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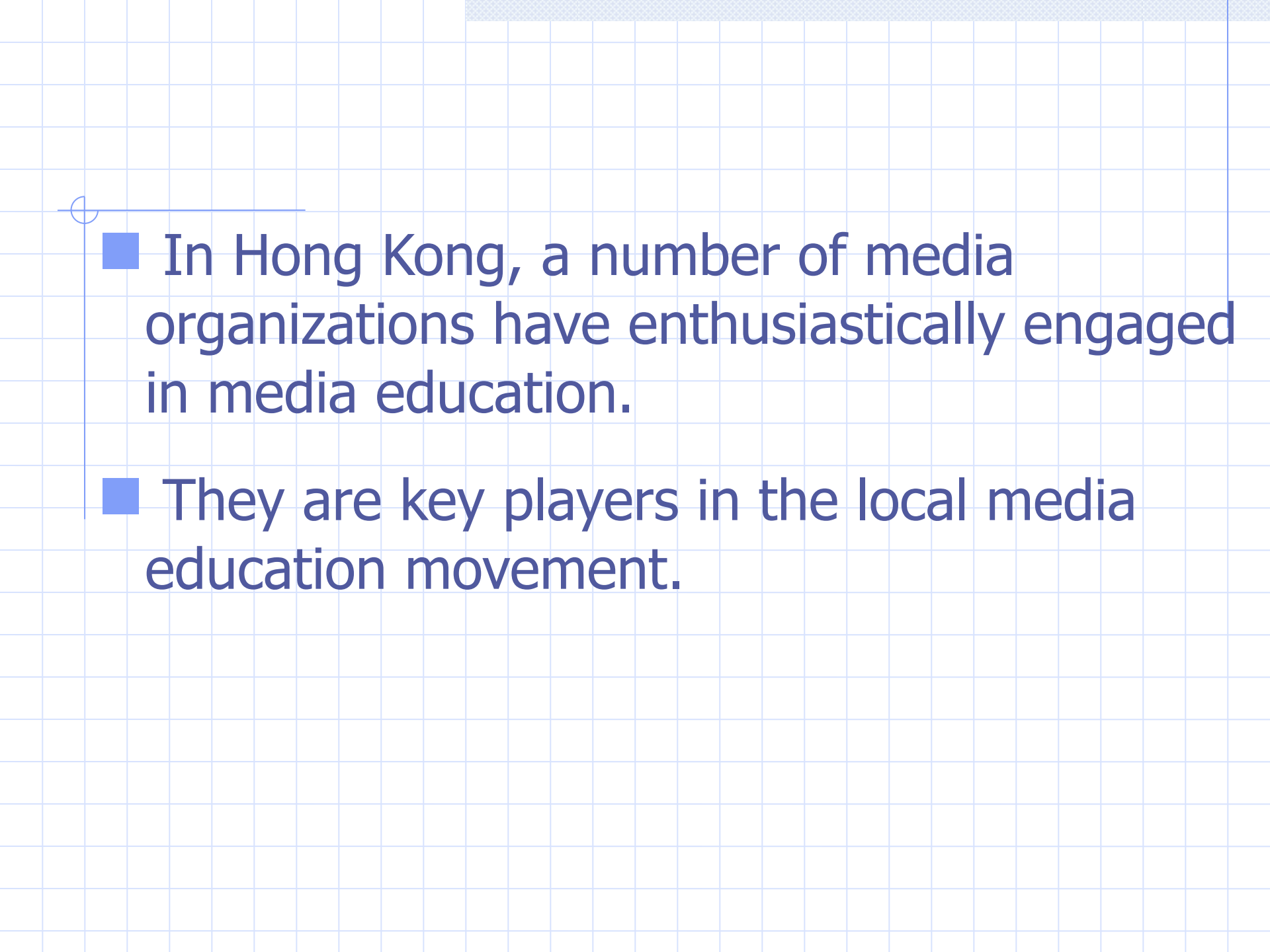


Research Question



One of the seven debates in media literacy movement:

“Should media literacy initiatives be supported financially by media organizations?”

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- In Hong Kong, a number of media organizations have enthusiastically engaged in media education.
 - They are key players in the local media education movement.

