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POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MEDIA IN BANGKOK

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<u>Abstract</u>

This study is important due to the crucial role of media in the dissemination of information, especially in emerging economies, such as Thailand. It adds in publishing information among the people in the community and the country. The research focuses on the development and management of the media industry. The study employed the qualitative research method, using interviews with media stakeholders, which were key informants of the research. Key informants were given in-depth face-to-face interviews. The research used the primary data of a total thirteen respondents from three groups: news producers, media regulation bodies and academic readers.

The research findings showed that news coverage should be formulated along the lines of CSR and ethical codes. This means the development of the media in line with the changing society in order to be more responsible towards society and regulation should include breaking up of the media monopoly so that a more competitive environment could be built. The media organizations must set their strategy and mission to be more involved in the society and take more responsibility for the country. The constitution should clearly state the need for a service mindset and the need for ethical behaviour in all organizations, especially public organizations. Additionally, taking responsibility in the society should be for everyone and in all organizations in terms of CSR. NBTC is an important media organization but they have no authority to actually regulate the media. NBTC should be the experts from the outside of Parliament, or who have not been stakeholders in the media industry. Regarding the development and management of media in the long term, the bureaucratic reform should focus on increasing good governance and ethics, along with the national reform. Finally, the government should develop and manage the existing media regulation bodies to be more effective in producing and presenting news.

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Statement of Originality

(Required only for Division IV Ph.D.)

I hereby certify that all of the work described within this thesis is the original work of the author. Any published (or unpublished) ideas and/or techniques from the work of others are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices.

(Mr. Pichet Treewai)

(March, 2015)

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List of Abbreviations

AEC	Asian Economics Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEC-TERO	BEC-TERO Entertainment Public Co. Ltd
BHP	Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited
CAFTA-DR	Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITV	ITV Public Company Limited
ISRA	Thai Press Development Foundation
MCOT	Mass Communication Organization Thailand
NBCT	News Broadcasting Council Of Thailand
NBT	National Broadcasting Services of Thailand
NCPO	The National Council for Peace and Order
NLA	The National Legislative Assembly
NPCT	National Press Council of Thailand
NRC	The National Reform Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAD	The People's Alliance for Democracy
SEAPA	Southeast Asian Press Alliance
Shin Corp	Shin Corporation
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
Thai PBS	Thai Public Broadcasting Service
TJA	Thai Journalist Association
TRF	The Thailand Research Fund
TRT	Thai Rak Thai Party

List of Abbreviations

UDD   United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship

UK   United Kingdom

UN   United Nations

USA   United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to study the political turmoil, which has taken place in Thailand in recent years. The media has played a very significant role in terms of highlighting, informing and influencing people's political opinions and it is, therefore, important to analyze that role in depth. This research aims to study the economics, politics, media and stakeholders in Thailand in recent decades. Thailand officially became a constitutional monarchy with a prime minister as head of government in 1932. Politics in Thailand has been characterized by fighting between the old and new elite, bureaucrats and the military, with, as many coups as there have been elections over the last eighty years.

Thailand remains a constitutional monarchy, with the King as head of state and governments elected or appointed by the military as a result of coups. Political crisis has plagued Thailand in recent years, especially recently, with divisions between the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), commonly called the Yellow Shirts, and the United Front for Democracy against Dictatorship (UDD), commonly called the Red Shirts. The PAD was a coalition of middle class anti-Thaksin protesters, led by Sonthi Limthongkul. The UDD supported the Thai Rak Thai party ("Thais Love Thais" or TRT), led by Jatuporn Prompan, Nattawut Saikua, Veera Musikapong, Charan Ditthapichai and Weng Tojirakarn.

In a dramatic political uprising in 2006, the Royal Thai Army overthrew the government of elected Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, the head of the TRT party. It was a critical turning point in Thai politics. We cannot dispute that the media has played a significant role in encouraging political communication and participation in

a fragmented Thai society. Reconciliation would, perhaps, be better in order to create harmony and reduce conflict in Thailand and the media would be an influential tool that could influence opinion and facilitate peace. The media is important, as it is an institution within the structure of society, which is capable of supporting and promoting political development through newspapers, radio, television or other media (Nakata, 2002). Communication through the mass media can influence public opinion and, consequently, has a duty to enlighten and inform in an unbiased manner, in order for the public to make better political choices.

Under the present circumstances in Thailand, there is a need to explore the role of domestic economic politics and how they affect the media. Furthermore, the corporate social responsibilities of media organizations have been studied. Finally, a suitable model for the development and management of the media in Thailand has been identified. This chapter sets the context for the research by providing a background of the study, including a brief history of the Thai media; the rationale of the research; the problem statement; the research aims and objectives; key research questions; a literature review; research methodology; and, finally, the conclusion.

1.1 Research Background

The politics of Thailand is conducted within the framework of a constitutional monarchy; the Prime Minister is the head of government and a hereditary monarch is head of the country. King Rama IX has been the head of state since 1946. He has been the world's longest serving head of state and the longest reigning monarch in Thai history. There are three major independent authorities holding the balance of power: the executive, the legislature and the judiciary. Although he is head of state, the King has little direct power under the constitution. Nevertheless, he is the symbol of the national identity and he unifies Thailand. Additionally, the monarchy has been a respected symbol of moral authority, which has been used to intervene in political crises and influence the government.

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According to the constitution, the prime minister has to be a member of parliament but the cabinet members do not. This study will cover the circumstances from 2006, when there was a bloodless military coup. These circumstances changed the politics and society of Thailand.

This study will also analyze media issues and the way that globalization has impacted the domestic print and electronic media. We also found a similar impact of globalization in other neighboring countries. Since the late 1980s, Thailand and many other countries in South East Asia, such as the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, have undergone a process of liberalization and globalization. The impact of these changes and their link with the global economy is still unfolding, in contrast to another neighboring country - Singapore. The gap between the rich and the poor in these countries has significantly increased due to the globalization process (Griswold, 2000).

The 2006 coup occurred while the former Prime Minister, Thaksin, was about to give a speech at the United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York. There was a conspiracy to create a violent clash to end the long Yellow Shirt protest. Thus, the military seized power on 19 September 2006. Afterwards, a military junta led by General Surayud Chulanont, who was appointed as prime minister, ruled the country. Additionally, there was a significant change in Thai society, including a decrease in confidence from domestic and foreign investors. This was caused by both the unstable political situation and the overall changes in the world economy.

In 2007-08, the Thai economy grew by 0.8%: a rate similar to the previous year (Rosselet-McCauley, 2011). The underlying causes were: (1) the deceleration of growth in the world economy in comparison to the previous year; (2) the decrease in the oil price in the world market; and (3) the unstable government and domestic situation providing little confidence to consumers and investors. As explained above, the Thai

economy witnessed a deepening economic crisis. However, soon after the political change, Thai society divided into two groups: the Yellow Shirts and the Red Shirts.

There have been political discourses regarding several times that the Thai media, including television and newspapers, disseminated information informing the public at large and participated in directing or guiding the community and society. This could have been caused by the nature of Thais and Thai traditions, whereby people tend to believe what they read, or hear from others, rather than taking the time to analyze it for themselves. In the next section, we shall briefly cover the history of the Thai media.

1.2 A Brief History of Thai Media

Dr. Dan Bradley, an American missionary, first established the print medium in Thailand in 1844. He set out the first newspapers in the Thai language, called the *Bangkok Reader* and in English called the *Bangkok Calendar*. However, the two newspapers were only published for a short period, from 1844-45 and from 1847-50, respectively. In the era when Thailand was transformed into a modern nation under the reign of King Rama IV (who ruled from 1851 to 1868) and his son (who later became King Rama VI), the monarchy played an important role in establishing the press. They ordered the establishment of a printing press in Thailand, publishing the Government Gazette named *Ratchakitja*, which was the State's official publication (The World Bank, 2002).

Television broadcasting in Thailand started in 1955, not long after it was established in the West. The first channel was *Channel 4 Bangkhunprom.* It began broadcasting on 24 June 1955, Thailand's National day. Colour broadcasting started in 1969. Presently, there are six free-to-air television stations in Thailand: Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 9, NBT and Thai PBS. Channel 3 was officially launched in 1970 as Thailand's first commercial television station, owned by BEC-TERO Entertainment Public Co. Ltd (BEC-TERO) and Mass Communication Organization Thailand

(MCOT), a government agency. Channel 5, or Royal Thai Army Radio and Television, first broadcast nationwide in 1958 as Thailand's second free-to-air TV station, after Channel 4 Bangkhunprom, owned by the Royal Thai Army.

Channel 7, a sister channel to Channel 5, was established in 1967 and was also owned by the Royal Thai Army. Channel 9, commonly called Modernine TV, is a state-owned free-to-air television network owned and operated by MCOT. NBT and Thai PBS are fully owned by the government. It can be seen that major television stations are owned and controlled by the Royal Thai Army or the government. Hence, the television media in Thailand has limited freedom in presenting news and entertainment. Apart from these, there is only one nation-wide cable TV channel, namely True Vision. There are also 78 locally registered, subscription-based cable networks in the provinces, providing entertainment and local news.

In contrast to the television media, the newspapers are not subject to the Royal Thai Army or government supervision. A single family or a small group of investors owns all print media. There are numerous newspapers in Thailand. They can be categorized into seven groups:

1. Mass-circulation dailies: *Thai Rath, Daily News, Kha Sod, Kom Chad Luek;*
2. Quality dailies: *Matichon, Thai Post, Naew Na;*
3. Thai-language business dailies: *Krungthep Turakij, Post Today, Manager;*
4. English-language dailies: *Bangkok Post, The Nation;*
5. Semi-weekly business newspapers: *Prachachart Turakij*, *Siam Turakij*, Than *Settakij*;
6. Weekly business newspapers: *Krungthep Turakij Biz Week, Manager Weekly;*
7. Weekly newsmagazines: *Matichon Weekly*, *Nation Weekend*.

As mentioned above, when we discuss the role of media in Thailand we will focus on two television media: Channel 7, Channel 3 and the newspapers *Matichon*, *Naewna* and

The Nation. The most popular television channel is Channel 7, negotiating powers to set prices for advertising. Channel 7 is one of the most popular and most commercially successful stations, with just under 50 per cent of the total audience, followed by Channel 3, at just under 30 per cent (AGB, 2014). The three newspapers were chosen to be key informants for in-depth interviews on the political perspective. *Matichon* and *Naewna* are biased towards the Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts, respectively, whereas *The Nation* is considered to be neutral.

1.3 Research Rationale

This study will be significant in a number of ways. It will contribute to the study of the media in Thailand from a political perspective and also to identify strategies for improvement in the future. This section presents the rationale for this research and why the topic has been chosen.

The research concerns the political changes and the use of media communication as an important tool in achieving that change, it also examines why democracy in Thailand could not progress in the same way as it has in Western countries. It argues that democracy can take a number of forms. The theory and practice of democracy depends on the social context of each country. Some societies demonstrate better representation and more freedom for their citizens than others. Before the democratic revolution in Thailand, the constitution of Thailand had not been formally written. All laws originated from the monarch until 1932, when the first written constitution was promulgated.

Furthermore, this research studies the internal and external factors affecting the media to be able to improve and develop Thailand through media communication. Significant obstacles in developing the country have also been examined. We concentrate on the interaction between the media and politics. We are aware that the media is an important mechanism of communication and in driving society; as in the Unites States of America (USA) and other Western countries, such as the United Kingdom (UK), France and

Germany. Additionally, it can provide the people with positive direction. Thus, stakeholders involved in media industries can act in an unbiased way to promote good politics within the society.

The study will analyze how people in media industries participate in developing or destroying the country. The Thai political system has also been studied, in order to understand the relationship between politics and the media. Certain political issues have arisen several times in the past, as can be seen from the coups in recent history. The Yellow and Red shirts have divided the politics and society of Thailand.

As a consequence, this research proposes to find out the significant characteristics of good media and how the quality of media in Thailand could be improved. The effects of the media in Thailand have been determined and empirically investigated in the thesis. Furthermore, we would like to explore why Thai politics has been unstable and how it has affected the media industry. Traditionally, in Thailand, the media organizations, such as newspapers, have been operated as family businesses or by a small group of investors. Apart from the above questions, the study also aims to answer the question of what the future role of media should be and how the media should be managed in order to free it from governmental censorship.

This study is a sincere attempt to understand the role of the media and how it can possibly play a positive role towards building a rich and prosperous Thailand. Institutions like the media do not mean to malign the country and its people. The researcher, having had working experience in media communications, hopes to play a small part in the development of the country via this study.

As we know, the importance of the media varies from place to place. Media such as newspapers or television are most effective in developed countries, such as the USA and the UK, but in the developing countries, such as Thailand, traditional culture is more

important. The media industry in Thailand has been well developed, especially by Southeast Asian standards. However, Thai media has relatively more freedom than other countries in the region. Nevertheless, it cannot be compared to other Western countries. The government and legislature have sometimes demonstrated considerable control over the broadcast media in Thailand and have been effective in persuading people in the community and society to think in a particular way. People and all stakeholders involved in the media should have responsibility within their role.

The Thai media was at a good level of confidence in the past until it was gradually changed in the government of Prime Minister Thaksin and after the coup of 2006. For instance, the media was partly controlled under the government commands because the Prime Minister invested some of media organizations. Additionally, after the coup, the subsequent military-run administration elected administrations to be involved in the media. Consequently, the Thai media suffered from increasing restrictions and censorship at that time. Thus there was less confidence in the media.

As mentioned above, this research targeted the study of the actual reasons for the problems and to help solve these issues for the country's development. During the writing of this thesis, several changes have taken place in Thailand: for example, millions of anti-government protestors took to the streets and Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, had to dissolve the Parliament. The media was heavily criticized for its portrayal of events. This research provides both historical and empirical evidence of the relationship between the Thai media, including television and newspapers, and Thai political phenomena

1.4 Problem Statement

This research primarily focuses on the role of the media and the relationship between the media and politics in Thailand, exploring whether or not the media affects other factors, such as the society and economy. Existing information about how the Thai

media influences society are also considered. As we know, the media plays a critical role in Thai politics. One important factor is that an unstable government can lead to political crisis. This is a risk in every nation, not just Thailand. Daniels et al. (2007) defined political risk as a chance that political decisions, events or conditions in a country will affect the business environment in ways that lead investors to lose some or all of the value of their investment or be forced to accept a lower than projected rate of return.

1.5 Research Aims

There is extensive literature analyzing the relationship between the media and politics in the USA and other Western countries, but little work has been done in Thailand. Thus, this inspires us to study and explore the relationship between the media industry in Thailand and the involvement of the media in politics. Firstly, this research aims to study the role of the media in Thai society. Since information technology came to influence people's lives, there have been a number of new communication channels, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. However, in this research, we concentrate on the more traditional media: television and newspapers.

Secondly, significant factors influencing and involving people are society, economy and politics. As a result, these factors have been studied in the context of the media. During the last two decades, the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has attracted the attention of businesses. Dodd (1932) discussed the responsibilities of managers to society. The media has become an important business through its ability to communicate to a large number of people. Consequently, it should consider how it could help and support society in return. For this research, we found out how media organizations can apply CSR to the current situation and how it should be adapted for the future in a Thai context. Furthermore, we also examined how the media can maintain CSR in the long term. Finally, when we study the media, we can hardly avoid the issue of censorship by the controlling authority. There has been a long history of

government censorship in Thailand. In particular, harassment, manipulation and strict control of political news were common under the former Prime Minister Thaksin's government during 2001-06. It worsened after a military junta overthrew the Thaksin government in a 2006 coup and increased under the former Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva during 2008-11. Hence, we would like to consider the role of censorship in regulating opinion and how the Thai media can improve its role (Government Policy, 2005).

Additionally, we expect to use the model to improve the management of the media industry. The ethics of the media are also essential to our analysis.

The key research questions of the study can be summed up as follows:

- What is the relationship between the media and society in Thailand?
- What are the problems regarding the political conflict in Thailand in terms of the media?
- Can CSR improve the media industry?
- What is a better way to develop and manage the media in Thailand?

The main objectives of the research can be written formally as:
- To study the roles of the media in Thailand in term of stakeholders;
- To identify the social, economic and political factors that affect the media industries in Thailand;
- To explore the role of the media, relating to CSR and the sustainability of CSR in Thailand;
- To determine a suitable model for development and management of the media in Thailand.

1.6 Literature Review

This section will give an overview of the literature related to the topic. A more comprehensive survey of the literature review will be provided in Chapter 2. It begins with introducing the concept of the media as the lens for this research. We shall discuss the stakeholders and related theories in the next section and then the political economy and the media will be presented. Finally, an analysis using CSR will be performed with Thailand as a developing country in South East Asia and also as a member of the Asian Economic Community (AEC). The media industry in Thailand has been gradually growing in importance over the last 10 years. The media is an influential agent in presenting the news, as well as political and economic developments.

Since the military coup in 2006, the media has played an important role in informing society and building opinions about the government and politicians in a very controlled manner. Other stakeholders in Thailand have spread their political propaganda and their concerns and have strengthened their power in Thai society. There has been a great deal of research studying the media and its role. We shall present an overview of the media here and it will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2. In Thailand, we can see that the social interaction of communication should be flexible, not fixed.

Willnat et al. (1992) argued that information is spread through direct personal experiences and structured patterns of social interaction. Weaver (1996) mentioned that the media did not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions through a nexus of mediating factors and influences. While Yang and Stone (2003) suggested that information could be expressed both directly and indirectly from the media, thus the media is not the only source from which people can obtain knowledge of issues or events directly. This is similar to traditional Thai culture, in which word-of-mouth is still influential in society, especially in the community.

In addition, politicians can use the media as an important tool in promoting themselves in elections. For example, Schmitt-Beck's (2003) studied the use of the media in the first all-German election in December 1990 and argued that the media's political reporting, in addition to interpersonal political communication, influenced voters' perceptions and affected the election outcome. In the USA's presidential election of 2008, it was claimed by actor Jon Voight that Obama's success was attributable to the power of the media (Joel, 2014).

One problem of studying the media in Thailand is that a single concept or theory cannot capture the big picture of the influence of the media in Thai politics. To enable us to fully understand the involvement of the media in politics, we shall use a combination of theories dealing with media effects through the research. These include the "agenda setting role" of the media, proposed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), the "two step flow" (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955).

1.6.1 Stakeholders

A brief overview of the concept and definition of stakeholders will be presented here. We shall give more details of the stakeholder in Chapter 2. Originally, the stakeholder concept was employed in the business science literature as a proposal for the strategic management of organizations (Freeman, 1984). This concept may be traced back as far as Adam Smith and his theory of Moral Sentiment. Freeman also suggested that the business organization should be concerned about the interests of other stakeholders in taking strategic decisions. Many researchers have accepted Freeman's stakeholder concept (Donald et al., 1995).

There have been a number of different concepts of stakeholders adopted by researchers. Bryson et al. (2004) identified a total of 66 different concepts of stakeholders. Additionally, Clarkson (1995) proposed three fundamental factors of stakeholders.

These were the organization, the other actors and the nature of the company-actor relationships.

Carroll (1991) described the term stakeholder as "*Those groups or individuals who have a stake, a claim, or an interest in the operations and decisions of the firm*". Additionally, the stake may represent a legal claim, e.g., by an owner, an employee or a customer who has an explicit or implicit contract with an organization. It may be represented by a moral claim, such as when some groups assert a right to be treated fairly at other times.

The concept of media stakeholders has become more important, as the many different participants involved have been increasingly recognized in its development and management. Likewise, Bryson (2004) gave the reason that stakeholder analyses were important because of the "increasingly interconnected nature of the world". He also cited public problems, such as economic development, natural resource management and global warming, amongst others, as encompassing or affecting numerous people, groups and organizations. The term 'stakeholder' in the firm's actions includes such diverse groups as customers, employees, stockholders, the media, governments, professional and trade associations, social and environmental activists, and non-governmental organizations (Lawrence & Weber, 2011).

However, Hardy et al. (2009) argued that stakeholder perceptions enable managers to assess their strategies for effectiveness and relevance to stakeholders. This warrants the utilization of the stakeholder concept as an appropriate lens for analyzing a complex global phenomenon like sustainable development in media organizations. This seems to be borne out by the research findings, in which underdeveloped countries fairly consistently underperform when compared with developed countries across 20 aspects of CSR, measured by the survey. In that survey, Thailand was relatively strong on external aspects, such as child labour and ethics (Crane et al., 2008). Stakeholders may

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also seek social objectives through their choice of investments (Lawrence & Weber, 2011).

