

## Abstract

The study entitled “The Administrative Characteristics of Local Newspapers in the Northern Region” was a qualitative research based on the survey with an in-depth interview with the varying sample group as follows: 18 newspaper owners or editors, 25 local residents of the three northern provinces including Sukhothai, Phitsanulok and Chiangmai, 5 scholars in journalism and mass communication from 5 different universities. The purposes of the study were to investigate the administrative process of the local newspaper in the northern region and to analyze factors influencing the production of the local newspaper. With the purpose to characterize the administrative attributes of the northern local press in terms of its roles, social responsibilities, and mass media management as a business organization, the researcher has employed the concept of journalism and administration in designing research methodologies. The political economy theory was employed, following the POSDCoRB organization administration framework, with the purpose to characterize the administrative characteristics.

The organization management of local newspaper in the north can be described as a family business run by members in family and friends with no certain structures, plans and work ethic controls. While some of them, with a formal administrative system, put an emphasis on their recruitment for those who possess talents and knowledge beneficial to the organization. They had their own obvious disciplines aiming to meet the work ethics.

It was found that the majority of press businesses in the north were run by individual owners as a family business. A few of them were further developed to be formal organizations. At present, the local press can be categorized into 3 groups according to their sustainability including: 1) the newly established firm, 2) the one with long – established history attempting to improve for their survival, 3) those who will soon become extinct. The organization structure featured 3 distinctive characteristics including those with only an editor, those with an editor and production team, and those

with systemized organization having certain teams account for editor, management and production.

1. The administration of the local press can be divided into two principal parts : content and production management and organization administration. For the former, it was found that most decision making was based on an editor and/ or a press owner. The content management by the editor team was hardly found. Daily newspaper possessed more distinctive framework than weekly newspaper, fortnightly newspaper, and monthly newspaper. The content of local newspaper mainly focused on news and information from government sectors and local administrative organizations, social news, articles, crime news respectively. The production process can be categorized into 3 groups including: 1) self-production throughout the process, 2) partial self – production and 3) hiring the service throughout the process.

The income of local press came from 4 different ways featuring the newspaper sale, advertising sale, publishing business, and other related businesses. Additionally, it was found that the main income of several press companies was through advertising sale paid by local politicians and local administrative organizations.

2. There were two problems hindering the administration of local press in the north as follows: 1) those related to manpower—both quality and quantity, competition in advertising business and mass communication business, capital limitation and unexpandable markets. 2) the particular characteristics of local residents in terms of their believes, tradition, values depending on politicians.

The suggestions were as follows. Surveys on information demand should be conducted in order to improve the form and content of the newspaper to meet the standards and expectation of the local residents. Seminars on mass communication, by educational institutions and other related organizations, should be held for the local newspaper administrators periodically in form of experience and knowledge sharing. This will lead to the self – adaptation and survival in newspaper business with the journalism ethics despite the severe competition. It is essential for the local newspaper owners to be learned and aware of journalism ethics as well as to apply them to use

while working with the purpose to be fully accepted by society and to maintain standards for the sustainable survival.