Purposes of the Study

Map out why and how these media organizations
get involved in media education

Explore their different uses of media literacy

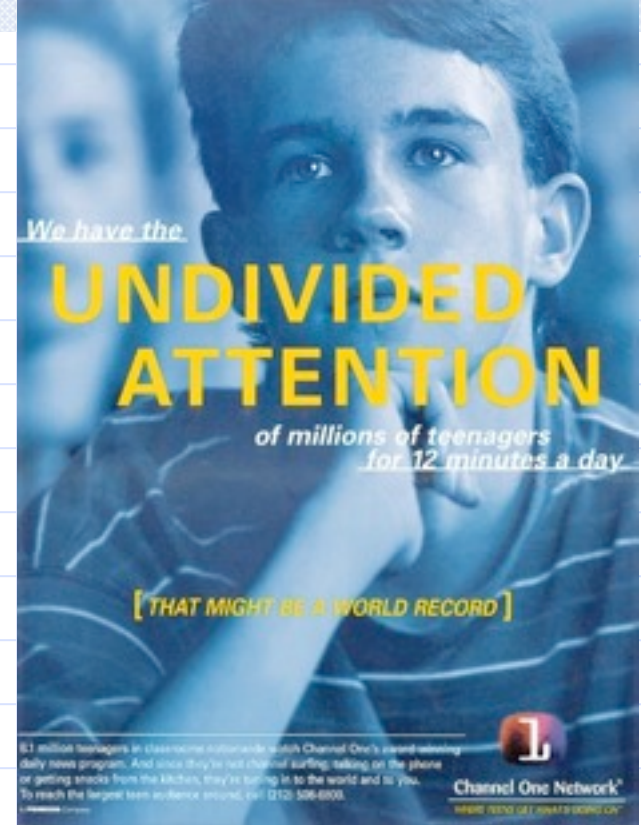
Media Organizations: Usual Suspects?

- ◆ Intentions of participation in question:
 - Seek commercial interest
 - Use the program as part of a public relations campaign
 - A shield against government regulation
 - Co-opt the media literacy movement and soften it to avoid public criticism of the media

◆ Channel One

◆ Cable in the Classroom

◆ CHUM



Key concern: COMMERCIALISM

Uses of Media Literacy

◆ Autonomous model of literacy

- **Literacy as a technical skill to be attained independent of its social environment**
- **Literacy will autonomously have effects on other social and cognitive practice**
- **Social consequences are assumed to follow from literacy such as modernization, progress and economic rationality -- “literacy myth”**

◆ Ideological model of literacy:

- Literacy is not neutral
- Literacy practices are embedded in deep social locations and interactions
- Media literacy is a social practice
- The meaning of media literacy cannot be separated from the social institutions in which it is practised or the social processes whereby practitioners acquire it.



◆ Schooled media literacy (SML):

Ontario Media Literacy Resource Guide (1989 p.7)

“Media literacy is a life skill ... if the school can provide them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and awareness, they will then be in a position to control their relationship with the media.”

- Media education is used to regulate students' media use and subsequently their social, political and consumptive orientation
- Media literacy as social regulation
- Bottom up initiatives by teachers, parents and community groups
- Regulation is not necessarily a bad thing, nor inherently oppressive

◆ Media organizations media literacy (MOML):

- Not neutral, it is embedded in the culture of media organizations and the professional values of media practitioners



Theory of Structuration

- ◆ A. Giddens: structure and agency are equal
- ◆ All human action is performed within the context of a pre-existing social structure
- ◆ Individual agency's action is inevitably predetermined by contextual rules
- ◆ The structure and rules are not permanent and external, but modified by human action in the social process
- ◆ media practitioners as human agency can reshape the meaning of media education in the structuration process

Characteristics of Media Organizations and Media People

The nature of media products

- ◆ *Information as perishable commodity*
- ◆ *Once a message reaches its audience, it loses much of its value*





- **Organizational structure**

- ◆ Flat structure – urgency to meet deadline
- ◆ Less gatekeeping and bureaucratic control

- **Types of employees – creative people**

- ◆ Enjoy autonomy, freedom and creativity
- ◆ Flexible and playful

- **Special societal role**

- ◆ Social responsibility – to serve the public



Professionalism of media people in HK



Top professional values

- ◆ Trustworthiness, duty, reliability, responsibility, respect and integrity (routine mode)
- ◆ Duty, responsibility, trustworthiness, compassion, respect and charity (crisis reporting in Sichuan Earthquake)

Pragmatic professionals

“get the job done well”

◆ Media organizations - Dual goals

- Profit-making
- Serving the public

◆ Media practitioners - Twin goals

- Fulfilling the job requirement
- Serving the readers in a meaningful and creative way

- ◆ **Media organization may not be purely commercial**
- ◆ **Media practitioners may not blindly follow the goals of the organization**

In this case, how do they 'use' media literacy?