1.6.2 Political Economy and the Media

The media and politics are components of society that can be inseparable. In Thailand, they depend on each other indirectly and directly. Besides this, the media has been an important source of conveying information to people in everyday life. However, when issues arise in the country, such as social transition, economic change and political problems, the media is an important tool in connecting them through news and social commentary.

In this study, we focus especially on the relationship between newspapers and TV media, with a particular focus on stakeholders in the politics and the economy of Thailand. The political road of Thailand has not been a smooth one in recent decades with occasional military interference, a corrupted electoral process, and an elected government lacking effectiveness. The media has been one source and a significant component to carry the communication between those issues in society. In particular, during the election campaigns, the media became a vital source of information for both the candidates and the public. The media acted as a connector between them. As shown in the research of Zaller (1999), the media is the one important tool, which can be used by politicians to get their message across in the form of press releases, news conferences or other types of media events across the country. Of course, they would like the media to portray them in a positive light. This is important because often, how people vote depends on the information they receive from the media.

In addition, the media influences and informs people about the events and politics in general. Graber (1991) presented the notion that the impact of the media on elections became a bandwagon for researchers to ride on because it was close to the political mainstream. Furthermore, McQuail (1994) suggested that the researchers could manage

to develop theories regarding the media's effect, but there was no consensus about the nature and media size.

1.6.3 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

As a matter of fact, Asia has been a diverse region from a fundamental point of view. CSR is important, whilst accepting that CSR drivers in Thailand should be different from those of other regions of the world. There have been evident country differences in socio-economic development, political histories, cultural traditions and environmental risks, which all call for close study. Davis (2002) discussed the fact that the media now had a role in society that it had never had before due to the power of technology. During the last two decades, CSR has been an important subject of discussion in the business field and has also drawn attention from the business press. The CSR issue was mentioned for the first time in a Harvard Review article in the 1930s. In that article, Dodd and Merrick (1932) discussed the responsibility of managers to society. Since then, scholars have discussed the relationship between business and society in the context of CSR (Carroll, 1979). Others have analyzed this relationship using stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984).

Davis (1973) defined CSR as: *"The firm's consideration of, and response to, issues beyond the narrow economic, technical, and legal requirements of the firm to accomplish social benefits along with the traditional economic gains which the firm seeks"* (p. 312).

Since that time there have been several different definitions of CSR. Even though there is limited agreement, most definitions underscore the idea that *"business and society are interwoven, rather than distinct identities"* (Wood, 1991, p. 695). Besser (1998) proposed three concepts of CSR: (1) responsibility to consumers, employees, and other shareholders; (2) responsibility to the environment; and (3) responsibility to community development. Crane et al. (2008) described CSR as a paradigm of a "state of

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emergence". There was an important study by Schwartz and Carroll (2003), which proposed three domain concepts of CSR that defined its elements, including economic, legal and ethical obligations, collapsing the fourth dimension of philanthropy into the ethical component. Windsor (2006) also studied three different philosophical approaches along similar dimensions of ethical, economic and the corporate citizenship.

In a similar way, Garriga and Mele (2004) suggested the four dimensions of CSR as being instrument, political, integrative, and ethical theories, including a business' obligations to pursue profits, accept social obligations, grow its business, and embed ethical values. According to the stakeholder theory, the studies indicate that an increase in media attention will be positively associated with increased CSR by firms (Cummings et al., 2000). As powerful social institutions, media companies would do well to engage in some form of issues management, the crux of which is social involvement and responsibility (Heath & Nelson, 1986, p. 246).

Recently, Brown and Forster (2013) extended Adam Smith's work on the Theory of Moral Sentiments in order to answer the question as to how companies should morally prioritize CSR initiatives and stakeholder claims. However, Smith's work was very clear that the moral obligations of business to society began with obligations upholding the perfect rights afforded in its stakeholder relationships, tempered by its obligations to correct any past harms.

1.7 Methodology Research

Social studies show that the actual behaviour of people in society may differ significantly from their responses to research questions (Pager & Quillian, 2005). The aim of this research is to explore the model of management and development in the media industry in Thailand. Thus, qualitative methodology is appropriate for this research, in order to convey information via media stakeholder's key informants. Two research paradigms, which influence the qualitative research, are *positivism* and

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phenomenology. Positivists assumed that truth was measurable with statistical precision, while the phenomenologists ignored the complexity of reality in its context (Patton, 1990). Positivists and phenomenologists took on different kinds of problems and explored different kinds of answers in the research; their research required different methodologies to maintain credibility (Jankowicz et al., 2005). The phenomenology paradigm has been applied in this research, concerning the understanding of the phenomenon of media in Thai society and the meaning of issues concerned with society, economics and politics through the role of the media in Thailand.

Additionally, the research has focused on the management and development of the media industry. In-depth interviews and face-to-face interaction with key informants have been used in the collection of the data. A total of 13 interviewees were separated into three groups: news producer, and academic reader, respectively. We applied content analysis in analyzing the data and employed triangulation in facilitating the validation of data through cross-verification of those interviewees. Triangulation has been an important tool in supporting the research data. Denzin (1978) defined triangulation as a process by which the researcher can guard against accusations that a study's findings are simply an artifact of a single method, a single source, or a single investigator's biases.

1.8 Significance of the Study

After World War II, Thailand and Japan were similar countries in terms of structure, royal dominance and resources. After two decades, Thailand was still a developing country, while Japan had moved forward in areas such as economy, society and technology. As a consequence, Thailand fell behind. The media has played an important role in society in disseminating information to the public and giving knowledge about occurrences in society and the country. The media has allowed the public to exchange learning and forms of entertainment and enhance their life experiences. Communication technology has developed rapidly. The media influences

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our everyday life and social interaction. It allows people to communicate more easily, more quickly and through more channels, by means of the printing press or social media. Thailand has been frustrated by political turmoil in recent years.

The media has been a significant tool of communication in driving the country forward. Politicians and investors have interfered in the media industry, gaining benefit for themselves. But it has often been used in the wrong way in politics, business and government organizations. The media has been used as an instrument of power through the military, through political groups and through the elite, to seek benefit for them. We wish to carry out management and development, via legal acts and a practical approach, in order to improve their behaviour and the country.

This research has been significant in analyzing the media relating to political issues in Thailand. We have tried to unmask any anomaly that a biased media may be influenced and controlled by, such as by different owners, and to understand the role of the political economy and CSR, which could be an influence on the development and management of the media. Additionally, we examined the CSR of media in terms of developing society. This thesis has contributed to the responsibility of the role of the media stakeholders relating to political, economic and social factors. The study attempts to contribute to the knowledge of the news producer, media regulation body and academic reader. It discovers the solutions of management and development of media. Qualitative methodology was utilized in the in-depth interviews. Another significance is that the organizations were in Thailand.

1.9 Conclusion

This research intends to study politics and the media in Thailand. The context of political conflicts from 2006 until the present will be raised in the research in order to understand the involvement and influence of the media in communication in Thai society. Thai politics has been unstable and frustrated by internal and external factors. In addition, we shall present a brief study of the Thai political system from the past until the present day, especially after the coup in 2006. The society, economy and politics have been significant factors affecting Thailand during this transitional period. For this reason, these factors have been important influences on the media. We also focus on the media stakeholders and how they perform their role and support or help, directly or indirectly. To illustrate this, the conflict in society between the Yellow Shirts and the Red Shirts is used to illustrate the role of the media in a social and political context.

There has been a revolution within the media industry in Thailand. There are several units controlling the media in Thailand, such as the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), the National Press Council of Thailand (NPCT), the News Broadcasting Council of Thailand (NBCT) and the Thai Journalist Association (TJA). However, those organizations do not always perform their role freely without invisible influences. Consequently, we have focused on this topic and have proposed the idea of setting up a middle unit to control the media. Finally, we shall evaluate the Thai media and explore a suitable model for future improvement and development.

1.10 Organization of the Thesis

Earlier in this Chapter, a brief overview of the research was provided, together with the research background, research rationale and statement of the problem, research aims and objectives. The thesis is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter 2 reviews the studies conducted on the effects of the media and politics. The political economy and media is introduced in the first section. It will be pointed out that the economy and the media are inseparable in society. The concept of CSR and stakeholders is also explained in this chapter. Then, we shall present the concept of the media and the power elite. The media crisis in Thailand will be presented in the last section.

To understand the context of politics and how it has impacted Thai society, it is necessary to study its history. Chapter 3 presents a history of the Thai media, Thai politics and the relationship between them. The history of the Thai media during the political crisis and up to the current situation in Thailand will be explored. This will focus on the history of newspapers and television. Additionally, case studies relating to Thai media and politics will be discussed.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology used in the study and the use of qualitative data. It begins by outlining the research approach, including the concept of the research, the type of research, and the research quality. The next section presents the interview as an instrument of research and other issues that are important for interviews. Those issues are interview questionnaires, in-depth interviews, the conduct of interviews, and the ethics of the interview. Additionally, other important topics of research, such as challenging quality research and primary data collection, are explored in the chapter. Secondary data is explained in the last section.

Chapter 5 presents the qualitative data collected and also points out the work and opinions of key informants from significant stakeholders. The stakeholder groups of news producers, media controlling organizations and academic readers are explained. The qualitative data gathered from informants from the three groups will be presented.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis of qualitative data. The analysis examines: (1) the role of the media in Thailand; (2) factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics; (3) CSR in the media and sustainable practical approaches for implementing CSR; and (4) the model for developing and managing the media in Thailand. Each topic will be considered from the three perspectives of producer, regulation body and academic reader, respectively.

Chapter 7 will conclude the key findings of this study and summarize the value of the concept of the development and management model of media in Thailand. The contribution of this study will also be included in the chapter. Finally, this chapter will provide recommendations about a practical direction for media stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2. Introduction

This chapter aims to survey and critically examine the academic literature on the media related to my research questions and the key objectives of this study. It will review the political and economic influences and identify the concepts of stakeholders and corporate social responsibility. There is a vast amount of literature available on the effect of the media on politics, especially in Western developed countries, such as the USA and Europe. Early studies on the effectiveness of the media were conducted at the beginning of the twentieth century.

As we know, the media has been a significant tool of communication in the community and society, in particular, in the large developed countries of the world. Some issues relating to communication brought attention to people under different conditions and some effects (Crotty, 1991). This chapter reviews the literature on economics and corporate social responsibility. The first two sections will introduce the political economy and the media and CSR.

The relationship between CSR and the stakeholder are inseparable. The concept of the stakeholder will be discussed in the next section. Then, we shall present the concept of the media and the power elite. Finally, the media crisis in Thailand will be presented in the last section. Note that the review of the literature about media and politics in this chapter will focus on general concepts, using Western countries. A more detailed account of the media and politics of Thailand will be discussed in Chapter 3.

2.1 Political Economy of the Media

The economy has been the important factor in driving the development of a nation, while the media has been a significant communication tool in societies. The economy and the media are inseparable factors of society. The political economy spans a wide range of academic disciplines. First and foremost, a commitment to the social totality means understanding the connections between the political and the economic. This broadly based effort to examine the wider social totality does not receive complete intellectual support. For example, those authors aligned with streams of postmodernist and post structuralize thinking, reject, sometimes emphatically, the idea of social totality. Across the range of differences within these views, one finds agreement that the term "society" is an attempt to apply a unity in discourse to something fundamentally divided and disconnected (Mosco, 1996).

The political economy has a very long historical tradition and can be defined in different ways (Gray et al., 1995, p. 52). Jackson (1982) describes political economy theory as the study of the relationship between the power and the goals of power wielders and the productive exchange system. Mainstream economists tend to ignore the relationship of power to wealth and neglect to include an analysis of the power of structures to control the market. Social movements are particularly important for a political economy of communication because they have influenced the development of the means and content of communication.

In facing up to the inevitable question of how to organize internal and external communication, all of the major social movements have developed communication strategies and policies. The political economy for the media itself has contributed to the formation of social movements organized principally around media production and policy. The political economy is a major perspective in communication research.

Since the 1940s, the approach has guided the work of scholars around the world and its global expansion continues today (McChesney et al., 2007). Additionally, the political economy offers another reason for avoiding communication essentialism. Although there is understandable tension over this, political economists of communication have sought to *decenter the media,* even as they have concentrated on investigating their economic, political, and other material constituents. "Decentering" the media, means viewing systems of communication as integral to fundamental economic, political, social, and cultural processes in society.

The political economy approach generally begins with a focus on the ownership and control of the production of the communication process by examining the growth of the business and its link to the wider political economy. The growth of a mass circulation press, the spread of national telecommunication systems, and, more importantly, the development of radio and TV broadcasting, were central elements in the mix that made up specific forms of mass consumption. Political economy studies also grew in response to the expansion of the state as a producer, distributor, consumer, and regulator of communication. Much of this activity arose from pressures to manage the conflicting demands of growing domestic and international business. The result can be found in the role of the state in expanding government intelligence, information gathering, and propaganda, broadcasting, and telecommunication systems. In particular, the relationship between the military and the media, telecommunications and technology has occupied several generations of political economists (Mosco et al., 1989). However, the political instability reduces economic growth, but a lack of economic growth creates instability within the political regime as well (Jong-A-Pin, 2009).

Proponents of a cultural studies view have rejected the political economic approaches as economic, totalizing, or simply derivative of the outmoded Marxism of *Capital* (Baudrillard, 1975). One can observe this in some of the communications carried out from the cultural studies perspective (Berland & Hall, 1992). Recent work in the

political economy of communication has also taken an interest in exploring continuities between these perspectives (Murdock et al., 1989).

In the developed countries, research about trade policy had been focused on a bottom-up process, by identifying economic preferences of domestic groups. There had been little analysis for the developing countries. Hicks et al. (2014) analyzed how economic and political variables influenced Costa Rican voters in a referendum on Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), an international trade agreement. Theories about trade policy were needed to take into account top-down political factors, along with economic interests. There had been uncertainty surrounding trade policy and the complexity of trade agreements thus political elites could have an important impact on public attitudes towards trade. Political elites could apply strategies involving both communication and organizational resources to reinforce the link between voters' positions and their economic interests.

The Thai concept called the "sufficiency economy" has been famous in Thailand. It is an economic model based on the development projects of Thailand's king. The sufficiency economy concept played an important role in justifying the 2006 coup, which deposed Thaksin. From the 2006 coup, leaders claimed that they were returning Thailand to a sufficiency economy and they employed it to contrast the policies with Thaksin , who was considered as a reckless, arrogant capitalist (Kate, 2006). Noy (2011) examined the model in three perspectives. First, the origins and principles of the sufficiency economy were analyzed as a model for Buddhist economics. Second, some possible political uses and misuses of the sufficiency economy discourse were also critically analyzed. Finally, he examined the sufficiency economy in relation to Islamic finance and Gandhian economics.

Freedom of the media has been involved in political economy in terms of media ownership. In particular, the issue of media reform was highlighted again. Even though

this issue has been discussed for a long time, it has been unclear in practice. The question for the reform is how diversity could happen at the level of structure, ownership, and content within the media itself (Seapa, 2013).

2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

CSR is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. It has also been referred to as corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, social performance, or sustainable responsible business. As mentioned in Chapter 1, CSR was used for the first time in 1930s by the proponents of stakeholder theory (Freeman, 1984). However, the term CSR became popular in the 1960s and has remained widely used to highlight the legal and moral responsibility of corporations.

In the following section, a number of definitions of CSR will be presented. We will address why companies have considered it important (why they should do it), what the benefits are, which companies are concerned about it and which are not. In a sense, it is CSR, which is taking up the challenge of providing an understanding of: what does it mean? Who does it? Why do they have to? The goal is to trace the evolution of CSR as a concept, or definitional construct, and come to appreciate what it has meant in the past and what it still means today.

Bowen (1953) gave a definition of social responsibility, referring to the obligations of businessmen to pursue policies, to make decisions, or to follow lines of action, which are desirable, in terms of the values of our society. Thus, we could call Bowen the *"Father of Corporate Social Responsibility"* (Carroll, 1999). According to Davis (1960), social responsibility referred to business decisions and actions that were at least partially beyond the direct economic or technical interests of the firm. He argued that social responsibility was a nebulous idea but should be seen in a managerial context. Davis asserted that some socially responsible business decisions could be justified by a

long, complicated process of reasoning, whereby the socially responsible actions may have a good chance of returning economic gain to the firm in the long term.

In this way, socially responsible actions ultimately had an economic benefit. Davis became well known for his emphasis on the relationship between social responsibility and business power. He set forth his now-famous "Iron Law of Responsibility", which is that social responsibilities in business need to be commensurate with their social power.

Frederick (1960) argued that social responsibility meant that businessmen should oversee the operation of an economic system in such a way that production and distribution should enhance the socio-economic welfare of society. While McGuire (1963), defined that social responsibility extends beyond economic and legal obligations, he did not clarify what, exactly, these obligations were. Additionally, David and Blomstrom (1966) argued that social responsibility could be referred to as a person's obligation to consider the effects of their decisions and actions on the whole social system. Businesses apply social responsibility when they consider the needs and interests of others in society, who may be affected by the business' actions. The term "businessman" had been used until the mid-1960s.

Then, Davis (1967) argued that the substance of social responsibility arises from concern for the ethical consequences of one act that might affect the interests of others. In the same year, Walton (1967) gave the new concept of social responsibility as recognition of the relationship between corporations and society and realized that top managers must keep such relationships in mind, as the corporation and the related groups pursue their respective goals. Johnson (1971) argued that a socially responsible firm is one where the managerial staff balances a multiplicity of interests.

Instead of striving only for larger profits for its stockholders, responsible enterprises also take into account the needs of employees, suppliers, dealers, local communities and the nation as a whole. It is worth noting that Johnson was hinting at the possibility of a stakeholder approach, as he referenced a "multiplicity of interests" and actually names several of these specific interests. With the varied definitions of CSR, Manne and Wallich (1972) argued that any working definition requires three elements. To qualify as a socially responsible corporate action, a business expenditure or activity must be one where the marginal return to the corporation is less than the return from some alternative expenditure. They argued that CSR was more than a conduit for individual largess (?). Their incorporation of volunteerism into the definition of CSR has been carried forward into many modern definitions of CSR but this, which is "purely voluntary" and that, which is in response to social norms. Three basic activities are involved in the exercise of corporate responsibility: (1) the setting of objectives; (2) the decision to pursue a given objective; and (3) the financing of these objectives (Manne & Wallich, 1972).

Carroll (1979) proposed a four-part definition of CSR. The basic argument was that, for managers or firms to engage in CSR, they needed to have: (1) a basic definition of CSR; (2) an understanding/enumeration of the issue for which a social responsibility existed (or, in modern terms, stakeholders to whom the firm had a responsibility, relationship, or dependency); and (3) a specification of the philosophy of responsiveness to the issues. He also proposed the definition of CSR as the social responsibility of business encompassing the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time. However, Jones (1980) argued that CSR is based on the notion that corporations have an obligation to constituent groups in society other than stakeholders in the firm, and beyond that prescribed by law and union contract. First, the coercive force of law or union contract is not voluntary.

Second, the obligation is a broad one, extending beyond the traditional duty to shareholders to other societal groups, such as customers, employees, suppliers, and neighboring communities. CSR is important for organizations, such as business firms. Later on, Carroll (1983) suggested that CSR should involve the conduct of a business so that it is economically profitable, law abiding, ethical and socially supportive. To be socially responsible, then, means that profitability and obeying the laws are foremost conditions to discussing the firm's ethics and the extent to which it supports the society in which it exists with contributions of money, time and talent. CSR is composed of four parts: economic, legal, ethical and voluntary or philanthropic.

There are three definitional and typological tracks along which analysis of corporate social performance has travelled over the years: firstly, *"business ethics"* and *"corporate social responsibility",* then *"corporate social responsiveness".* Managers and policy analysts used them to define and evaluate business policies and practices in value-oriented terms. Business ethics, corporate social responsibility and corporate social responsiveness can be envisioned as three overlapping circles sharing common conceptual space, yet possessing distinctive intellectual properties. Notions of ethical, responsible and responsive vary with time, place and circumstance.

In the 1990s, the CSR concept served as the base point, building block, or point-of-departure for other related concepts and themes, many of which embraced CSR-thinking and were quite compatible with it. CSR, stakeholder theory, business ethics theory, and corporate citizenship were the major themes that took centre stage in the 1990s. Again, Carroll (1991) argued that for CSR to be accepted by the conscientious business person, it should be framed in such a way that the entire range of business responsibilities is embraced. It is suggested here that four kinds of social responsibilities constitute total CSR: economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic. Furthermore, these four categories or components of CSR might be depicted as a pyramid. To be sure, all of these kinds of responsibilities have always existed to some extent, but it has only been in recent years

that ethical and philanthropic functions have taken a significant place. He summarized that the CSR firm should strive to make a profit and obey the law.

