (.040, .000).

Table 2: Correlations of News Content and Consumption to
Gratification Development

Independent Variables		Adaptation		Shaping		Selection		Gratification	
		r	Sig.	r	Sig.	r	Sig.	r	Sig.
News consumption		.053	**.021***	.073	.142	-.022	**.032***	.059	**.015***
Breaking news		-.060	.234	-.048	.342	-.067	.181	-.020	.690
Business Economy	&	.054	.284	.015	.768	-.042	.398	.017	.734
Climate Environment	&	.036	.474	.070	.164	.021	.681	.040	.430
Life Entertainment	&	.071	.154	-.103	**.040***	-.007	.886	-.013	.796
Politics		.070	.162	.069	.167	.079	.113	.037	.460
Sports		.082	.101	.378	**.000***	.095	.059	.222	**.000***
World news		-.092	.067	.043	.393	.005	.927	.011	.821

Remark: * represents 95% confidence, while ** exhibits 99% confidence.

It is apparent that the advances of communication technology ensure the reduced time of information access and encourage many new possibilities [24]. The importance of source of information and its qualities are possibly devalued by the opportunities to consume and share news one another[11]. Due to the media uses and gratification theory, the audience's gratification initialed by specific interest can be differently developed in relation to behavioral pattern [21] . The performances of adaptation and shaping to existing environment, when receiving information in repeats, are conditional to the development of human wisdom and intelligence [24, 32]. Eventually, a viewer's gratification development is essential for identifying the user's media literacy [17, 20, 22].

3.4 Gender factor. In term of gender, the values of male and female are equivalent to 40.50% to 59.50%, respectively. As shown in Table 3, the correlations of a gender factor to gratification development and, especially, to selection approach are at the 0.01 level. Among the statistical significances are news consumption, with 95% confidence, and the types of news content those corresponding to *climate & environment*, *politics* and *world* news.

Table 3: Significance Tests for Gender Factor

Dependent variables	Gender		
	Statistics value	Sig.	Confidence
Gratification development	9.849	.002**	99%
Selection approach	19.655	.000**	99%

News consumption	4.197	.041*	95%
News content:			
Climate & Environment	3.933	.048*	95%
Politics	5.781	.017*	95%
World news	16.350	.000**	99%

Remark: * represents 95% confidence, while ** exhibits 99% confidence.

Conclusion

A use of converged-TV media for news consumption and a variety of news content result in Thai youth's gratification development. They highly use the converged-TV media for news consumption. The practices in news consumption are that life & entertainment news is mostly consumed while business & economy is on the contrary. The youth are much more common to an adaptation approach than those of shaping and selection. The adaptation is mostly performed when consuming breaking news, while a shaping manner is favored for life & entertainment news. The extreme manner in selection is consistent with political news. Two in three stages of gratification development, adaptation and selection, indicate the correlation to their news consumption. Acting in shaping approach shows the significant relation to the consumption of life & entertainment and sports news. A factor of gender distinguishes the scales of gratification development and news consumption, too. In conclusion, the undercurrents of media convergence in the realm of progression in news consumption can cause a profound impact to the youth in evidence.

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