Media and Education in Hong Kong Context

- ◆ Hong Kong media before and after 1997
- ◆ Concern about free speech
- ◆ Concerns about sensationalism, market-driven journalism

◆ Education reform since 1998

- New measures to reform curriculum and school structure
- New Senior Secondary Curriculum in 2009
- A new core subject called “Liberal Studies”
- Mass media as an elective item: the first time media education gets an ‘official’ entry to the formal curriculum

- ◆ Media education emerged after 1997 handover
- ◆ Networking Model – bottom up initiatives
- ◆ Often responses to increasing self-censorship in news, the prevalence of market-driven journalism and deterioration of the media environment

Research Method

- ◆ Media education programs conducted by four media organizations in Hong Kong were selected for study
 - These organizations are key nodes in the Hong Kong media education network
- ◆ In-depth interviews with the program leaders

◆ “public broadcaster”

- Media education TV series
- Website “Point@Media”
- Media Simulation Day



Case 2: Ming Pao Daily News

- ◆ elite Chinese newspaper
 - Student Reporters (14 years)
 - *Enjoy Teaching* weekly supplement – media education columns
 - Liberal Studies related news analysis



Case 3: Sing Tao Daily

- ◆ elite Chinese newspaper
 - Education page
 - Education supplements
 - Student posts



◆ children magazine

- Media education school talks
- Media education summer workshops
- Family media education -- *Yellow Bus Light*



Uses of Media Literacy

Goals of MOML:

- ◆ Organizational goals
- ◆ Personal goals

Meeting Organization Goals

1. Generating revenue: (commercial agenda)

Ming Pao Daily News and Sing Tao Daily:

- school subscription
- Liberal Studies market

2. Corporate image enhancement (commercial agenda)

All four organizations:

- Work closely with schools
- Meet the needs of teachers and students



3. Media environment improvement (societal role)

Good media VS bad media

Quality media VS popular media

4. Social responsibility (societal role)

- Cultivating informed and critical citizens

(*not purely commercial; no perceived adverse effect on students)

After accomplishing the organizational goals:

1. Training future media workers (pragmatic professionals)
2. Helping young people to understand the media and enjoy the media (creative people)

Meeting Personal Goals

- * Redefining and reshaping the meaning and content of media literacy:
 - The example of RTHK
 - “Media Simulation Day” as by-product of a publicity campaign for the Control of Obscene and Indecent Articles Ordinance for TELA





- The example of Ming Pao Daily News

Starts from the “Student Reporters”

Provides media education talks and publishes a series of media education columns

Pedagogical Characteristics

	RTHK	Ming Pao Daily News	Sing Tao Daily	Yellow Bus
Approaches	Workshops + experiential learning + production (guests: academic and celebrities)	Workshops + experiential learning + production (guests: academic and celebrities)	Information and analysis	Talks on media influences
Underlying rationales	Experience, enjoyment, engagement	Experience, enjoyment, engagement	Engagement	Enjoyment, engagement

◆ Production-oriented cases:

- **Workshops that emphasize on hands-on training in basic skills and understanding (reporting, writing skills and media ethics)**
- **Experiential learning (arranging interviews for student reporters to acquire direct experience as “real” reporters)**
- **Production (student reporters have to write and submit entries; participants in the simulated events can produce their own news reports and enter for a competition)**



◆ Analysis-oriented cases:

- Educating about the media
- Educating through the media

[enjoyment, experience, engagement]

Conclusion

- ◆ Diverse uses of media literacy
- ◆ Complexities and variations even within the media organizations
- ◆ Should not assume a unified way to do media literacy by media organizations

MOML is a social practice which is shaped by the nature of media organizations as well as the characteristics and professional values of the media practitioners.

◆ Roles of media practitioners in the capacity of creative people

◆ The goals of MOML in Hong Kong are highly compatible with the key media education principles long advocated in school.

The programs are well supported by teachers and students

◆ MOML is not by nature evil.

- ◆ It is important to keep the uses of media literacy under constant check
- ◆ It is important to encourage diversified media education practices and to keep on-going dialogues
- ◆ Is MOMO a passing fad or a long-term commitment? How to sustain these initiatives?