Besser (1998) identified the three main areas of CSR: (1) responsibility to consumers, employees and other shareholders: (2) responsibility to the environment; (3) responsibility to community development. While Abrams (2009) suggested that CSR was designed to meet, or exceed, the ethical, legal, commercial and public expectations that society has of business. CSR then became known throughout the 1980s and 1990s as the concept of the triple bottom line: people, planet and profit.

Within this framework, companies have wider responsibilities than simply to make money for their shareholders. Owen (2003) argued that there was increasing pressure on corporations to communicate the social and environmental effects of an organization's economic actions, both to particular interest groups within society and to society at large. These changes in the business environment were driven by globalization and accelerated by the public trust in business. In the world of business, companies need to perform well to earn a profit to survive in society and the country.

Competition in business means that they can produce higher quality products for cheaper prices. In a similar way, media organizations are significant businesses; they tend to gain most benefit from their advertising. However, there has been no evidence that journalistic integrity is a key competitive feature. People or readers choose their news source on the basis of interesting scoops. CSR can be an important part of increasing satisfaction with the product and service. A discussion of CSR has become more important and is playing a significant role for businesses in modern society. It is as important for the media as it is for businesses. The media also plays an important role in promoting social responsibility. According to Monshipouri et al. (2003), the relationship between business, society and the media has significantly transformed social relations, as well as political, economic and legal structures.

The idea of the corporation as a legal function without responsibilities is no more sacred or accurate than the idea of unfettered state sovereignty. If media organizations are like other businesses, then there will be no difference to other industries. However, Berg (2005) posited that the concern of a monopoly media is a critical issue with ramifications far beyond the functioning of a business. In the international context, media conglomerates are heading towards being able to quickly react to ever-changing demand. Criticism of the media has not been limited to academic circles. A 2003 poll (Healy, 2005), conducted by the Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press, reported that 66% of Americans see news reports as biased, compared with 53% in 1985. Also, 32% of the respondents judged news organizations to be immoral; an increase from 13% in 1985. Media companies might appreciate the fact that they "cannot fool all of the people all the time" (Heath & Nelson, 1986, p. 246). No company can ignore public opinion and media companies are no exception. With respect to their CSR communication, media companies stand to risk their credibility and reputation. They need to have a better balance between "doing well" and "doing good". Consequently, we can conclude that customers or readers give importance to the CSR of media organizations, building relationships with consumers and other stakeholders. If companies align themselves with a cause that people care about, they will strike a meaningful chord in people's hearts and minds.

CSR is no longer a term used only in corporate boardrooms. Thai consumers are concerned about what this means for Thailand. If a product can be presented so that it has a positive impact on Thai society, it is believed that Thai people would do the right thing for their country, even if it meant paying a slightly higher price at the checkout counter. Apart from the above reviewed literature, there have been several studies on CSR and the media. Chaudhri (2007) argued that the media's role in CSR research has been limited by three factors.

Firstly, the media was a channel for corporations to communicate their social obligations. Secondly, the media was a guardian of people's trust and an auditor of corporate actions. Finally, the media was a stakeholder for the corporation itself. In addition, he concludes that no study has looked at the profound impact of the media on society. As a result, the big media corporations have escaped any examination of their own accountability and responsibility. To sum up, his study was the first investigation of the social obligations of media industries located in the USA. Globalization has resulted in positive outcomes for media corporations in the past two decades. As Herman and McChesney (1997) have shown, information flow, knowledge sharing and linkages among people have spread across the globe. They described this rapid dissemination of the popular culture. Next, Champlin and Knoedler (2002) stated that the volume of available information had increased, while the cost of delivering the news to the average citizen had been reduced. However, Chaudhri (2007) argued that, while these developments were positive, they also had some unwanted consequences. There have been a large number of studies into the political economy of CSR in recent years. For example, Guthrie and Parker (1990) examined the annual reports for a BHP Billition limited company for 100 years to ascertain whether the pursuit of organizational legitimacy was a primary rationale for the disclosure of the effects of actions by the company on the societies where they were operating.

They discovered that "*management had a predisposition towards selective disclosure policies, suppressing information on some major social impact events*" (Gray et al., 1996, p. 158). Besides this, the main theme of political economy theory is that political, economic and social contexts are inseparable and should all be considered in CSR disclosure research (Guthrie & Parker, 1990). Williams (1999) used a political economy analysis to interpret voluntary CSR disclosure provided by organizations (356 listed companies) in annual reports operating in seven Asian-Pacific nations (Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia). He concluded that the socio-political and economic systems of nations interact to sharpen

the perception that organizations, when disclosing CSR, voluntarily meet social expectations as well as the requirements of government regulation to preserve their own self-interest.

Recently, two core CSR theories, such as stakeholder theory and Carroll's CSR pyramid, have been redrawn, enhancing their relevance for small business. This study was done by the application of the ethic of care, informed by the value of feminist perspectives and the extant empirical research on small business social responsibility. She (Spence, 2014) suggested that the expanded versions of core theory had wider relevance, value and implications beyond the small firm context. The theorization of small business social responsibility enabled engagement with the mainstream of CSR research, as well as making a contribution to small business studies in scholarly, policy, and practice terms (Spence, 2014).

A number of researchers claim CSR leads to positive employee attitudes and work behaviour, while previous research suggests that CSR improves employee loyalty, motivation, satisfaction, and commitment and employee creativity. Brammer et al. (2015) discussed the fact that CSR has an impact on employee creativity, which is contingent upon the corporate ability of a local firm, such as producing and delivering its products or services. Not only can corporate ability influence employee organizational identification, but it can also affect how employees react to CSR. Additionally, they found strong support for their arguments from the test within a sample of professional workers in the telecommunications sector in Spain. While Money et al. (2015) reviewed the contemporary studies of CSR from the literature of business and society development.

Studies in the past achieved the defining and measuring of the concepts of CSR and promoting the notions of CR, sustainability and corporate citizenship, rather than the social aspects of CSR. They proposed that the impacts of the economy, society and

environment for individuals, groups, and organizations could be better understood if they are viewed in terms of psychological mechanisms at the level of the individual who cause these outcomes. About the CSR in Thai media, Paireepairit (2013) discussed media ethics should be social responsibility, the public advantage and neutrality.

To sum up, the term CSR has been used by many researchers, such as Bowen (1953), Davis (1960), Frederick (1960), McGuire (1963), David and Blomstrom (1966), Walton (1967), Freeman (1984), Brammer, He, and Mellahi (2015) and Money et al. (2015). CSR broadly means the process of assessing an organization's impact on society and evaluating the responsibilities of that organization. It begins with an assessment of a business and identification of their stakeholders. The stakeholder includes the social environment and communities. Even though CSR was applied in many organizations, it was not popular until it had been widely used in the 1960s in the studies of legal and moral responsibility of corporations. As the media has increased in significance in society, CSR has become important as a communication tool for media organizations.

2.3 Stakeholders

Stakeholders in this research are groups or organizations that affect or can be affected by an organization's actions. As this study is about the media, it is necessary to identify the media stakeholders. Stakeholders in this research are news producers, media regulatory bodies and academic readers. The audience of readers and viewers is also an important stakeholder to be considered. Mass media originally meant newspapers. According to the "free press theory", freedom of the press is a critical link supporting individual freedom and modern democracy, as the "fourth estate" and a conduit for the voice of the people (Friedman & Miles, 2006).

Freeman first introduced the concept of the stakeholder in the business science literature in 1984. His definition of a stakeholder was any group or individual who can affect, or is affected by, the achievement of the objectives of organizations (Freeman, 1984,

p. 46). Clarkson (1995) defined the stakeholder as a person or group that has, or claims to have, ownership, rights, or interests in a corporation and its activities, past, present and future. Gray (1997) considered that a stakeholder is someone with rights to the accounts that the organization has in order to consider them in his interests. Roberts (1992) suggested that the stakeholder could include shareholders, employees, customers, creditors, suppliers, public interest groups and government bodies.

Gray et al. (1996) argued that stakeholders were even broader, including future generations and non-human life. Evan and Freeman (1998) elaborated on the concept of stakeholder to encompass an organization being thought of as a grouping. Top-level managers are thought of as the focal group, charged with fulfilling the role of stakeholder management. Rowley (1997) presented a network theory of stakeholder influences and recognized that stakeholders were likely to have direct relations with one another, not just with the organization. Social network theory has been used to analyze the interdependence of stakeholders and how their position in the network influences their opportunities, constraints and behaviour.

Freeman (1983) stated that the important question was why those groups who can influence the organization should be stakeholders. Strategic management literature suggests a direction for the organization. Effective stakeholders, who can influence an organization's direction, should be considered in the strategic management process. Thus, previously non-effective groups, or individuals, are able to influence the actions of the organization on a day-to-day basis. Hence, organizations have become more sensitive to groups who can make a change to the direction of the organization, and they are also to turn new "external change" into internal changes. Effective strategic managers must deal with these groups that can influence the organization. At the same time, to be effective in the long run, managers must deal with those groups and individuals, which they can influence. Ullman (1985) applied stakeholder theory as the basis for a framework, which was developed from the strategic management theory

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proposed by Freeman (1984). He also suggested a way to explain why corporations engage in social performance and social disclosure in the framework. Additionally, Ullman discussed that the power of a stakeholder to affect corporate management was a function of the stakeholder's degree of control over the resources required by the company. In other words, stakeholders received their power from being able to control the resources required by the company with the aim of operating from the resource dependence perspective.

Roberts (1992) employed stakeholder theory in his study to empirically test a stakeholder analysis of the determinants of CSR disclosure. Some evidence was found to support the stakeholder approach to analyze corporate social decisions. In 1995, Donaldson and Preston proposed a concept of instrumental stakeholder theory, which was based around the notion that, if managers treated stakeholders in line with the stakeholder concept, then the organization would be more successful or more likely to be sustainable. Gray et al. (1995a) addressed the way that stakeholder theory was typically involved with a view of the world from the perspective of the management of an organization.

In addition, the media could be a double-edged sword, which could not be perfectly controlled by organizations or stakeholder groups (Friedman & Miles, 2006). Readers or audiences are important stakeholders in the media industry.   There has been a presupposition that the public would only buy papers that reflected their views and this would align the private interests of owners to the public good and act as a check on the power of the government (Thompson, 1995, p. 238). Stakeholders could be intermediaries, as well as mediators, facilitators and campaigners in particular roles in the media (Rowley, 1997). Management is primarily concerned with developing and evaluating the approval of corporate strategic decisions for groups whose support is required for the corporation to continue to exist. However, stakeholder theory was

typically concerned with how the organization manages its stakeholders (Gray et al., 1997).

Moreover, Smith et al. (2005) found that companies from countries where there was a stronger emphasis on social issues had a stakeholder orientation, compared with those from countries with weaker emphasis on social issues. The media affected the flow of information, which may then indirectly affect the flow of material resources between the parties by acting on identity and ideas, e.g., by removing public support (Friedman & Miles, 2006). The media appeared to be primarily interested in bad news. Good, happy stories of effective, efficient, or even perfect stakeholder management did not sell newspapers (Friedman & Miles, 2006).

Stakeholder groups used the media to take their messages across to other stakeholders and to the government (Friedman & Miles, 2006). The effect of this trend has been to make the stakeholder relations of organizations more visible (Friedman & Miles, 2006). Another effect is the attention the media has given to a number of cases of poor stakeholder management and subsequent attempts by many large corporations to show that they are actively working to manage their stakeholder relations (Friedman & Miles, 2006). The above discussions lead to the conclusion from stakeholder theory that it is the relative power of the stakeholder involved and the existing economic conditions that determine how CSR is presented.

CSR is part of the dialogue between a business organization and its stakeholders (Gray et al., 1995a), with management using CSR as a medium for engaging in this management of stakeholders, in order to gain the support and approval of a range of stakeholders that can influence a corporation's policies and, ultimately, profitability (Adler & Milne, 1997).

Swift et al. (2001) argued that CSR was important in understanding how the organization viewed and treated its stakeholders. CSR became more important as the need to keep employees, customers and investors on board increased. Corporate social reporting was one way of engaging with the diverse range of stakeholders' influence in modern corporations. Nevertheless, Jones (1995) discussed that the practical integration of stakeholder theory and CSR has remained arguably embedded in the instrumentalist approach to stakeholder theory that posits that CSR activities are ultimately driven by financial gain.

There has been some progress on the integration of stakeholder theories and CSR. One example is the work of Michell et al., (1997). They proposed a stakeholder salience model with three dimensions of legitimacy, power and urgency. These dimensions were designed to identify the definitive "stakeholder" and ranked all others as lower on the scale, with the lowest being "dormant" stakeholders. Moral elements could be found in each of the dimensions to give some normative applications. In another example, Phillips (2003) suggested the notion of "stakeholder legitimacy" and determined the conditions for normative legitimacy claims of stakeholders in the organization. CSR is said to "exacerbate the problem of capitalism and ethics" under the stakeholder theory, when it is added to the financial commitments and responsibilities of a business (Parmar et al., 2010, p. 413).

Apart from the CSR applied in organizations, stakeholder theory is one of the major, if not the most frequently used, approach in social, environmental and sustainability management research (Montiel & Delgado-Ceballos, 2014). Similarities and dissimilarities between stakeholder theory and sustainability management were examined, based on the analysis a conceptual framework (Horisch et al., 2014). The analysis was developed to increase the applicability and the application of stakeholder theory in sustainability management. Three challenges of managing stakeholder relationships for sustainability have been identified: they were strengthening the

particular sustainability interests of stakeholders, creating mutual sustainability interests based on these particular interests, and empowering stakeholders to act as intermediaries for nature and sustainable development (Horisch et al., 2014). Additionally, Fernandez-Feijoo et al., (2014) discussed that transparency was a quality of corporate social responsibility communication, which enhanced the relationship between the investors and the company. They analyzed whether the transparency of the sustainability reports was affected by the relationship of companies in different industries with their stakeholders. They found that the pressure of the stakeholders, such as customers, clients, employees and the environment improved the quality of transparency and this transparency was affected by ownership, along with size and global region.

2.4 Media and Politics

Media and mass communications are inseparable components of modern society. The media is a subset of mass communication. The history of mass communication is not very long, even so, several forms of mass media have been developed over the years and have made a tremendous impression on technological, political, economic, social and cultural trends. A history of media will be provided in this section. The related study of the media and politics will be considered the following section.

Mass communication has been defined as communication that can reach a large number of people. An earlier development, along with technological advances and social change, helped spark the demand and innovation that characterizes today's mass media. Newspapers are considered to be the oldest mass medium. The first technological innovation was the printing press, which, in 1456, enabled the circulation of news and opinions beyond word of mouth. A worldwide race to add pictures then ensued, with the creation of television, which is considered to be one of the most important inventions of the Twentieth Century. Television and satellite communications were developed in the latter half of the Twentieth Century. The newest mass medium is the Internet, which is still revolutionizing communications.

Each new medium emerged to supplement and compete with established, traditional media. Trends included specialization, globalization, consolidation and convergence. During the industrial revolution, advances in education and transportation, as well as an increase in leisure time and urbanization, helped spur reader demand and the growth of newspapers, books and magazines. As the public demand for information and entertainment grew, technological innovations paved the way for the creation of the electronic media of the Twentieth Century. Satellite communications and the Internet are now among the foundations of today's information age, sparked by the demand for even more channels of communication.

The media defines the world through news, commentary and discussions. It determines what gains prominence and what recedes into the background, what is included and what is excluded. In addition to providing a "window on the world", offering selective perspectives, the media also signifies and interprets. It provides an explicit framework of explanation, as well as tacit understanding, based on associations of ideas - evocative images, "natural" chains of thought. It also furnishes codes that label and classify, for example, by distinguishing between the normal and deviant, the natural and unnatural. The media both maps the social world and explains its workings. In brief, the media is not simply a palimpsest, bearing the diverse imprints of resourceful, playful audiences. The media can persuade, change and mobilize.

However, the principle way in which the media influences the public is not thorough campaigning and overt persuasion, but through routine representations of reality. This power of definition influences the public understanding of the world and, in indirect and contingent ways, public attitudes and behaviour (Edward & Chomsky, 2002). The media has had an enormous impact on the social, economic and political trends of every country, including Thailand. Media advertising becomes a vital element of the capitalist economic system in shaping political systems and promoting democracy. On the other

hand, governments of most countries have tried to exert several levels of control over the media. At this point, the media has been blamed for misleading people, especially with political propaganda and advertising (Edward & Chomsky, 2002).

McQuail (1969) introduced the concept of the media as mass communications that comprise the institutions and techniques by which specialized groups employ technological devices (press, radio, firms, etc.) to disseminate symbolic content to large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences. The history of the media, as described above, has focused on the societal, economic and political perspectives on the change of media. We shall give more details here about the relationship between the media and politics. The involvement between the media and politics may be complicated, yet simple, because they depend on each other and are inseparable. As can be seen in the political society, politicians need the help of the media to carry their messages across to the public and the media needs to rely on the politicians for news and information in order to undertake its role.

To make their relationship more interesting, the public needs to be part of the equation because these factors interact on a daily basis. The importance of the relationship between the media and politics was introduced in Zaller (1999). In the UK, during the nineteenth century the prestige and influence of press proprietors increased as a consequence of the growing circulations they commanded and an increased measure of political antinomy. Government ministers assiduously cultivated leading proprietors and editors (Anon, 1935, 1939 and Hindle, 1937), and a growing number of them entered Parliament. Their increased political weight was reflected in the substantial legal privileges awarded to the press during the period 1868-88 (Lee, 1976). At the same time, the role of the press was widely reinterpreted as Boyce (1978) discussed, to establish for newspapers a "claim for a recognized and respectable place in the British political system". The growth of the press as a mass medium was accompanied by increased concentration of ownership, giving leading press magnates ultimate control

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over vast aggregate circulations. The character of the British press changed during the twentieth century.

An increasing number of newspapers became more loosely connected to political parties and offered, relatively speaking greater bipartisan coverage of politics than before (Seymour-Ure, 1977). The popular press also became more entertainment oriented, with some papers roughly halving their coverage of public affairs as a proportion of editorial space between 1936 and 1976 (Curran et al., 1980). The media conferred legitimacy on political parties by giving prominence to the parliamentary process. The media publicity given to general elections was also crucially important in enabling parties to mobilize their supporters to go to the polls and in reviewing the legitimacy of the democratic process. However, the decline of the old party press, the rise of television as a bipartisan medium of communication and the development of media anti-partisanship, also wreaked the political parties (Curran, 2002).

In the USA, the media has affected American politics for a long time. For instance in Zaller (1999), it can be inferred from the former president Lyndon Johnson's message when he answered the television reporter about what had changed in politics over the years. He mentioned that the media was the main reason for the change in American politics. Thus, we can see that the relationship between the media and politics of the USA has impacted politics for a long time. According to the media, the role it plays is to make sure that people in society receive the information they deserve. The media has to play its role in the democratic system at the same time. Furthermore, the media's role has often been affected by other factors, such as social and economic issues. For example, the USA Watergate scandal happened under the investigation of media coverage, such as *The Washington Post*, *Time*, and *The New York Times* (Dickinson et al., 1973). In almost every country, the media industry has been a highly competitive market. Consequently, most media companies rely on advertisers for survival. In some countries, particularly developing countries, the media is owned or funded by the

government. The study by Herman and Chomsky (2002) showed that media ownership and advertising are affected media content, as they had to give recognition to the views that were important to their sponsors.

This denies public access to the full facts behind some issues. In other words, some media organizations follow the guidance of their owners and advertisers. They actually have no freedom in their roles. Moreover, some media companies have to base what is reported on what information and news the government and other institutions supply them with. Without a doubt, these factors do affect the messages or information that is delivered to the public (Shoemaker et al., 1991). The media has enormously influenced both the community and society. In some circumstances, the media has been criticized for bias and its role has been questioned. As a consequence, Herman and Chomsky conducted a study of the structure of media organizations and their role. They published their results in the book entitled *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media (2002).* In it, they explained the media model, performance and behaviour of media in society. Besides this, the media model described that there were five types of filters determining what news was available to society: media ownership, advertising, and source of media news, politics and anti-communism.

However, Herman (1996) suggested that the media model did not investigate the effect of media on society but concentrated on the performance and behaviour only. As a result, the media has been a significant source of messages and information for people in their everyday lives. They are bombarded and exposed to numerous messages daily from different media sources. The implication and consequences of these messages for the public have been the focus of a number of research projects throughout the years.

We can see that ownership is the most important factor of the media's role. In Western countries, such as the USA, the media has been owned and controlled by a few rich and powerful companies, such as Time Warner and Rupert Murdoch's News International.

Not only have these companies owned a large share of the media industry, but they have also diversified into other businesses. They will not communicate any negative reports about their own businesses or business associations. Therefore, Mazzoleni and Schulz (1999) agreed that the negative content of their businesses would not be carried on the press because they would be negotiated.

In the similar way, Hassan (2004) stated that the mass media, such as radio, television and newspapers were controlled by a relatively small number of big businesses. In controlling the media, the editors and journalists had consciously or unconsciously internalized the dominant ideologies of big business. However, Hallin (1994) argued that in the media model of Herman and Chomsky, the filters, such as advertisers and ownership, would determine the journalists' professionalism and objectivity. Additionally, Kobayashi and Ikeda (2009) found that the audience generally chose to read the news, especially the political news, from their politics favours. Political parallelism and journalistic autonomy did not conclude all types of connection between media and politics (Albuquerque, 2013). Albuquerque (2013) studied the model associated with two variables – the degree of competitiveness of the political system and the degree of stability of the relationship between the media and politics – resulting in four basic groups of political communication environments, which are identified as: (1) Competitive/Stable; (2) Competitive/Unstable; (3) Noncompetitive/ Stable; (4) Non-competitive/Unstable.

2.5 The Media and The Power Elite

As described earlier, social, economic and political factors affect the media and what information is reported. Another analysis of these dimensions was the *power elite,* which has an enormous impact in the understanding of the media industry. Here, we shall present the concept of the power elite and its relationship to the media in society.

Mills (1956) described the general concept about the power elite in his book entitled, *The Power Elite.* He argued that it was composed of the leaders of the military, corporate and political elements of society. He also discussed how the ordinary citizen is a relatively powerless subject of manipulation by those entities. For example, according to Mills (1956) after World War II, the USA became the leading country in the world, both in military and economic terms. The power elite was those people who occupied the dominant positions, in the dominant institutions (such as military, economic and political) of a dominant country.

Furthermore, Mills suggested that politicians relied on the mass media and accessing those media was expensive. As he predicted, the media became important half a century later when television became a factor in political campaigning to a degree unimaginable to those used to watching three black and white channels on a small screen. The power elite are central to investigations of power that seek to document the political, economic and cultural means by which those in power and those who operate at those sites shape the media to further advantage. Investigations are led by asking how the media and culture are used by, as well as influence, those actors, processes and the sites themselves. Further explanation of the power elite follows a review of work linking media, communication and power (Mills, 1956).

As a result of critical cultural theorists, political economists have sought to locate the material means by which elites, at the state and corporate levels, influence the production of mass media texts. This has come to mean a focus on news texts (Schiller et al., 1989). These studies presented the details and concepts of accounts of the power of the state and market forces to shape the news media and public information. These include unconscious and indirect influences. The overt, conscious influences can be identified through the ownership of media corporations. This ownership by both state and private corporations has brought with it the power to allocate resources, appoint senior staff and influence editorial agendas. Several studies stated that news

organizations and news values supported journalists to repeatedly seek out and promote certain elite sources over others (Fishman, 1980; Gandy, 1982). Thus, Mills and Mann (1956) concluded that the selected power were those who had a more important part in the economic, politico-legal and military spheres. In addition, some studies in politics and political sociology were concerned about political decision-making and relationships between the state and corporate and other elites, at the local and national levels (Mills et al., 1956). Besides this, these authors, Schiller et al. (1989) explained the multiple "filters" or "top-down" influences, which shape the media and public opinion in ways that benefit those in power. The most obvious means by which the state and the corporate elite have attempted to manage the media is through the ownership and management (direct and indirect) of news organizations themselves.

Ownership power is wielded in the allocation of resources, the appointment of senior editorial and management staff, and the directing of editorial agendas (Davis, 2002). This "allocation" form of control filters directly through to editors and journalists down the chain and, thus, results in daily "operational control" (Mordock, 1982). The most recent media legislation in the USA, UK and continental Europe has encouraged privatization, deregulation and corporate conglomeration in the sector (Mcchesney et al., 1997). Power has been exercised on a more routine basis, in elite source-journalist relationships. It has been readily advanced by the adoption of promotional techniques and personnel. Historically, the promotional professions usually expand during periods of political or corporate crisis. So, they come to be increasingly utilized by the corporate sector (Dreier et al., 1988), during industrial shifts, corporate expansions and large-scale union activity.

In the USA, Patterson and Donsbach (1996) found that there was no clear relationship between the political views of journalists and those of the organization for which they worked. However, they had some problems working in an organization with ideologies to which they were opposed at a personal level. Golding and Murdock (1991) agreed

that synergies proposed considerable advantages to their owners. They can use their presence in a number of media markets to sell their products more effectively. Furthermore, they discussed that the owners of media organizations have a degree of discretion around the policies they pursue and the operating targets that they set, but there are clear structural limits to this. Herman and Chomsky (1988: see also Herman, 1998), suggested that the mass media in the USA was a transmission belt for the ideas and ideologies of the powerful, a group that they saw who wanted to see the world and society around them as including governmental and corporate elites.

2.6 The Thai Media Crisis

As we mentioned in Chapter 1, communication has been a significant tool in society, especially for politicians, the government and the people. Media organizations are important channels in the communication between people in society and in the understanding and awareness of issues raised in the country. This section will address past media crises in Thailand and how they have changed in the present. More details about the Thai media will be presented in Chapter 3.

Historically, after the revolution in 1932, Thailand changed from a monarchy into a parliamentary democracy. From time to time since that date, the military has taken over power from a government elected by the people and has stayed in power for decades. At those times, the military used the broadcast media as a tool for political propaganda to affect Thai society and its attitudes to government. Consequently, civil society has been arguing for reform of the state-owned media or for accountability and freedom from government control. It was argued that there was a need to have fair and transparent regulation of the media. A chance for success was officially written under Article 40 of the 1997 Constitution (Klagnarong, 2009). Article 40 specified the principle that the airwaves were a public resource and were to be allocated on the basis of public and community interest and fair competition.

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In 1997, the Southeast Asian countries were hit by the economic crisis. Although there had been signs that the crisis in Thailand might be alleviating, the economic collapse left an indelible mark on the media in the country. As a result, there were more than 3,000 Thai journalists and other media employees who lost their jobs in 1997. After years of economic slowdown, the media in Thailand, such as newspapers, magazines and television had been forced into a sobering downsizing that may continue long after the country's economy recovers. Consequently, not only did the economic crisis affect thousands of Thai journalists, their stakeholders and other media employees, but also the future of an independent media was jeopardized. The journalists and media employees were laid off through a reduction policy; the newspapers no longer had enough resources to sufficiently cover government corruption scandals or sensational news. As can be seen from the economic crisis in 1997, there were a lot of effects in society and perhaps it was a major financial revenue problem.

According to Robertson and Schidlovsky (1999), who analyzed the impact of the economic crisis of 1997 on Thailand, revenues from newspaper advertising declined by more than 60%. Newspaper survival became difficult because one of the problems was the advertisers' management process. Organizations with small papers, mostly weeklies and monthlies, went out of business during that time. They could not survive the loss of revenue. Thaksin was an extremely rich businessman, who stepped from the business world into politics in 2001. His business empire included the mass media and telecommunication companies.

His taking up politics was not without allegations of a conflict of interest. Then, the government managed to investigate their implementation since the news was announced in the agenda-setting role, and many journalists and proprietors choose the easy option of following that agenda. Those who strayed from the fold and published critical reports and allegations of corruption were sued for defamation. With hindsight, it may have appeared that the opening up of the media between 1992 and 2001 was a false dawn, but

there were initial signs that civil society was gaining strength once again and that the government may have lost its grip on the media, due to weakening economic prospects and disillusionment by the public. It was hoped that a new dawn of media freedom in Thailand would not come at the expense of another economic crisis, as happened in 1997.

In Thailand, the broadcast media, including television and radio ownership, have been controlled by different state agencies through concessions since the beginning of radio broadcasting in 1930 and television in 1955 (Klagnarong, 2009). In practice, 524 radio stations and five television stations have been commercialized under temporary and permanent concessions. Media reform has still been a difficult story in Thailand.

The new media reform movement is able to dominate the discourse of media reform, which is based on the right and liberty to own the airwaves. It should be seen that people are not only passive audiences, but also communicative actors. They want space for people's expression. Then, the media should be the voice of the voiceless and the airwaves must be fairly allocated among three sectors: public, commercial and people. Recently, Marshall (2014) discussed the explosion of social media relating to the lèse-majesté law that created hundreds of thousands of Facebook profiles using fake names to protect themselves from lèse-majesté penalties, and began swapping information and insights in online communication.

2.7 Conclusion

The economy and the media are inseparable factors in the development of the country. The political economy has been described as affecting the CSR and media stakeholders. This chapter has described the political economy of the Thai media. The issues of CSR and the media stakeholders have also been explored. CSR has been defined as the process of assessing an organization's impact on society and evaluating its responsibilities, beginning with an assessment of a business and its stakeholders,

including social environment and the engaged communities. CSR has been gradually applied in the media industry recently.

In Thailand, the media has intervened in politics through the communication and reporting of news. It has had power driving society but has not been clear about what it was doing. In this chapter, we discussed that media should be neutral and should not take sides in politics. Additionally, the elite have been a powerful influence in Thai society for a long time. The military or junta is currently controlling the society.

Following the revolution in 1932, the monarchy in Thailand changed to a parliamentary democracy. In recent times, the military has taken over power from a government, which was elected by the people and had stayed in power for decades. An explanation has been given about how the military used the broadcast media as a tool for political propaganda to affect Thai society and the attitudes of the Thai people to that government.

CHAPTER 3

Thai Media and Politics in Thailand

3. Introduction

Thailand has a well-developed media compared to other countries in the region. Historically, Thai media has been relatively free, although the government and legislature have always exercised considerable control, especially over the broadcast media. In this sense, Thailand has more freedom than other neighbouring countries, such as Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. For instance, the media in Myanmar has undergone strict censorship and regulation since 1962. This applies to print, broadcast and online media. The military dictators who have ruled the country have applied these restrictions. The Myanmar Constitution does not provide for freedom of speech.

In order give a full account of the current media crisis and the role that CSR plays, consideration must be given to the former Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin first came to power in 2001 and remained in power until he was overthrown by a military coup in September 2006. The terms *Thaksinomics* or *Thaksinocracy* were used to describe his populist economic policies and authoritarian style of leadership that earned him admiration from the Thai public and facilitated his re-election in 2006 under the slogan *"Four Years of Repair – Four years of Reconstruction'' and ''Building Opportunity"*. It is impossible to study the media's role in politics without taking into account the effect of the Thaksin government and what happened in his era, with his CEO-style of leadership and business focus. Marshall (2014) discussed the political rise of Thaksin and argued that this was the catalyst for Thailand's social struggles to erupt into crisis. Additionally, Thaksin has frequently been compared to former Italian Prime Minister, Silvio Berlusconi, who is also an extremely rich businessman whose business empire involved the mass media and telecommunication companies. Berlusconi's move

from business to politics, like Thaksin and his government, was similarly controversial. After the coup of 2006 and under the military administration, the Thai media suffered from increasing restriction and censorship. However, after elected governments replaced the military junta, the Thai media regained some influence on Thai society.

In this chapter, we shall explore the history of the Thai media during the political crisis and up to the current situation in Thailand. Different kinds of media, such as newspapers and television, and the nature of each one will be also described. These include the role of the media in terms of responsibility in the media organizations and how it presents the story in Thai society. Furthermore, a brief history of Thai politics will be presented in order to understand the context of Thailand and its influence on Thai society in the past and the present. Finally, case studies relating to the Thai media and politics will be provided.

3.1 History of Thai Media

In Thailand, the creation of an "official" national cultural identity has been an explicit project of the land for at least the past 90 years, and the mass media have been central to the project. Central to this project has been the establishment of a single public education system (Keyes, 1991) and mass literacy in spoken and written central Thai as the national language.

The media has been a significant tool in shaping Thai politics since the nineteenth century. A substantial milestone occurred in May 1992, when there was a failure of the state broadcast media. The print media were limited by censorship. At that time the potential of emerging technologies was becoming apparent; mobile phones and fax machines could disseminate information, which was not carried on state channels (Mendel, 2005). After 1992, Information Communication Technologies of the media came to influence Thai society, such as the Internet, text messaging and community radio, and they were automatically added to the Thai media landscape.

Bangkok is the capital and the most populous city of Thailand, with a population of over 8 million, or 12.6 per cent of the country's population. A further 22.2 per cent of people live within the surrounding Bangkok Metropolitan Region, making Bangkok the prime city, dwarfing Thailand's other urban centres in both size and influence. Bangkok has been the centre of media production throughout the history of Thailand and, also, in an ongoing process to privatize the state-owned broadcast media operators.

The Thai media is categorized into two groups. The first consists of state-owned media, which often view information as a public commodity to be protected against a private sector monopoly in the public interest. The second consists of privately owned media, which may distort information under the influence of political parties or commercial organizations. For Thailand, the print medium has been privately owned through corporations while the Thai Royal Army owns some television stations. Private corporations own the remaining television stations.

However, news from the media has been a routine part of the everyday life of Thais. A recent survey called the Sripatum Poll (2009) of news consumption, surveyed Bangkok in 2009 with a sample size of 3,000 respondents. The results showed that television was the most popular source of news (68.0%), followed by newspapers (13.6%), the Internet (12.1%) and radio (3.2%).

As briefly illustrated in Chapter 1, print media, such as newspapers, were first established during the reign of King Rama III, while television broadcasting began in the second term of General Phibun Songkhran in 1955. More details about newspaper and television will be presented in Sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, respectively.

3.1.1 Newspapers

Thai media has been among the freest in Asia, even though criticizing the monarchy has been prohibited. According to Freedom House's latest survey of the press around the world, Thailand is rated as one of the six freest countries for news media in Asia, along with Japan, Korea, Mongolia, the Philippines and Taiwan.

Additionally, the condition of the press in Thailand was described in Freedom House's annual report (2000) as follows:

> *'Particularly in Thailand, it was regarded as a necessary element in improving the country's financial position. The new national information act promotes transparency within the government. Lively political and economic news has become routine fare in many newspapers and magazines whose content had traditionally been entertainment news and fiction. The papers have also been investigating the social implication of the economic crisis. Most radio and television stations are run by the government or the military and are less apt to follow quickly the print media's new openness.'* (p. 31-33).

Thai newspapers were launched in parallel to the emergence of Thai politicians and political parties. Thai print media remained constrained from acting fully as a force for political change. The newspapers were failing their readers and their society in a number of respects at the same time. After the democratic revolution in 1932, the tradition of adherent press had been continued. Former Prime Ministers, Pridi Banomyong and Field Marshall Phibunsongkhram, were associated with newspapers, which sought to advance their political causes. Then, in the age of Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat (1959-63**),** the Thai press began a period of strong restriction and control. Besides this, "*Announcement 17***"** was announced to commit all newspapers to be licensed. Additionally, if newspapers published "statements of a certain character", which included pro-communist statements, statements, which offended the King, and, most ominously, statements which "discredited the government", then the license would be withdrawn. It caused a restrictive climate for the press media. Thus, newspaper licenses became a valuable commodity. Speculators purchased licenses at very high prices, and then rented them to would-be newspaper publishers. During this period, newspapers were often sensational and full of inaccuracies **(**McCargo, 2000). Since the

first newspaper was established, there have been a large number of newspapers launched. Some were only published for short periods and only the key informants from the most significant newspapers were chosen for this study.

After the financial crisis in 1997, the media industry was on the road to recovery, assisted by the establishment in the publishing business. Many newspaper publishers, who had borrowed heavily to expand their businesses, were hit hard by the economic crisis. Many had to close down while others were bought up and turned into big business co-operations by their competitors. Twelve out of 25 daily newspapers went out of print at this time. Mostly these were Thai language papers but English language papers, such as the hard-hitting *Siam Post* and the *Asia Times,* also closed at this time.

Additionally, *Asia Times*, the newspaper owned by Sondhi Limthongkul of Manager Group, hoped to build into a transnational Asian newspaper. As a result, many journalists were made redundant at that time (Mendel, 2005, p. 45). However, several new newspapers and magazines were launched a few years later. These were *Kom Chad Luek* by the Nation Multimedia Group, *Post Today* by the Bangkok Post Group and *ThaiDay*, an English language supplement to the *International Herald Tribune*, by the Manager Group. In addition to these, there were other newspapers established afterwards, for example, *Matichon, Krungthep Thurakij* and the English-language, *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*. Besides this, the mass circulation *Thai Rath*, *Khao Sod*, and *Daily News* had a broader appeal. *Sin Sian Yit Pao* and *The Universal Daily* are the two leading Chinese language newspapers. Furthermore, more than 320 provincial newspapers are published outside Bangkok.

We shall briefly describe several newspapers relating to our key informants. The *Thairath* newspaper was founded on 25 December 1962 by Kampol Wacharapol. It served as an ideal model because it was the giant of the popular press in terms of circulation at that time. Also, it continued to dominate the newspaper market as the best-selling daily newspaper in Thailand in 1971. *Thairath* is a Thai language daily newspaper published in Bangkok and distributed nationwide. It is a broadsheet

published in two sections. The first section is the news, which is best known for its sensationalist coverage of crime and accidents, but also includes stories and commentary on politics, economy and society. The second section features coverage of sport and entertainment. *Thairath* is the oldest and best selling newspaper in Thailand, claiming a circulation in excess of 1 million copies daily. The high circulation is due to its focus on populist issues and acceptance of the public opinion of the general population, in particular, the rural market, which accounts for most of the readers.

Journalists founded *The Voice of the Nation* (*The Nation)*, a new English language newspaper, in 1971. It advocates a democratic political order, but also national sovereignty and economic independence. In 2008, *The Nation* had a financial crisis. A large number of staff was laid off under the new editorship of former business editor, Thanong Khanthong, due to a re-organization of the business. He recast the newspaper as a business newspaper, moving international wire copy to a free tabloid insert, the *Daily Xpress*. Currently, *The Nation* is owned by the Nation Multimedia Group and is also a member of the Asia News Network. *The Nation* is one of two English language dailies in Bangkok, the other being the *Bangkok Post*.

Matichon was founded by a group of progressive writers *and* journalists on 18 January 1978. This group was later called the Matichon Limited Company. The company's core business is to operate a diversity of publishing entities, including printed books and magazines. The central entity is the newspaper "*Matichon Daily*". Additionally, Matichon also produces other daily and weekly magazines and newspapers, as well as publishing books and other reader materials. A number of weekly publications were also established which sought to continue the best elements of the politically engaged journalism of the 1970s**.**

The "quality" of *Matichon* and *The Nation* seems to be invulnerable to external pressures from politicians or other interest groups**.** Both newspapers may sometimes function as watchdogs of the public interest, but they remain inherently partisan. The *Naewna* newspaper was established on 22 March 2000. It was a complicated time for

new daily newspapers. Under the government of Prime Minister Kriengsak Chumanun, government policy reduced the number of the daily newspapers that were permitted, especially those relating to politics. As a result, to get government permission to publish was difficult. Initially, *Naewna* focused news on crime and politics but the feedback on crime was not good. Later, *Naewna* changed its focus to concentrate on economics and politics, a focus that has continued until the present day. As can be seen, the press medium has been a dynamic element in Thai civil society, in particular, in monitoring the power of government and politicians. The press medium showed its mettle in the political crisis of May 1992. For example, the print medium was an important factor in applying strong pressure in driving the unpopular Suchinda goverment from office. For newspapers, the interests of the owner have not been synonymous with the public interest because newspaper businesses owe their primary loyalty to owners and shareholders. Loyalties to "customers" in the form of advertisers and readers, is secondary. Even though it is possible to argue that readers are members of the public, and that a newspaper therefore serves the interests of the public, in practice these interests have been agreed and modified by the competing interests of shareholders and advertising. McCargo (2000) argued that the practice among Thai columnists of taking favours, gifts, or even money from influential figures constitutes a form of franchising of newspaper ownership. He also suggested that politicians should have no formal investment in a newspaper company, but many could buy space through clandestine payments to a columnist or editor of a newspaper.

Table 3.1 Market share of Thai newspapers between 2010 and 2012, (Nielsen, 2014)

Newspaper	2010	2011	2012
Thai Rath	1,266,900	12,526,000	9,759,000
Daily News	7,073,000	6,910,000	5,303,000
Khan Sod	1,157,000	960,000	747,000
Matichon	998,000	955,000	717,000
Krungthep Turakit	179,000	95,000	90,000
Post Today	84,000	81,000	85,000
Bangkok Post	71,000	115,000	70,000
The Nation	55,000	33,000	29,000

The measurement of the market share of Thai newspapers between 2010 and 2012 by Nielsen, shown in Table 3.1, shows that *Thairath* and *Daily News* were the most popular newspapers in Thailand, whereas the English language newspapers, *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation,* focused on a much smaller group of educated readers. Also, *Krungthep Turakij* is aimed at business readers who are interested in economics, rather than general society news. Furthermore, Table 3.1 shows that newspaper readership declined by no less than 14% year on year between 2010 and 2012.

3.1.2 Television

As described in Chapter 1, television-broadcasting Thailand began in the second term of General Phibun Songkhran's rule in 1955. The first channel, *Channel 4 Bangkhunprom,* was broadcast on Thailand's National day. Colour telecasts were started in 1969 and by 1975 full-time colour transmissions were launched. Currently,

there are six free-to-air television stations in Thailand: Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 9, NBT and Thai PBS. The audience share of television stations during 2010-12, according to Nielson is shown in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2 Market shares of free-to-air television stations in Thailand (2010-13) (Nielson, 2014)

Note: *Before 2008, this channel was known as iTV, a commercial station. Thus, comparisons should be made with care

Station	2010	2011	2012	2013
TPBS	12.6	10.3	7.0	4.9
NBT	3.0	2.4	4.6	3.4
CH9	10.2	9.2	9.7	10.0
CH7	41.2	41.9	44.3	45.6
CH5	7.3	6.7	7.1	8.7
CH3	25.6	29.6	27.3	27.6

Channel 7 has been the most popular channel, with an audience share increasing from 41.2% in 2010, 41.9% in 2011, 44.3% in 2012 and 45.6% in 2013, respectively. Channel 3 followed by 25.6% in 2010, 29.6% in 2011, 27.3% in 2012 and 27.6% in 2013.

3.2 History of Thai Politics

This section will discuss Thai politics after the democratic revolution of 1932. Throughout Thai history, the state has tried to suppress and deny the sacrifice of those who lost their lives in fighting for equal rights and democracy (Marshall, 2014, p. 13).

This summary will be restricted to the division in Thai society, characterized by the emergence of sectional political groups, Red Shirt and Yellow Shirt.

After the monarchy was abolished, King Prajadhipok, Rama VII, granted the first permanent Constitution to the Thai people in 1932. Thailand officially became a constitutional monarchy with a prime minister as head of government. From this time, the military became the backbone of the state and it has influenced Thai society and Thai politics until the present day. During this period, the middle classes came to have their role in society at the same time. However, while it is true that the social and economic status of the population had changed over the years; the political ideals had remained generally the same (Maisrikrod, 1997). For example, pro-democracy student leaders in the 1973 uprising continued to hold similar ideas in 1993, even though they were in their late thirties or early forties. In order to understand how the process of democratization has changed over the years, it is important to describe the Thai political and economic system in terms of the different groups in Thai society: who they are and what their roles are. In Thailand, the lese majeste law, as Streckfuss (2001) expressed:

> *'Shields this overwhelming, inescapable presence in Thai society, politics and the economy. As a result, the operation of the lese majeste law in Thailand creates a black hole of silence in the center of the Thai body politic. Political and social discourse is relegated to the fringes as whispering and innuendo.'* (p. 6).

Bello (1998) argued that:

> *'Despite the massive economic change that has been underway in Thailand, its social and political fabric remains remarkably intact, and the country has been able to avoid some of the major economic and political blunders and developmental dead-ends of some of its immediate neighbours.'*
> *(*p. 256).

This section will explore why different groups of people influence Thai society in different ways. The four different periods in contemporary Thai political history are described below:

- The 1973-76 period between the 1973 student-led uprising and the military coup of October 1976;
- The 1977-79 period during the premiership of General Kriangsak Chomanan;
- The 1980-88 period during the premiership of General Prem Tinsulanonda;
- The 1988-92 periods covering the premiership of General Chatchai Choonhavan, the 1991 coup, the 1992 pro-democracy uprising, and the premiership of Chuan Leekpai.

The abolition of the monarchy shifted the power from the palace to the military. Besides this, the fourth period from above is one of the most significant in post-1973 Thai political history. It was the prime ministership of General Prem Tinsulanoda, against the backdrop of the 1976 coup, followed by a new Constitution in 1979, which consolidated the strong military presence in politics. Therefore, the Prem period could be viewed as one of re-democratization (Maisrikrod, 1997). It was during the Prem period that parliamentary politics became relatively stable for the first time. Nevertheless, this period was appropriately characterized as semi-democratic, since the military played an active role in Parliament.

Thailand has had two military coups, four constitutions, eight general elections and thirteen prime ministers since 1991 (McCargo, 2011). According to the model of Albuquerque (2013), McCargo (2011) stated that competitiveness in Thailand was not associated with the existence of a stable democracy but, on the contrary, derives from a persistent political instability. For the competitive/stable environments in Thailand, internal pluralism was not a consequence of the adhesion to transcendental ethical

values (as objectivity or impartiality), but rather a strategy for surviving abrupt political changes. The newspapers media in Thailand adapted extreme forms of internal pluralism, thus, McCargo called it as a partisan polyvalence. Additionally, McCargo discussed that Thailand may be dangerous for media organizations to cultivate rigid political alliances due to political polyvalence.

In the twenty first century, Thailand has been whipped by a restive political conflict. The traditional ruling class has been engaged in a harmful battle to crush the political influence of former telecommunications tycoon, Thaksin. He had been the most popular prime minister in Thai history. After being overthrown in the coup of 2006, he has been living abroad in self-imposed exile. He was convicted, in absentia, of corruption in 2008. The escalating crisis inflicted severe collateral damage, enfeebling the economy, eroding the quality of governance, and undermining the rule of raw. Thailand's political, business and military elite seem hell-bent on securing absolute victory whatever the cost without seeking compromise and reconciliation (Marshall, 2014). In Thailand, the economic inequality of Thai society has influenced all aspects of social, economic, and political life. Hewison (2014) studied a complex series of political events, such as elections, the coup, constitution, and the political ascent of Thaksin Shinawatra – that rose to a relatively recent politicization of economic and political inequalities, now invoked in street politics – a rhetoric developed amongst pro-Thaksin red shirts that challenged the status quo and generates conflict over the nature of electoral democracy.

3.2.1 Political Groups

The politics has been unstable over the past century in Thailand. The conflict of political issues has had similarly theatrical character-confrontations, which tend to be legitimacy of competition, rather than straightforward combat in which the stronger side prevails (Marshall, 2014, p. 61). The division of Thai society into Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts commenced at the beginning of the Thaksin era in 2001. Thaksin inherited a compromised democracy in the government in 2001 by running a campaign, and winning, on an anti-IMF policy. During the first year of his prime ministership, he

promoted three heavy spending programs that directly contradicted the IMF: (1) a moratorium on farmers' existing debt, along with facilitating new credit, (2) medical treatment for all for only 30 baht; and (3) a 1 million baht fund for every district. His three policies did not bring on the inflationary crisis that the IMF and conservative economists expected. Moreover, they buoyed the economy and increased his popularity with the rural and urban poor. This was the "good" side of Thaksin.

After gaining power, Thaksin began to undermine the freedom of the press and introduce restrictions on other media. He used the power of government to increase his personal wealth and ease restrictions on his businesses. He used his position to buy allies and buy off opponents. A popular project in his era was the war on drugs. This resulted in the loss of over 2,500 lives through extra-judicial killings. It included human rights activists. His hardline, purely punitive policy towards the Muslim insurgency in three southern provinces, Pattani, Yala and Narathivat, simply worsened the situation there.

Prior to the coup of 2006, Thaksin was elected as Prime Minister twice in 2001 and 2005. Thaksin, leading the Thai Rak Thai party, won landslide victories. In the February 2005 elections, Thai Rak Thai won 374 out of 500 seats in Parliament under the slogans "Four Years of Repair, Four years of Reconstruction" and "Building Opportunities". This election had the highest voter turnout in Thai history. His second term was soon beset by protests, with claims that he was a "parliamentary dictatorship". Using this sweeping majority, he overreached his power.

In 2006, his family business avoided paying any tax from the sale of their controlling stake in the telecoms conglomerate, Shin Corporation, for US1.87 billion to a corporation owned by Singapore government called Temasek Holdings. Thaksin made the Revenue Department interpret or modify the rules to exempt him from paying taxes. This brought the Bangkok middle class to the streets to demand his removal in a movement that bore a striking resemblance to the "People's Power Uprising" that overthrew Joseph Estrada in the Philippines in January 2001.This movement was the foundation of the Yellow Shirts

that formed the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) to oppose Thaksin. Additionally, Thaksin had been seen by members of the Bangkok elite, as a rude, corrupt, and abusive leader, who lacked respect for the monarchy and tried to sell out Thailand for his own enrichment. Bangkok elites considered that his populist policies were nothing more than a cynical manipulation of the ignorant rural masses (Noy, 2011).

3.2.2 Red Shirts

The UDD, which is alternatively translated as the National Democratic Alliance against Dictatorship, whose supporters are commonly called Red Shirts, emerged at the same time. It is a political pressure group opposed to PAD, the 2006 Thai military coup. The symbol of the UDD is red.

The leaders of the Red Shirts were Jatuporn Prompan, Nattawut Saikua, Veera Musikapong, Charan Ditthapichai and Weng Tojirakarn. Thida Thavornseth has been the leader of the UDD since 2010. Additionally, the Red Shirts allied themselves with the Pheu Thai Party, which is the party of Thaksin, formed to replace the TRT party, which was banned from politics in 2006.

Just five weeks before the scheduled elections in 2006, on the evening of 19 September 2006, Thaksin was overthrown while he was visiting New York City in the USA to attend a UN Conference. The army led by General Sonthi Boonratklin took control of Government House in Bangkok by ordering approximately 220 policemen in the complex to lay down their weapons. Additionally, troops surrounded the Thaicom satellite receiving station and state-run television station, Channel 11. On the following day, tanks and military vehicles armed with machine guns were stationed at Government House, the Royal Plaza and government units along Rajdamnoen Avenue.

After the coup, the Red Shirts were formed for the first time to oppose the military government. The prime minister of the military government was General Surayud Chulanont. He was the head of the interim government between 2006 and 2008 and was

also a former supreme commander of the Royal Thai Army. He had been a privy council to King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Members of Red Shirts are mainly rural workers from outside Bangkok. The Red Shirt ranks also include students, left-wing activists and some business people who saw attempts by the urban and military elite to control Thai politics as a threat to democracy.

After the coup, the TRT regained government. However, the constitutional court of Thailand removed Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat of the TRT party from office. Abhisit Vejjajiva was appointed as prime minister on 17 December 2008. Abhisit, at age 44, became the country's youngest prime minister in more than 60 years. The UDD led anti-government rallies in April 2009 against the Abhisit government and again in March to May 2010. These rallies led to violent clashes with military forces, with the big shopping mall called Central World being burned down, as well as several other places in Thailand. More details are explained below.

The first major protest of the UDD began in March 2009. Later, in April 2009 they forced the cancellation of a regional ASEAN summit by storming the venue in the seaside resort of Pattaya. Clashes involving troops, protesters and Bangkok residents, left at least two people dead and dozens hurt. As troops massed, the Red Shirts called off their protests. The Red Shirt leaders said they feared more loss of life. But their anger had not gone away and, in March 2010, they called fresh protests in Bangkok, aimed at toppling the government.

Tens of thousands of people occupied Bangkok's historic and commercial districts and at one point stormed Parliament, forcing Prime Minister Abhisit to flee. The Red Shirts also stormed a satellite transmission base, in a bid to restart a television station, which had been shut down by the government. The first bloodshed occurred on 10 April when at least four soldiers and 17 civilians were killed in clashes, as the army tried to disperse the Red Shirts from one of their two bases in Bangkok. The violence shocked the city, but the Red Shirts consolidated their forces in one camp, closing down the city's commercial heart for several more weeks. On 19 May, armed government troops moved

into the Red Shirt camp, smashing through the barricades. By the end of the day, the camp had been cleared, several of the group's leaders had been arrested and dozens of people, including protesters and soldiers, had been killed.

3.2.3 Yellow Shirts

The PAD, also called Yellow Shirts, originally consisted of a coalition of protesters against Thaksin, the former prime minister. The leaders are media-mogul Sondhi Limthongkul and Major General Chamlong Srimuang. The Yellow Shirts had been significant players in the political crisis of Thailand during 2005-06. The Yellow Shirts are mainly royalist upper and middle class Bangkokians and Southerners, supported by the conservative factions of the Thai Army, some leaders of the Democrat Party, and members of the state enterprise labour unions.

Anderson (2012), described the urban middle classes as becoming much wealthier too, and increasingly aligned with the elite rather than the people, jealously protective of their privileged niche in the social hierarchy. Additionally, Anderson discussed them as generally "*timid, selfish, uncultured, consumerist, and without any decent vision of the future of the country*". The most important protest by the Yellow Shirts occurred on 25 November 25 2008, when Suvarnabhumi International Airport was shutdown. They blocked the terminal building and blockaded the main road to the airport during their protest against the Thaksin government. On the following day, the services of Don Muang Airport were also stopped after the Yellow Shirts seized control of the domestic passenger terminal.

During the closure of the two main airports in Bangkok, the media presented pictures and PAD conditions to the public. The government's strategy and the solution from the army were published and criticized. The economists estimated the income lost for the country and the private sectors. Seemingly, there was no one who agreed with the Yellow Shirts' actions. It is definitely inappropriate to negotiate with government by

blocking the international airports of the country. Using monks and women to protect the Yellow Shirts leaders is also unreasonable.

As can be seen from the protests of Yellow Shirts and Red Shirts, the way that the military deals with them is different. The media reported and analyzed these two cases very closely and seriously. Both groups made mistakes. For the Yellow Shirts, closing and blocking the international airport was the wrong strategy, while closing and blocking the main business area was the wrong strategy for the Red Shirts. At the end of the protests, Thailand's military has promised to abide by the results of the election. An election is the best solution for these problems and we all have to accept the result, whether we like it or not.

3.3 Thai Media and Politics

The relationship between the media and politics is complicated because they depend on each other. In the past, the private media sectors attempted to displace the entrenched power of the military-dominated "bureaucratic polity" while the new business elite sought to displace the old public sector elite and harness the rhetoric of democratization for its own ends (Laothamatas, 1992). According to (Fuller, 2014) most academics and journalists who analysed the conflict in Thailand omitted the succession altogether and foreign correspondents often struggled to characterize exactly what was happening and why the disarrangement of Thai politics defies compact explanation. In one aspect, politicians need the media to carry their messages across to the public and also to promote themselves and their party, whereas the media rely on the politicians for news and information so they can perform their role in society. Additionally, Bello (1998) said *"Gradual exacerbation of the contradictions of the economic and social structures would be forthcoming"* (p. 256).

Politicians, police, military, tycoons and criminals conspired in burgling the country with impunity (Marshall, 2014, p. 41). To make the relationship between them more interesting to the public, they need to be part of the equation because these factors

interact on a daily basis. We shall explore the relationship between the media, such as television broadcasting and newspapers and politics in Thailand in this section. One important case study highlighting the relationship between the media and politics in Thailand is the takeover of the media by the groups connected to Prime Minister Thaksin.

Additionally, Marshall (2014) argued that the group of ruling elite used obligated behavioral norms to envisage a fairy-tale country. There have been many concerns about media issues, which have been widespread, both in Thailand and out of the country. We shall briefly highlight the case here.

In May 2000, iTV (or Thai PBS as it is currently called) made heavy losses because of the high licence fees the organization had to pay to the state. These high costs were associated with a fall in advertising revenue. Following the economic slump, iTV needed investors to restructure its debts. Shin Corp (Intouch Holdings Plc), which was a company controlled by Prime Minister Thaksin, stepped in to take over the iTV business. At the beginning, the Shin Corp bought 40% of the shares, increasing ownership to 80% over five years. Of the then shareholders, only the Nation Multimedia Group opposed Shin Corp, gaining majority control of the station. Consequently, members of the iTV staff, academics and NGOs raised a protest against them. Then, the government of Chuan Leekpai lifted the ten per cent cap on ownership written into iTV's licence. Buying the iTV share of Shin Corp was widely criticized. As a matter of fact, it was not only about the size of the Shin Corp share, but also the implications of the station being owned by the company belonging to the leader of a political party, who was working towards becoming the next prime minister. Thaksin denied any involvement with Shin Corp, claiming the shares had been transferred to his wife and son during election time.

However, the impact of Thaksin's control of Shin Corp within iTV became clear. Thepchai Yong, who was a news editor at the time, was removed from his position after he criticized Shin Corp for buying shares and taking over iTV. As a result, he claimed

that his removal was because of the criticism and was unfair. After that, iTV rapidly lost the reputation that it had earned as an independent and critical news medium. Some journalists in iTV were seen to be critical of the TRT and the leaders of the party were sacked, others kept their heads down to be safe (SEAPA, 2003).

In addition, the media has also been involved with, and influenced by, business in Thailand - the politics of business. Cunningham (2004) suggested that what is happening now is worse than under the military regimes because now Thailand is democratic, and such influence should not happen. For example, Central Group's board representative, Suthikiati Chirathivat, was unhappy with a number of editorial decisions at the *Bangkok Post* and gave the editor, Veera, three months to "get in line". Then on 20 February 2004, he dropped a bombshell by saying that the editor was out of a job. It was found that this dismissal was not related to the editor's performance. It was the influence of Central Group politics and ad revenue that were decisive factors in the abrupt editorial change. The editor was trying to maintain credibility, while juggling mounting political and commercial pressures. Nevertheless, the matter at the Post was that the right hand was taking serious money from the advertising company, while the left hand insisted on the freedom to criticize the same.

There was a politic important issue in 2013, an amnesty bill that would have absolved corruption charges against Thaksin angered the Thai people, and this oppositional alliance forced the capital to a virtual standstill on 22 December 2013, with hundreds of thousands of demonstrators turning out on the streets of Bangkok (*Khaosod* 2013). Consequently, Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who is the sister of Thaksin, tried to confound the protest by calling quick elections for February 2014. According to Grömping, M. (2014), there was a case study about using social media, such as Facebook, called an 'echo chamber' effect on general election of 2 February 2014 in Thailand. Mapping the 'like', 'share and comment' networks of a selection of partisan pages, showed this. The case was used to identify divergent themes in how the elections were depicted by the opposing sides in a deeply separated society. The 'echo chamber'

hypothesis was further supported through network visualization and analysis of the interaction patterns between Facebook page users. While the 'same side' users of the political separate divide frequently comment, share and like content posted by like-minded pages and individuals, interactions; selective exposure seemed to be at work, leading to a situation in which partisan social media users hardly engaged with discrepant information or views at all.

Thailand had another coup on 22 May 2014, the Thai military had had soft sanctions imposed on it for its seizure of power in an illegitimate way by the international community led by the US and EU. To keep the people happy, they must use their ability to deliver economic benefits. The military has striven to narrow the democratic space, while curtailing many forms of freedom, including the media (Chachavalpongpun, 2014).

For the media, the recent research of TRF (2013) found that the problem issue of media in Thailand is about ethics because there has been a rapid increase in a large number of media organizations. News media and local media organizations lack the support of media professional organizations. Consequently, these organizations have no clear guidance regarding how to behave and act. One of important problems is that entrepreneurs and workers are under capitalism. Additionally, there has been political interference in the media industry. They are not disciplined for controlling it. Furthermore, there has been a suggestion about the capability of people in the media industry. For example, news reporters and editors are required to have specific analysis skills in reporting and interpreting the news, rather than the usual methods (Limpattamapanee, 2015).

Additionally, bureaucratic administration is an important factor in driving the country. Bowornwathana and Poocharoen (2010) studied the administrative reform and argued that it is not about management. They also gave a definition of reform as the struggle over power between involved actors having evidence of patterns of power struggle

among, and between, politicians and bureaucrats. They proposed a framework to advance the concept of bureaucratic politics with reference to administrative reform policy. Bowornwathana (2013) commented that Thai government bureaucracy has been generally highly politicized, with appointments and transfers of top bureaucrats in the hands of powerful government politicians.

3.4 Conclusion

In summary, there are several channels of media in Thailand. Newspapers and television broadcasting have been chosen in this research. We presented the development and management of the media in Thailand from the beginning until the political separation. Additionally, political demarcation has been concerned with two groups: the Yellow Shirts and the Red Shirts. As to politics, we began with the history of Thailand relating to the big change of the monarchy in 1932 when King Prajadhipok, Rama VII granted the first permanent Constitution to the Thai people.

Thai politics had become complicated since the time when politics and elites intervened in the mass media, directly or indirectly. We explained the politics issue and the resulting conflict, which happened in the Thaksin era in the chapter. The PAD, or Yellow Shirts, was originally a coalition of protesters against Thaksin, while the united front for UDD, or Red Shirts, was a political pressure group opposed to the PAD. The PAD and UDD have been discussed in the chapter. Furthermore, another group such as the junta or military had influenced and played an important role in Thai politics and the associated media. The media has played a significant role in politics, starting with Thaksin era. The power group used the media as a political tool in political competition. The media lacked social responsibility. This phenomenon has continued for the last ten years.

3.5 Summary of Chapter 2 and 3

The economy and media are important factors in developing countries. Jackson (1982) gave a definition of political economy as the study of the relationship between the

power and the goals of power wielders, and the productive exchange system. The political economy has contributed to the social movement organized around media production and policy. The relationship between the military and the media occupied several generations of political economists (Mosco, 1989). The military is an important factor in politics for developing countries such as Thailand. As of yet, there is no study on the effects of the political economy on media industries. In this research, we applied the political economy concept on how social change, especially in politics, effects the economics of media industries. Additionally, we would find the factors that affect media from the perspectives of society, economics, and politics.

CSR has been a prominent issue in business administration in recent years; it is viewed as a central means by which to deliver sustainable development. Although there are important differences in definitions and interpretations of CSR among policy makers and academics, definitions of CSR have been given by many authors (Bowen, 1953; Davis, 1960; Frederick, 1960; McGuire, 1963; David and Blomstrom, 1966; Walton, 1967; Freeman, 1984). According to the father of CSR, "Bowen" (Carroll, 1999), CSR is social responsibility, referring to the obligations of businessmen to pursue policies, to make decisions, or to follow lines of action, which are desirable in terms of the values of our society. The relationship between business, society, and the media has significantly transformed social relations, as well as political, economic, and legal structures (Monshipour et al., 2003). Additionally, CSR has been mainly employed in business, but not much in media companies because media roles relating to CSR were limited by three factors: 1) the media was a channel for corporations to communicate their social obligations, 2) the media was a guardian of people's trust and an auditor of corporate actions, 3) the media was a stakeholder for the corporation itself (Chaudhri, 2007).

The stakeholder was first introduced by Freeman in 1984. It means any group or individual can affect, or be affected by, the achievement of the objectives of organizations (Freeman, 1984, p. 46). The definition of the stakeholder in business was studied by many researchers such as Freeman (1983), Robert (1992), Clarkson (1995),

Gray (1997), Evan and Freeman (1998) and Rowley (1997). The CSR and stakeholder are related to each other, as CSR is part of the dialogue between a business organization and its stakeholders (Gray et al., 1995a). The media could be a double-edged sword (Friedman & Miles, 2006), while stakeholders of media could be intermediaries, as well as mediators, facilitators and, campaigners in particular roles in the media (Rowley, 1997).

In this research, we shall identify the perspective and opinions of media stakeholders regarding the media's role relating to CSR in Thailand. The stakeholders of media in this research are identified as news producers, media regulation body, and academic readers.

Communication is a significant tool in society, especially for politicians, governments and the people. The media presents channels for communication between people in society, as well as understanding and awareness of issues raised in the country. As shown in Herman (1996), the media model did not investigate the effect of media on society, but concentrated on its performance and behavior only. In some countries, media has not been as free as in western countries, as suggested in Hassan (2004). Additionally, the power elite, such as the group of the leaders of the military, corporate, and political elements of society, has an enormous impact on the media industry (Mills, 1956).

Thailand changed from a monarchy to a parliamentary democracy from time to time since 1932. The military has taken power from a government elected by the people and stayed in power for decades. The media, such as television and radio, have been controlled by different state agencies through concessions since the beginning of radio broadcasting in 1930 and television in 1955 (Klagnarong, 2009). By the time of the political crisis in 2001, Thai media had been relatively free and had more freedom to disseminate. People have been divided in two groups of different political opinion. They are called red group and yellow group. Media became an important tool of

communication, especially in society and politics. Additionally, another problem of media is ethics of media staff (TRF, 2013).

From the above media issues, we shall study the practical way to develop and manage media organizations. We would like to find out whether or not media should be controlled, and how they should be controlled.

CHAPTER 4

Research Methodology

4. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in this thesis. A qualitative research methodology has been used. Many researchers have discussed the theories, methodologies and practices of approach in the social sciences. Each research study has distinctive features and must draw upon the range of methodologies to address the specific research questions involved. The first section of this chapter will describe the qualitative approach employed in the research. The instrument of research will be given in the second section, including the questionnaires. Data collection has been explored in Sections 4.4. Additionally, the other data methodologies, such as the pilot study, in-depth interviews and conducting interviews are also described in the section. Triangulation and content analysis are the important approaches in checking and analyzing the data and are given in Section 4.5 and 4.6, respectively. The conclusion of the chapter is the last section.

4.1 Qualitative Approach

As presented in Chapter 1, the objective of this thesis is to study the role of the media in Thailand and the economic and political factors that affect the media. Additionally, the corporate social responsibility of media organizations has been explored in the research. Finally, the model of media for development and management will be suitability identified.

The main method associated with phenomenology is qualitative research, which seeks to understand social phenomena through their perspectives of the subject or key informants. With the focus on phenomena about society, economics and politics in Thailand, qualitative approach was optimal for this research and meets the key research objectives.

The intention of this study is to bring stakeholder perspectives of media: how they perceive, narrate and express the issues relating to society, economics and politics. Consequently, this thesis has applied a qualitative methodology by conducting the in-depth interviews as significant instruments. We shall briefly clarify the qualitative approach in order to understand the concept of research through the thesis. There have been many definitions of this term that is universally accepted in social science.

Miles and Huberman (1994) took the view that qualitative data is a source of rich descriptions, which is well grounded and yields explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. Qualitative research is studies about things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of phenomena, in terms of the meanings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Advantages of qualitative research were to an increasing number of social science researchers, adopting the open-ended qualitative interview as the principle method of data collection, to the extent that the informal interview became the ubiquitous means of data collection (Baker, 1996).

The qualitative approach is both naturalistic and interpretive, involving studying people and other phenomena in society (Denzin et al., 2000). Additionally, Riley and Love (2000) suggested that, even though the quantitative approach has had a place in business studies, some researchers questioned whether it could explain issues of understanding and meaning. If researchers were concerned with exploring people's life histories or everyday behaviour, then qualitative methods may be favoured. Furthermore, qualitative researchers were seen to promise that it could be a way to avoid statistical techniques and the mechanics of quantitative methods (Silverman, 2000).

Patton (2002) described that the qualitative approach generated useful and credible qualitative findings through observation, interviewing, and content analysis requiring discipline, knowledge, training, practice, creativity and hard work. Cassell and Symon (2006) agreed that the richness and significance of the individual experience offsets an overdependence on reductionist explanations. Creswell and Plano (2007) proposed the

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implications of five dimensions for the qualitative approach, as follows: 1) The nature of reality (ontology); 2) How the researcher knows what he knows (epistemology); 3) The role of values in the research (axiology); 4) The language of research (rhetoric) and the methods used in the process (methodology). Given (2008) remarked that qualitative methods are the best for addressing many of the why questions that researchers have in their minds when they develop their research. Qualitative approaches were typically used to explore new phenomena and to capture an individual's opinions, feelings, or interpretations of meaning. The philosophical assumptions have been essentials in the qualitative approach, especially in conducting and writing of the research (Jankowicz, 2005). Two research paradigms, which have influenced the qualitative approach, are *positivism* and *phenomenology.*

There are some fundamental differences between the two paradigms. Rubin et al. (2005) stated that positivists assume that truth is measurable with statistical precision. For the phenomenologist, such an assumption ignores the complexity of reality in its context. According to the positivism paradigm, a topic like the media can be studied by applying scientific observation that quantifies the processes under scrutiny (Collis et al., 2003). Positivism is critical of interpretivism, which has been committed to the understanding of social phenomena from the actor's own perspective and examining how the world has been experienced Schwandt (2000). Patton (2002) agreed that the debates have focused on the relative value of both paradigms and the associated research philosophies.

Consequently, positivists and phenomenologists take on different kinds of problems and explore different kinds of answers in the research; their research requires different methodologies to maintain credibility (Jankowicz et al., 2005). With regards to our research, the phenomenology paradigm is appropriate for the study. It is concerned with an understanding of the phenomenon of the media in Thai society and the meaning of issues concerned with society, economics and politics through the role of the media in Thailand.

4.2 Instrument of the Research

4.2.1 Questionnaires

In this research, an open-ended questionnaire was the important tool to focus on for the in-depth interviews. Drever (1965) defined the term questionnaire as a series of questions dealing with some psychological, social, educational topic or topics, sent or given to a group of individuals, with the object of obtaining data regarding some problems. Similarly, Kahn and Cannell (1957) defined the questionnaire as an instrument allowing maximum opportunity for full and accurate information to be given by the interviewee to the researcher. There are several advantages of using questionnaires in the research.

The questions were separated into three sets to provide the information from three groups of key informants. The key informants were news producers, a and academic readers. We needed to ensure that the design of the questionnaire would generate qualitative data and would assist in answering the research question. Additionally, it was also important that the questions asked were understandable by the three groups of our key informants.

There are four topics in each questionnaire, reflecting the research objectives. These are ''*The role of media*'', ''*Factors that affect the media from the perspective of society, economics and politics*'', ''*Perspectives of the role of the media in applying CSR and sustainability*'' and ''*The model for developing and managing the media in Thailand*''. Several questions were constructed for each topic in the questionnaires. For example, for news producers, two questions were used in order to achieve knowledge of the first research objective. In addition, the questionnaires were trialed in a pilot study. The questionnaires are included in Appendix 1.

4.3 Data Collection

Data collection is a key part of the research and it often represents the biggest cost of primary research. The quality of qualitative research is based on the quality of the qualitative data and is affected by the nature of interaction with interviewees. Our selected key informants in the research were three groups of media stakeholders who were news producers, media regulatory bodies and academic readers. There were two television-broadcasting channels and three newspapers for the news producer group, which were Channel 7 and Channel 3, and three newspapers, *Naewna*, *Matichon* and *The Nation*. Four media regulatory bodies were key informants: the NBTC, the NPCT and the Isra Institution (ISRA). Similarly, four key informants were chosen for academic readers. More details about key informants will be given in Chapter 5. We applied the pilot study before conducting the proper interviews, in order to adjust our questionnaires.

4.3.1 Pilot study

In social research, the *pilot study* has been used in two different ways: one is a feasibility study, which will determine if it is possible to do the larger study or not. The other is done in preparation for the major study. Here, the pre-testing or ''trying out'' of a particular research instrument is the main focus (Baker, 1994, pp. 182-183).

In this research, a pilot study was conducted to test the questionnaires with three interviewees for each group. The advantages of a pilot study are: developing and testing the adequacy of research instruments, assessing whether or not the research questions are realistic and workable, collecting preliminary data and developing research questions and the research plan. From the pilot study, it was found that the primary questions were not clear and understandable. For example, one interviewee commented on a question in the second topic (*factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics*) that it should have been given a specific example in each question and it could receive more facts and information.

4.3.2 In-Depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are one of the main methods of data collection to use in qualitative research. The qualitative interviews are almost always conducted face-to-face and the interview is an intense experience. A physical encounter was essential in this context for an interview, which was flexible, interactive and generative, where meaning and language was explored in depth (Legard et al., 2003). Qualitative research methods are often concerned with garnering an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon or are focused on meaning, which is often centred on the 'how' and 'why' of a particular issue, process, situation, subculture, scene or set of social interactions (Dworkin, 2012). It could be argued that interviews are more important than observations in some senses. There have been a number of important definitions and the details are as follows.

By having a structured interview guide, the researcher could prepare and knew exactly what information was needed using a predetermined check list (Kahn & Cannell, 1957). In interviewing for qualitative research, interviewers are able to enter the respondent's frames of reference and gain access to people's feelings, thoughts and intentions; consequently, they could understand people's opinions, which were unlikely to be obtained by any other research method (Patton, 1990). Interviewers could also use any non-verbal clues, such as posture, gestures, voice intonation, facial expressions and eye contact, all of which can be analysed and add cues to be explored further (May, 1993).

One of the main disadvantages of using in-depth interviews is that the information collected can difficult to analyse. Due to the long process of interviewing, fewer interviews can be conducted (Dey, 1993). Observation techniques involve monitoring people's interactions in real-life situations and require a vast amount of information to be recorded, from dialogues to non-verbal clues, such as dress and body language. The use of overt observation was conducted throughout the field of research. In-depth interviews could be described as a form of conversation (Lofland & Lofland, 1995).

Also, the interviewer must be careful not to ''go native'' and become too embroiled in local politics of the community under study (Delamont, 1992). There is, however, a fine balance between becoming too close and not being close enough. A fieldwork diary is helpful to keep throughout the research. This offered the opportunity to note down any observations and conversations that occurred throughout the day. However, due to quality and richness of the information collected fewer interviews were required.

Every effort in the in-depth interviews was made to receive the opinions of the interviewees to express their own ideas spontaneously in their own words (Oppenheim, 2000). In fact, although a good in-depth interview appears naturalistic, it could bear little resemblance to an everyday conversation (Legard et al., 2003). The emphasis on depth, nuance and the interviewee's own language, as a way of understanding meaning, implied that the interview data which needed to be captured was in its natural form (Legard et al., 2003). Therefore, the success of the interview depends, to a large extent, on the personal and professional qualities of the individual interviewer (Legard et al., 2003).

4.3.3 Conducting Interviews

The interviews for our research were conducted between October 2013 and February 2014. In the interview, some difficulties in interviewing arose. These were: 1) some interviewees could not give in-depth information relating to the questions as they were not sure about those questions; 2) some interviewees were a bit biased in some points, especially about politics; 3) some interviewees were difficult to make an appointment with; 4) some interviewees were afraid to give an interview about media issues relating to politics; 5) some interviewees wanted the interviewer to push the research results to be practical.

There are a number of various steps for the conducting interviews. The process of conducting interview, as presented by Creswell (2007), included: (a) preparation for the interview; (b) constructing effective research questions; (c) actual implementation of the

interview(s). While the conducting the interviews, we looked at the process of Daniel (2010), where, in the same general process, they were planning, developing instruments, collecting data, analyzing data, and disseminating findings. They designed their interviews to provide the researcher with the tools needed to conduct a well-constructed, professional interview with their participants. Atkins (2012) proposed five steps of conducting an interview, as follows: 1) selecting key informants; 2) focusing the interview; 3) gaining entry for the interview; 4) recording the interview; 5) asking the questions.

The primary tool of qualitative research is in-depth interviewing. There are three important characteristics for conducting the interviews, as follows (Rubin & Rubin, 2014 p. 29)

1. The researcher is looking for rich and detailed information, not for 'yes' or 'no', agree or disagree responses. He or she is looking, for example, for experiences, for narratives and stories.

2. The interviewer does not give the interviewee specific categories to answer, rather, the questions are open ended, meaning that the interviewee can respond in any way he or she chooses, elaborating upon the answers, disagreeing with the question, or raising new issues.

3. The questions that are asked are not fixed. The interviewer does not have to stick to a given set of questions, or ask them in a given order; he or she can change the wording or skip questions if they do not make sense at the time, or make up new ones. He or she can pose a separate set of questions to different interviewees.

For preparing and conducting the interview, Hermanns (2004) presented three suggestions for the interview. They were: how to explain to the interviewees what we expect; how to create a good atmosphere in the interview; and how to open up their minds. Additionally, Rubin and Rubin (2012) stated that:

'a *'key element' of a (responsive) interview: in the responsive interviewing model, you are looking for material that has depth and detail and is nuanced and rich with vivid thematic material'* (p.101).

The starting point of qualitative interviewing is the presumption that inputs, which are characteristic of standardized interviews or questionnaires restricting the sequence of topics dealt with, obscure rather than illuminate the subject's viewpoint (Flick, 2014).

4.4   Triangulation

Triangulation is a method used in this qualitative research to check and establish the validity in our studies by analyzing the conducted results from three groups of media stakeholders, such as news producers, media regulatory bodies and academics. There have been several definitions of triangulation, as follows. Denzin (1978) stated that the logic of triangulation was based on the premise that:

"No single method ever adequately solves that problem of rival causal factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This is termed triangulation. I now offer, as a final methodological rule, the principle that multiple methods should be used in every investigation." (p.28)

While Webb et al. (1966), suggested:

"Once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more independent measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced. The most persuasive evidence comes through a triangulation of measurement processes. If a proposition can survive the onslaught of a series of imperfect measure, with all their irrelevant error, confidence should be place in it. Of course, this confidence is increased by minimizing

error in each instrument and by a reasonable belief in the different and divergent effects of the source of error." (p. 3)

In triangulating, a researcher may use several methods in different combinations and each individual has his or her own social history and an individual perspective on the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) gave the definition of triangulation as a crosschecking method for data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data. While, Rothbauer (2008) described triangulation as being applied in qualitative research to indicate that two (or more) methods are used in a research in order to approve the conducted results. The concept of triangulation has been borrowed from navigational and land surveying techniques that determine a single point in space with the convergence of measurements taken from two other distinct points. The idea is that one can be more confident with a result if different methods lead to the same result. Guion, (2011) proposed that triangulation refers to whether the findings of a research are true and certain; "true" in the sense that research findings accurately reflect the situation, and "certain" in the sense that the research findings are supported by the evidence.

The goal of triangulation is to arrive at consistency across data sources or approaches. However, if the results from triangulation are not consistent, it may not be that those studies are wrong. Patton (2002) agreed that inconsistencies from triangulation might be likely, given the relative strengths of different approaches because these inconsistencies should not be seen as weakening the evidence, but should be viewed as an opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data.

Denzin (1978) identified four basic types of triangulation, which could be employed in the research, as follows:

1. *Data triangulation*, the use of a variety of data sources in a study.

2. *Investigator triangulation*, the use of several different researchers or evaluators.

3. *Theory triangulation*, the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data.

4. *Methodological triangulation,* the use of multiple methods to study a single problem or program.

For our research, we applied data triangulation and methodological triangulation in order to check the validity of our results. We shall describe more details in Chapter 6.

4.5 Content Analysis

Another method employed in analyzing the data is content analysis. According to Bernard (1952), content analysis is:

> *''A research technique for the object, systemic, and quantitative description*
> *of manifest content of communication.''* (p. 220)

While Kracauer (1993), gave the definition that content analysis is a quantitatively oriented technique by which standardized measurements are applied to metrically defined units and these are used to characterize and compare documents. Kvale & Binkmann (2009) described that content analysis is a technique for a systematic quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. Content analysis was based on examination of the data for the recurrent instance of some types; these instances were then systematically identified across the data set and grouped together by means of a coding system (Silverman, 2011).

For the social sciences, with the possible exception of content analysis, have not developed systematic evaluative techniques for documentary analysis (Holsti, 1969). After World War II, sociologists and students of mass communications refined the idea of content analysis. Aside from the methodological problems associated with any quantitative technique (sampling, generalization, validity, especially external validity, and reliability), content analysis was not able to capture that the context within a written text has meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994)

There have been many techniques for content analysis. Znaniecki (1934) introduced analytic induction. According to Buhler-Niederberger (1985), he defined analytic induction as:

"....a method of systematic interpretation of events, which includes the process of generating hypotheses as well as testing them. Its decisive instrument is to analyze the exception, the case, which is deviant to the hypothesis." (1985, p. 476)

Steps of analytic induction (Buhler-Niederberger, 1985, p. 478) are as follows:

- A rough definition of the phenomenon to be explained is formulated;

- A hypothetical explanation of the phenomenon is formulated;

- A case is studied in the light of this hypothesis to find out whether the hypothesis corresponds to the facts in this case;

- If the hypothesis is not correct, either the hypothesis is reformulated, or the phenomenon to be explained is redefined in a way that excludes this case;

- Practical certainty can be obtained after a small number of cases have been studied, but the discovery of each individual negative case by the researcher or another researcher refutes the explanation and calls for its reformulation;

- Further cases are studied, the phenomenon is redefined, and the hypotheses are reformulated until a universal relation is established; each negative case calls for redefinition or reformulation.

The methodology that was appropriate to this research was an inductive approach because it is particularly concerned with the context in which events take place using a small sample of key informants. Furthermore, the inductive approach is more suitable than the deductive approach because the researcher is particularly interested in understanding why something is happening, rather than merely describing what is happening.

4.6 Conclusion

The research employed a qualitative methodology, using open-ended questionnaires as the primary tool. Thirteen key informants were recruited from news producers, media regulatory bodies and academic readers. There were five representatives from news producers and four each from media regulation body and academic readers, respectively. In-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with each of the key informants. In conducting an interview, there were main five steps, following Atkins (2012). These were: 1) selecting key informants; 2) focusing the interview; 3) gaining entry for the interview; 4) recording the interview; 5) asking the questions. There were four topics in each of the three questionnaires, reflecting the research objectives, they were: ''*The roles of media*''; ''*Factors that affect the media from in the perspectives of society, economics and politics*''; ''*The perspectives of the role of the media to CSR and sustainability*''; and ''*The model for developing and managing the media in Thailand*''. A pilot study was undertaken to test the suitability, quality and interpretation of the questions.

The advantages of the pilot study were the developing and testing of the adequacy of the research instruments, assessing whether or not the research questions were realistic and workable, collecting preliminary data and developing the research questions and the research plan. We tried it with three interviewees in order to develop the questionnaires. Additionally, the ethics of interview were managed by adhering to a protocol of introducing ourselves and the interview topic to the interviewee, using questions that avoided being intrusive and were friendly during the interview; the data was analysed by content analysis.

CHAPTER 5

Data Presentation and Analysis

5. Introduction

In this chapter we will present the primary data collection from the fieldwork. This data has been translated from the Thai interviews into an English transcript. The question addressed was: "why have members of the government or powerful people in the media influenced the activities or the role of the media in Thailand?" Additionally, the phenomenon of political bias was explored. In 2006, Prime Minister Thaksin bought the iTV channel and started controlling it for his own narrow political interests, supporting his political party (TRT and later, Pheua Thai).

This was an open display of money and power to influence and build public opinion in support of a political party. Some television broadcasting channels and newspapers presented the news in a biased way, or did not give audiences the actual news about what was happening in Thai society. For example, some broadcasting channels and newspapers did not present the news about the large gathering of the People's Democratic Reform Committee (PRDC) or the Bangkok Shutdown on 10 December 2013. Therefore, if there was not an effective controlling organization, Thai society could be biased by restrictions on the news. For this research, key media informants were separated into three groups. These were, news producers, media regulation bodies and academic readers.

For the news producers, the selected key informants were two television broadcasting channels, Channel 7 and Channel 3, and three newspapers, *Naewna*, *Matichon* and *The Nation*. For the , the selected key informants were the NBTC, the NPCT and the Isra Institution (ISRA). The academic readers were two academics, who worked in, and had had long experience with television broadcasting and print media. The others respondents included two television newsreaders. The main role of this media is to

present news. For newspapers, news is presented in several sections, for instance, politics, economics, education and entertainment. The working role of the news head's deputy is to check all the news in detail before printing and the editor controls the overview of the news. Newspapers are published daily, weekly or monthly. In addition, newspapers have other channels, such as websites and social media, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The websites have the same content as is published in the main newspaper, but it is updated in advance of publication, often in the afternoon; while television broadcasting is accessible to more audiences and news consumers than are newspapers. Additionally, television is responsible for presenting news to the public, including the making of entertainment programmes. There are six television channels in Thailand: Channel 7, Channel 3, Channel 5 Channel 9, NBT Channel and Thai PBS. More details about the media relating to our key informants are summarized in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Profile of the respondent key informants for TV and newspapers

Respondent	Gender	Age	Occupation	Location	Work place
1	Male	34	Journalist	Urban	Bangkok
2	Female	48	News Director	Urban	Bangkok
3	Male	46	Journalist	Urban	Bangkok
4	Male	50	Journalist	Urban	Bangkok
5	Male	52	Journalist	Urban	Bangkok

From Table 5.1, it can be seen that four respondents were men and one was female. They all worked for television or newspapers. All key informants were located in urban Bangkok and their ages ranged from 30 to 55.

Four persons were interviewed from media regulatory bodies. These were the President of the News Broadcasting Council of Thailand (NBCT), a director of ISRA, a committee member of the NPCT and a committee member of the NBTC, as listed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Profile of the key informants from the Media Regulation Body

Respondent	Gender	Age	Occupation	Location	Work place
6	Male	55	President (NBCT)	Urban	Bangkok
7	Male	48	Director (ISRA)	Urban	Bangkok
8	Male	58	Committee (NPCT)	Urban	Bangkok
9	Male	42	Committee (NBTC)	Urban	Bangkok

From Table 5.2, we can see that all the respondents were men. Their ages were in the range of 40 to 60. Their positions were chairmen (or directors) or committee members. All key informants were located in the urban areas and they all had been working in Bangkok.

For academics and newsreaders, four key informants with long-term media experience were interviewed. The first respondent was a founder of Pacific International Communications Limited. He is well known in Thailand. The second respondent had been an academic in the political and economic field and had been working as a commentator for several television channels. Their details are summarized in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Profile of the key informants for academic readers

Respondent	Gender	Age	Occupation	Education	Workplace
10	Male	65	Former President/ Former Columnist	Ph.D. (South Asia), United States	Bangkok
11	Male	54	Director /Instructor	Ph.D. (International Cultural Studies), United States	Bangkok
12	Male	35	Assistant Minister of Commerce/Instructor	Ph.D. (Administration), Australia	Bangkok
13	Female	37	Director/ Instructor	Ph.D. (Statistics), UK	Bangkok

The age range of the academic respondents was 35 to 65. Three people were men while the other is a woman. They all had completed postgraduate qualifications in international universities and worked in Bangkok. The qualitative data from the interviews with these key respondents is presented and analyzed in this chapter. The analysis examines the perspective of the different stakeholders: news producers, media regulatory bodies and academic readers.

5.1 Qualitative Data Analysis - Television and Newspapers

The main objective of the methodology of this thesis is to study the roles of the media in Thailand from the perspective of the three stakeholder groups, in order to understand the way in which the news is mediated by political influence and the role of CSR. The most significant media stakeholders in Thailand are news producers in the newspaper and television industries. Many newspapers have been launched in Thailand over the two decades from the publication of the first newspaper. As presented in Chapter 1, these newspapers can be categorized into seven groups: (1) mass-circulation daily; (2) quality daily; (3) business daily; (4) English language daily; (5) semi-weekly business newspapers; (6) weekly business newspapers; and (7) weekly news magazines.

For television broadcasting, there have been six free-to-air television stations in Thailand: Channel 3, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 9, NBT and Thai PBS. As mentioned in Chapter 1, major television stations are owned and controlled by the Royal Thai Army or by the government. Television media have more difficulty in presenting news independently than do newspapers, as broadcasting audiences are wider than newspaper readers. Additionally, a single family or small group of investors owns each print medium. We concentrated on the newspapers and focused on two television media: Channel 7 and Channel 3. These newspapers were *Matichon, Naewna* and The *Nation.* Key informants of the news producers are given in Table 5.4.

This section focuses on two television stations (Channel 7 and Channel 3) and three newspapers (*Matichon, Naewna* and The *Nation).* Key informants are described in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Key Informants of TV and newspapers in Thailand

News Maker	Journalist	News Media
Respondent 1	Political section	TV: Channel 7
Respondent 2	News section	TV: Channel 3
Respondent 3	Political section	Newspaper*: Matichon*
Respondent 4	Political section	Newspaper: *Naewna*
Respondent 5	Political section	Newspaper*: The Nation*

5.1.1 Roles of the Media

Three questions (Appendix 1) have been used to identify the roles of the media, as follows;

- What is your role in the media organization?
- Does the media owner have other businesses?
- What are the major and minor roles of the organization?

Respondent 1 from TV Channel 7 described the role of the media as follows:

'Channel 7 is a television station about programme production, news production and other entertainment productions. Apart from those (news presentation, drama productions and entertainment), the other business of Channel 7 is still related to the media circle, such as Bakaboo <online television programmes> which is an online medium. We are going to be on a digital television auction. So, we need to develop more quality of production and the quality of the news. However, the target group of digital television is office workers (or white collars).'

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Respondent 2 from TV Channel 3:

> *'I am a news producer of Channel 3. My main duties are overseeing and reporting news, including politics. Previously, I worked as a journalist in Parliament and as a reporter at ITV (TPBS). My role is more responsible than the previous one, as I have to be in charge of choosing and screening news in our news programmes. We have several news programmes in one day; for example, in the morning, at midday and at night.'*

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* Newspaper expressed the following:

> *'We serve to cover news media, such as newspapers, in terms of daily and weekly publications. Our daily newspapers are Khaosod and Prachachartdhurakij, published every day, while a weekly one is published on Thursdays. Additionally, we are a media producer and one of our roles is producing the newspaper everyday but we concentrate on politics rather than on other areas, such as drama or entertainment.'*

Additionally, *Matichon* has published books and other reading materials. *Matichon* has been involved in television broadcasting, including Workpoint TV and Matichon Academy. Matichon Academy is professional centre for training professionals and business people. A number of weekly publications have also been established and seek to continue the best elements of the politically engaged journalism of the 1973-76 periods.

Respondent 4 from *Naewna* newspaper commented about his work, as follows:

> *'Our newspaper has two parts: the first one is a newspaper in print while the other is online news, such as websites and Facebook. We used to focus*

on crime and politics, but the feedback on crime was not so good. Then, we
changed to concentrate on economics and politics instead.'

At the beginning, *Naewna* started as a daily newspaper and became well known for its presentation of political news. *Naewna* also introduced television broadcasting in its business.

Respondent 5 from *The Nation* commented on his newspaper, his company and on the media role in general, as follows:

'Our business has divided into three groups, according to the type of
business. They are television broadcasting, radio business and new media
business or what we can call New Media. New Media develops educational
technology in various forms in order to create value added benefit from the
information network and also to meet the lifestyle of new changes. It will be
publicized on new channels, such as the Internet, mobile phones, IPTV and
so on.'

The Nation is a broadsheet, English language daily newspaper published in Bangkok. Journalists founded it in 1971 under the name of *The Voice of the Nation*. The name was eventually shortened to *The Nation*. It is one of two English language dailies published in Bangkok. The other is the *Bangkok Post*. The *Nation* newspaper changed considerably when several Thai journalists from the *Bangkok Post* joined *The Nation* in 1991. *The Nation* advocates a democratic political order, but also national sovereignty and economic independence. Currently, the Nation Multimedia Group owns *The Nation*. Also, it is a member of the Asia News Network (ANN). ANN is a network of 21 media groups in Asian cities, organized to provide avenues for co-operation and to optimize coverage of major news events in the region.

The Second Question

Respondent 1 commented about business ownership:

'Channel 7 has been a commercial television station and has also focused on entertainment programmes, while we pay attention to news production as well. We have an appropriate proportion of news time because now we have communication laws to determine the proportion of news presentation.'

In business, the owner may have one or several businesses running at the same time. Some businesses might reflect the good reputation of the company and provide a benefit to society or the community in which the company is located. Some businesses might reflect a negative impact on society or might not relate to the good ethics for Thai society. However, the authority rests with the owner.

Television broadcasting is big business with a large investment for programme production.

Respondent 2 stated as follows:

'Prasan Maleenond and the clan of Maleenond have owned our group: usually people know us by the name of BEC-TERO (BEC-TERO Entertainment Public Co. Ltd.). In addition, our business includes entertainment companies that organize and promote concerts; own recording labels and produce films and television shows. In the past, one of Maleenond became involved in politics at Ministry of Tourism and Sport. At present, CEOs are not involved in politics any more.'

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* commented regarding the owner of the company:

'Other businesses of Matichon are television-broadcasting businesses, including Workpoint TV and the Matichon Academy. The Matichon

Academy is the professional centre for training professionals and business people. Furthermore, Matichon has another business about book publishing.'

While Respondent 4 from *Naewna* newspaper commented:

'Being Naewna means newspaper, not the other media, but as far as I know the shareholder or the owner has other business in tourism such as golf and hotels.'

Respondent *5* from *The Nation* newspaper commented regarding the owner of the company:

'Apart from the newspaper, the owner invested in real estate, but it didn't work well so they stopped. Now the owner invests in an education service, which is Nation University.'

The Nation Group took over Yonok University in Lampang, in the north of Thailand. The name was changed to Nation University. Dr. Nirund Jivasantikarnin founded Yonok University with the help of the Yonok Foundation and the American-Thai Foundation in 1988. Nation University has focused on communication services relating to the business of *The Nation*. The owner of *The Nation* newspaper, apart from publishing daily or weekly newspapers, has other businesses, such as publishing books and magazines. Apart from the newspaper, *The Nation* owns a television station and a university.

The Third Question

Respondent 1 commented on the major and minor role of Channel 7, as follows:

'The primary responsibility of Channel 7 is to publicize news, game shows, variety shows and other entertainment. Channel 7 has an online business, Bakaboo. Channel 7 has been the most popular channel in Thailand and can access a wide range of coverage of entertainment, such as drama, after

the evening news programme, as shown in a dialogue of Channel 7's journalists.'

The main function of the media is disseminating information, such as news and entertainment. The media has influenced the form of disseminating information and entertainment within society. For the newspaper industry, the main focus has been on publicizing news through daily and weekly newspapers. The main source of income for Thai newspapers has been from advertising. For television, the primary role is to produce news and entertainment programmes. However, news production for television is a secondary priority.

In recent times, many television channels have been distributed through cable, but this has not been very popular due to the cost. Television businesses are competitive in Thailand and rely on advertising for their income. Thailand does not have independent media, like the BBC in the UK, or ABC in Australia. Additionally, some media in Thailand are under the control of the government.

Respondent 2 from Channel 3 explained:

> *'Channel 3 operates TV, radio and other news media, such as animated series, for example Dogga Doop, Shelldon, and Four Angels. We receive a concession in producing various media to audiences. Additionally, BEC-TERO is the largest media group in Thailand. The most popular programme is talking news in the morning, which has the highest audience share in the morning. Channel 3 is a commercial station.'*

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* newspaper had a wide range of interests:

> *'Our main focus is media with other interests, such as books, pocketbooks and magazines.'*

Matichon is a daily newspaper that features every form of news but concentrates mainly on politics.

According to Respondent 4, *Naewna* newspaper mentioned the other business of Naewna:

> *'Shareholders or the owners have other business interests in tourism, golf clubs and hotels.'*

The Nation (Respondent 5) has a broad range of business interests:

> *'As I mentioned earlier, apart from media business, we invest in educational services. Our executives took over Yonok University three years ago. We think that higher education is important. If we give them a good education and pass on our own experience, it is good for our organization because we can determine the effectiveness of our staff and can direct the way of development at the same time. Furthermore, we can produce professionals for the global market of education.'*

As described above, The Nation Group has interests in all media, including radio, television and newspapers. The newspapers consist of *The Nation*, *Komchadluak* and *KungthapDurakij*. The Nation Group is unique in that it has also launched an educational business, Nation University.

5.1.2 Factors that affect the Media from the Perspectives of Society, Economics and Politics

According to Thai history, the media has been informally controlled since the beginning of democracy in 1932. This control was more apparent in the dictatorial age of Thailand, such as during the governments of Field Marshals Thanom Kittikachorn and Sarit Thanarat, who were the 10th and 11th prime ministers, respectively. News

relating to the government and the country was distorted. In the present day, even though Thailand has become more democratic, some media are still intimidated by powerful people within society, as they want the media to present the truth related to society and not just the privileged elite.

Currently, media intimidation has been an issue that has become more significant when media channels, such as television broadcasting or newspapers, are biased or controlled by the government. The government can use the media to communicate only the government's perspective. As a result, this control has caused disharmony within the community and the country, as we have seen in recent times. According to our interviews, there are four questions relating to factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics, as follows:

- Have you ever been threatened in reporting news, especially in political issues?
- When the world economy has changed, has your organization been affected by economic circumstances?
- When some political or social issues have happened, what can your organization do to support them?
- What has your organization realised about the problem of violence in the southern provinces and the conflict between the PAD and the UDD?

- Has your organization ever had any problems in functioning? What are those problems? What are your functional limitations?

The First Question

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* commented regarding the threats in reporting the news, especially in political issues, as follows:

'They might call us to write less about them, for instance, the fraud on rice mortgages and threaten legal action, especially public people, such as politicians, prime ministers. For the private sector, they sue through the court. One more example about public people such as politicians within the Democratic Party, they think that Matichon is opposed to them. They would express hostility towards us and also they would rarely talk to us and sometimes they say, "what are you doing here, you get some information from us but you would never write it down in your newspaper.'

Respondent 4 from *Naewna* gave an opinion about the intimidation:

'About the threats, we have never formally had been threatened but our friend who writes in our column was smashed at his head. I could explain a little bit about the threat in our functioning context. We do not think that lawful suing or impeachment proceedings are not threats in the Naewna context. We think that it is the right of media consumers and the right of readers. If they think that we don't present correctly or distort from the truth, of course, they have their right to sue us or process it in the legal way. We are fair enough to consumers and readers. In some cases, if something wrong has happened and they come to us directly that it is not true or would like us to correct some parts, which are not true, we would be all right to correct them. On the other hand, if they are truly right we would not change, we have our own standing point in the media.'

Furthermore, *Naewna* reported other intimidation, such as the staff of *Naewna* being injured, physically assaulted, or intimidated through violence.

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 identified threats to the organization:

'It is threatening in certain situations. For example, if we work on gathering news on a politically separated group, they would expect us to present their view or that we would agree with them. This is what happens

during political protests. Actually, it has been the nature of these people that when we make news, they expect us to present their news in a good way and attack the opposition. That's one kind of threat we have received. As another example, we went to check on deforestation, corruption of the forest industry and illegal oil purchases in the south of Thailand. When we got there, they would be vigilant but they wouldn't openly threaten us, they would just give us some sign that they knew we are checking on them.'

However, the brand image of Channel 7 has been good because it has been accepted and followed by the majority of people for long time; many people think Channel 7 belongs to the military.

In contrast, big organizations such as Channel 3 and *The Nation* gave their opinions as shown by Respondent 2 and Respondent 5, respectively.

'During uncertain situations, such as protests or demonstrations, we would inform everyone that we are presenting news carefully and do not put their personal comments or their feelings in the articles, especially in the political issues. In the past, there were some threats, but only mild ones, such as calling us or sending us an insulting letter. However, we have never had any violence resulting from these threats.

We are a big media company so we do not have many threatening situations, meaning threats that are malicious toward the security and welfare <of the reporters>. For legal threats, currently they <the reporters> are threatened by using insulting law and other laws relating to the media. For example, politicians who consider that their reputation has been damaged due to the news media would sue for damages for a large amount, which is approximately about 20-40 million baht. This is a way of threatening. Sometimes, the court could make a profit from the lawsuit. The

media professionals would be careful with public figures, such as politicians, prime ministers or well-known people in society.'

The Second Question was about economics, namely how the organization of media has been affected by a change in economics.

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 described how the organization has been affected by a change in economics, as follows:

'Channel 7 is a big organization, which has a good business strategy. Even though many organizations have been affected by the economic crisis in 1997, we were able to survive and pay bonuses (extra money apart from the normal salary) to all staff as usual. We could say that we have never had any financial problems.'

Respondent 2 from Channel 3 stated:

'Channel 3 was affected by the economy in 1997, but our CEOs tried to prevent the effect through policy, for example, by getting rid of some programmes but retaining popular ones, such as news and entertaining game shows. Some programmes could not make sufficient profit so it was better to support the popular ones, as we could attract bigger sponsors. Also, news programmes such as the morning one, could gain a larger audience better than the other channels. However, we didn't suffer much impact from the change of economics, as Channel 3 is a big media company. If they lose in one area, they can earn more in another, or they can swap employees within the group.'

While Respondent 3 from *Matichon* explained:

'We asked them <the staff> to help by saving energy for the organization, for example, by switching off electricity when they're not using it, or

switching off the computer monitor for 1-2 hours, or by using the stairs instead of the lift.'

Matichon did not ask people to stop work but reduced staff salaries.

Additionally, Respondent 4 from *Naewna* reported on the situation in the organization when the economy changed. The organization was affected as follows:

'Staff had been asked by the CEO twice in the past to reduce their salary and no one refused. They helped each other. When business improved, their salary was gradually increased. It wasn't ideal for them but they thought that it was better nothing.'

Similarly, Respondent 5 from *The Nation* gave an opinion:

'Their bonus is different depending on their role. It is understandable for them because the bonus in each year is based on the profit of the organization. Asking them to stop working is not normal, unless they volunteer to do it themselves. There were more people than jobs and our organization was in financial crisis. In some cases, we might reduce the salary for some staff for a period then return to normal later. That's what we would do.'

These situations happened in Thailand during the economic crisis of 1997. Almost every company faced these problems at the time. It was an unavoidable situation.

The Third Question regarding factors that affect the media from the perspective of society, economics and politics is how the organization has directly or indirectly participated in solving the problems (or some issues) about the conflict in the south of Thailand or the conflict of political reconciliation.

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 commented on how Channel 7 has participated in solving issues in the country:

'Regarding the conflict within the three southern provinces, people do not know much about what is going on. Therefore, the policy of our station is to present news generally around the country, rather than one specific viewpoint. With the conflict between the Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts, CEOs from broadcasting channels always stress that we should present news equally between both colours and we have to be careful not to provoke either side. We should present the facts only. In presenting both sides equally, we hope to avoid provocation. We present the facts about what has happened or what is happening in the area. We are very careful to avoid a conflict of political opinions. In my opinion, some channels that are government controlled have to accept government policy because they have to survive. The audiences who watch Channel 7 are widely ranged in terms of age and sex. We have a high brand loyalty. Furthermore, we have the largest public access network. One more strength is our prime time drama. We have the most people watching at prime time. Even though drama might not be popular in Bangkok, it is very popular in other provinces.'

Respondent 2 from Channel 3 gave her opinion:

'For some social circumstances, such as natural disasters like the flood in Bangkok, Channel 3 was not affected much because the main location of the company was not in the flooded area. There were some cases, for example, where employees were victims of the flooding directly or indirectly and could not come to work. We allowed them to work from home or send news from the area instead. Some arrived late. Additionally, the offices of Channel 3 were temporarily modified for staff to stay overnight.

Regarding political issues, we cannot support or help them directly but we present informative news for everyone. For example, when there were some protesters in an area, we told everyone to avoid those areas. On other social issues, we always support and help them directly, as you can see from the

morning news in the "Rueng Lao Chao Nee" where we raised special funding for the purchase of medical equipment for rural areas to help patients with physical problems.

As for violence in the three border provinces, Channel 3 has been trying to present the news very carefully. This has been a sensitive issue for several related organizations. The problem is deeply rooted in society and could take long time to be solved. Additionally, we need many people to help each other. As the media, we present news from facts so we cannot intervene. However, we have been told by the government to present news frankly and not to take any side, or to favour one side or the other.

New forms of media are growing in society. I think there is some impact because the main profits for media are from advertising. The audience size remains the same but it is now shared across a greater number of formats. The benefit to the audience is diversity of entertainment.'

Similarly, Respondent 3 from *Matichon* gave an opinion:

'In the flood of 2010, we helped flood victims with aid packages. With the conflict between the Red Shirts and Yellow Shirts, the media is important for the delivery of news to audiences. We do not refuse that we could make audiences believe in our news presentation. Media can reflect more controversial issues.'

Respondent 4 from *Naewna* responded to question 3:

'Our newspaper chose accuracy; we do not choose any side. We also offered a way to solve the conflict. We did not choose to support the Democratic Party, even though people believe that we are Yellow Shirts and are with the Democratic Party. It is not true. We chose integrity, which

coincidentally, is the Democratic Party. In my opinion, our newspaper looks like a Yellow Shirt and our brand image is like that. But several issues raised by Red Shirts are interesting, such as the double standard of political justice.'

Naewna has focused on politics and the majority of people think that *Naewna* is on the Yellow Shirt's side.

Respondent 5 from *The Nation* gave an opinion on how the organization has participated in solving some issues:

'The Nation's duties are to write articles, interviews and news reports, and to deliver our opinions to the public. The Nation has been seen as taking a side in politics but taking the middle ground is more difficult than taking a side. It is easy to only present one side. For example, if we choose to present a mob holding a sign that abuses someone, it would be known immediately that we do not like that side.'

Presenting news should be screened because it may affect one group or another and they need to understand that Thai people in every part of the country have different cultures. When anything has happened in the area it should try to make them understand it better in context.

The Fourth Question

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 considered the obstacles and restrictions on working as follows:

'It could cause a problem if we report a political scoop or political news in a particular area. Sometimes, the protesters hope that we would side with them because they understand that our channel belongs to the military due to our name: "Army Station Channel 7". But we do receive concessions from the army. It helps us in accessing the military when we need

information and we can go somewhat deeper than normal. Therefore, it can be an advantage rather than an obstacle.'

Respondent 2 from Channel 3 described the obstacles and restrictions on working as follows:

'Channel 3 is a commercial channel. In the event of political conflict, we will provide neutral coverage. Although, sometimes we have been accused of inclination in favour of the Red Shirts. The staff has always emphasized <the need> to be accurate and unbiased.'

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* described his experience as follows:

'We have difficulties in accessing or receiving information. This may be a bit tough, especially accessing or receiving information from the opposition side (Democratic Party) or an independent entity, such as the National Anti-corruption Commission. It may be due to the confidential information to be used in the House of Representatives.'

While Respondent 4 from *Naewna* described their obstacles and restrictions on working as follows:

'We do not experience many obstacles, for example, in reporting political news, as we see everyone as Thais together. Particularly when working with Yellow and Red Shirts we respect both; therefore, there is no obstacle. For example, I have many friends who are involved in the Red Shirts. Even though we have different thoughts, different opinions, different attitudes, <when> we go to work, we work together because we respect each other.'

In a similar way, Respondent 5 of *The Nation* did not have much of a problem:

'Currently, we have little problem because we haven't gone far enough, unless we have a problem with that group or that organization. For many

reasons, they might not like us or our news might involve them but it does not cause violence. The leader of each group can clear the air when something has happened. Thus there is no problem. The obstacle depends on our management.'

There are a wide variety of obstacles to the independent functioning of the media. Some may be internal to the organization and some external. This depends on each organization. The important issue in presenting news is accuracy and reliability. Also, media staff should have capability and professional ethics.

5.1.3 Roles of the Media relating to CSR and Sustainable Practical Approaches

In our interviews, questions were asked of the key informants about the roles of the media relating to CSR and sustainable practical approaches. The questions were:

- Do you have a particular unit/department about volunteering in society? (Volunteer in society, public unit)?
- What do you think that your organization should do/have/done to develop sustainability and corporate social responsibility at the same time?

Respondent 1 of Channel 7, which has a concession from the Thai Army, gave an explanation regarding to volunteering unit and CSR as follows:

'We have a close relationship with the Army. If we can help or facilitate, we will not hesitate because it is the policy of our station. The CEO of Channel 7 understands the importance of volunteering to help people within the community and in society, in addition to our main duties, and the administration has had a CSR approach for a long time. It has helped us to maintain a good image in society and the country.'

Respondent 2 of Channel 3 explained with regard to volunteering and CSR:

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'Apart from our commercial role, we always work for society too. We have a social project relating to environmental development as well as social and community well being. Additionally, we have some projects relating to giving priority to children and young people to learn and promote education and sports, as well as the importance of religion. Recently, we promoted a project in the field of anti-corruption, supporting the younger generation to behave well in the democracy and anti-corruption society. During the winter, our morning news programme and our channel have a project to distribute clothes and necessary aid in rural areas, such as in the Northern provinces.

We do operate CSR both inside and outside the organization. Inside, we have a human resources administrator to manage legal welfare and we also have annual health checks. We have a ward with a doctor and we set up a retirement fund for employees and encourage them to develop their knowledge and promote programmes, such as religious activities, to improve awareness of our responsibility to society and the environment.

As we are a media organization, taking social responsibility is one of our duties too. We have been supporting the campaign relating to social responsibility and have recently also supported preventing and resolving corruption, as this issue has been raised in society. Our channel has been well known in taking responsibility within society and keeping our audience happy. Formerly, Channel 3 had a foundation called "family three" established to help society through donations and gifts to impoverished people.

We initiate support and co-operation in the activities and projects of government agencies, private organizations and other organizations where their aim corresponds with social development, religious promotion or environmental protection. Even though we co-operate with government or other organizations, Channel 3 realizes the importance of neutrality in terms of information transmission, but in the eyes of the public at large we are ready to move forward with the community and all sectors of society for the purpose of sustainable development.'

Whereas Respondent 3 from *Matichon* commented:

'Regarding CSR, we have made a project about water resources development and canal water resources development. We have done this for several years. The reason for this was the flooding of 2011. If the canals are clean, then water can flow easily and this helps the flooding problem. Additionally, our anniversary of Matichon will have been fund raising for five years. We have also received donations from PTT.'

Likewise, Respondent 4 from *Naewna* also gave an example of volunteering and CSR:

'We volunteer directly ourselves. For example, in a big flood of 2011, we contributed money and distributed aid packages to Ayutthaya, because it was flooded first. Later, floods came to our area; and people helped us in return.'

By contrast, *The Nation* did not present much about CSR, as shown in an interview of Respondent 5:

'The Nation does not dedicate as much to CSR as other media. But we support the water resource development. In addition, we do volunteering by giving information to children or making books for blind people. We have

been carrying out these projects continually. We do not choose to be a presenter of CSR too much, as this is not our main duty.'

5.1.4 The Model for Developing and Managing the Media in Thailand

There were two questions targeting the model for developing and managing the media in Thailand.

The First Question was:

- Do you think that media organizations should be controlled? If so, how should this be done?

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 gave an opinion relating to the controlling of media organizations and how it should be done:

'In my opinion, we need a strong organization to take care of and control the media. Associations of the journalists or the press should do it. Not only do they describe themselves as supervising all media, but also we need legal regulation to be accepted and to be practical. For example, when there is a complaint about the media not presenting well or being biased, or when there is a mistake in presenting, especially news about the impact on children and women, they have to be more careful. Also punishment should be more substantial. Nowadays, each media type is careful when presenting news. Perhaps staff is too emotional and is not being careful enough in presenting without feeling. It shows that they are not responsible to their ethics. I think we should have an independent entity or association to control and supervise.'

Contrary to the above, Respondent 2 from Channel 3 stated:

'I think that the media shouldn't be controlled because the media should have the freedom to present the news. Thailand is a democratic country so we should have freedom to work. Our channel has our own controlling mechanism, even though it is not formal. We already have media controlling agencies in the NBTC.'

Respondent 3 from *Matichon* suggested:

'We should have a media controlling organization. Actually, we had a beacon of newspaper and national newspaper association. They worked well for the media and have had an effect on media but they could not make any serious penalty on media organizations that had done wrong. They just issued them a letter to warn or suggest problems. In the worst case, what they can do is just condemn them.'

Additionally, Respondent 4 from *Naewna* described and gave an example regarding the control of media organizations:

'Now there have been two organisations as far as I know: the TJA and NBTC. Perhaps they could also supervise the media. Recently, there was a resignation from Matichon by a popular commentator, Sorayuth, from Channel 3, from the Thai Journalist Association. When the problem happened, they could not resolve it or have any redress against them.'

Conversely, Respondent 5 from *The Nation* gave a different point of view:

'I think we should not be controlled because media consumers, audiences and readers should be the controllers. Technology has moved forward very quickly. There are many media channels, such as TV, tablets, Smartphones, etc., many different screens delivering instant news. Slow news is not good quality media. Readers or audiences should be the controller because when they see or listen to news, they can check up on the accuracy and reliability

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themselves. For example, if they read news in a newspaper and it is not true or they do not agree they can take a photo and share it on Facebook or Instagram. It is faster than any organization. Similarly, if they read news on the Internet and something has gone wrong, they just click the share button on Facebook and it will spread to other people quickly. There is regulation of social networks nowadays. I think a controlling organization is an old fashion style; it may have worked well 40-50 years ago.'

Controlling the organization is the most important administrative task and is also a sensitive issue relating to people in media industries and people who have experience in this field. Controlling an organization depends on the acceptance of several departments in their own organization, as well as external factors. Overall in Thailand, there has been a difference of opinion in general within society, economics and politics. For people in the media industry, there is also a difference of opinion. For example, people who have been working in newspapers or who have experience in the industry would not like to be controlled. In contrast, people in the broadcasting industry disagree because they think that the media should be controlled and that they should be able to control each other at the same time.

People working for newspapers with a lot of experience do not feel that they should be controlled. In contrast, those in the broadcast industry (television) believe that the media should be controlled.

The Second Question was:

- Have you ever known or recognized media controlling organizations in action?
- Do you think that Thailand should have this kind of organization to control the media?

Respondent 1 from Channel 7 commented about the controlling organization in Thailand as follows:

'I think that we should have <a controlling organization> but it should not control the content. They can control the presentation; they could concentrate on presenting information for society. In case of the Matichon resignation and Mr. Sorayuth's resignation, the <Thai Journalists> association could not do anything because there is also conflict internally in the association. For example, the main duty of the NTBC is to give a license to those media who won on the spectrum auction.

Thus, they should control the media, shouldn't they? Because they allowed them a license and organized a spectrum auction, so they should control the quality of the allocated spectrum too. It should be covered for each other, I think. Perhaps, we should have a new organization to do this. In my opinion, we have several organizations controlling or supervising the media. The number does not mean that we can be guaranteed that media can be controlled well in the short term.'

While Respondent 2 from Channel 3 stated:

'Actually, we have an organization to control the media; it just doesn't work well, or perhaps it doesn't have real authority to control those media organizations. What I can see is that they organized the spectrum auction distributing to those media organizations but they are not involved much in setting media controlling law. I think that we should reorganize the existing controlling unit or revise regulations and make them work, rather than establishing a new organization.'

In a similar way, Respondent 3 from *Matichon* gave an opinion:

'I think our country should have some kind of organization controlling the media. We have many channels on free-air as well as paid cable. Why can some cables communicate their messages and make people believe them, I mean cables for red-shirts and yellow-shirts? Some times people believe in

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one side without consideration and analysis. If we have this kind of proper controlling organization, we could have a good direction for presenting news in the future. Also, it will help the work of the media to be more effective.'

Furthermore, Respondent 4 from *Naewna* commented that:

'It should be controlled. It means that we should have a limited framework for presenting news. For newspapers, I have some comments for the National Press Council. If a newspaper prints some porn pictures, writes a column in a biased way, or insults people, these are ethically wrong and unscrupulous. What can they do apart from issuing a letter to warn them?'

On the other hand, Respondent 5 from *The Nation* argued that organizations should control themselves:

'Actually, we could control for others. If anything happens, we could warn or ask them to be more careful because we have laws relating to media.'

5.2 Qualitative Data of the Media Regulation Body

In the past, throughout the world, many powerful countries have controlled the media in their unique processes and various forms. We cannot deny that the government of Thailand has controlled the media in a direct or indirect way for a long time. We have legislation, the Act of Printing 484, to control the media. It means that the government has its own authority to shut down the media or censor the press. Additionally, we have had the radio and television council, which belonged to the government but was shut down later in 2007. Later, there was an association of media to control for each other in the media industry. However, due to many factors, not much has been achieved. The one factor that has been significantly affected is the political one.

The respondents have provided good input into this research. We mainly chose them for their experience and knowledge in the media. Not only have they experience in the

media industry, but also they are highly responsible in their careers, holding positions such as president (chairman) and director. Furthermore, society and the media have individually accepted them. Currently, some big companies employ popular or well-known people in their organizations without considering their actual experience.

Therefore, these are important issues, especially in a time when the country has been split over the idea of political violence. To be a neutral person is very important. As mentioned above, the key informants for this media regulation body are from the NBCT, ISRA, the NPCT and the NBTC, as shown in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Key Informants of Media Regulation Bodies in Thailand

Media Regulation Body	The Role	Organization
Respondent 6	Media Regulation section	NBCT
Respondent 7	Media Regulation section	ISRA
Respondent 8	Media Regulation section	NPCT
Respondent 9	Media Regulation section	NBTC

5.2.1 Roles of the Media

There are three questions (Appendix 2) in this part targeting the roles of the media.

- What are you doing for work (your responsibility)?
- What is your organization's role in the media?
- Which media organization is the most difficult to control, television or newspapers?

The First Question

Respondent 6 from NBCT commented regarding the role of media as:

'I am the president of NBCT and my main duty is to supervise the media organization to stay within guidelines and minimize adverse impact on society, especially with radio and television news. Additionally, our primary function is to support professionals in radio and television to be responsible and ethical in their profession in order to uphold honour and dignity, promote freedom and support the right to information. Furthermore, we support citizens in expressing their opinions and developing professional radio and television broadcasting.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA explained that:

'Working functions of the ISRA News are:

1)   To present news through the website focusing on investigative news related to dishonesty issues of society,

2)   To concentrate on the news about the conflict in the three southern provinces;

3)   To focus on the news about public policy.

We do not present mainstream news unless it is an important matter; for example, protests against the PDRC amnesty bill. We do not present news on a daily basis, as we do not have enough staff.

Additionally, the ISRA Institute's mission has three key functions:

1) Providing a curriculum for training people in various professions in mass communication at several levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced;

2) Carrying out research, even though it doesn't make much money. The research is not advanced but can be applied in practice because the topic is related to the circumstance and a network of professional organizations;

3) Establishing a news agency, which is missing from mainstream media. Generally, our news would not be too noticeable but the majority people of

society can accept it. It is within an ethical framework; for example, we do not present headlines in an exaggerated way.'

Respondent 8 from the NBTC said:

'Our responsibility is to control people in the newspaper medium to remain within a principled framework. Our primary function is to regulate them and work on ethics within the framework of the Press Council. We concentrate on news in newspapers only, including details of news, images, articles and all newspaper content. If we receive complaints, our committee will consider and punish them in our way. After that, the newspaper must publish the decision for seven days and we may require those newspapers to publish an apology.'

Respondent 9 from Office of NBTC explained about his profile and the role of NBTC in the media:

'Firstly, I would like to introduce my role and myself. I am an external expert in the sub-committee. I am not on the staff of the NBTC. My role is to give them advice. Our main function is to allocate the spectrum for television broadcasting, making a spectrum auction and to overview opinions. We have to gather people from several fields, such as television, radio, and information communication technology (ICT) in our committees to brainstorm ideas and consider offers from many organizations for the spectrum auction. Furthermore, our organization is an independent entity established under the Constitution Act, 2007, to manage the spectrum used for radio broadcasting, television, national communications and telecommunications. The spectrum is a national resource for the public benefit. We could say that NBTC deputies allocate the spectrum and control radio broadcasting, television, national communications, and

telecommunications in order to provide the most benefit to people. The NBTC works as an administrative office for them.'

The Second Question

The second question was about the difference in control between television and newspapers.

Respondent 6 from the NBCT commented on the most difficult media organization to control between televisions and newspapers:

'I think it is not much different. It might be a little bit more difficult controlling TV because of the timeframe. For example, a live programme would be difficult to control.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA said:

'I think that, in principle, the television medium is more difficult to control than print media. The NBTC has not finished establishing the process for controlling television. Additionally, the NBTC gives them <members> the motivation to make money from establishing an organization and regulating themselves. We might see an achievement if this method can be used. However, in practice it is still difficult.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT described the most difficult media to control between televisions and newspapers:

'I cannot say one is more difficult than the other. It depends on the nature of the media. For TV, it is difficult in the sense that it comes fast and goes fast too. For newspapers, it is difficult because if something is wrong in principle or violates anything, it is historical evidence on paper to be seen many times and also it is difficult to change. Despite the publication of an

apology on paper, people have already remembered the wrong article. They may not remember the correct one or they might not see apology.'

Respondent 9 from Office of NBTC said:

'Nowadays, according to the status of the media, it would be difficult to be controlled. There are two kinds of soft control. The first one is called hard power: this is where regulation clearly specifies what can or cannot be done. The second is called soft power. This way is control by culture and good ethics. Currently, media law is not strong enough. New newspapers can be launched easily. They do not have to register like in the past.

Free TV is more complicated because they have to get spectrum through an auction from NBTC to register as a channel. However, TV broadcasting is competitive because there are alternative channels without spectrum. This includes cable TV, TV satellite, Internet TV. Controlling these is more difficult than controlling Free TV.'

5.2.2 Factors that affect the Perspectives of Society, Economics and Politics

There were four questions about the factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics for the Media Regulation Body:

- Do you think it is difficult to establish media law and decide when it will be applied?
- Are you concerned that the media has focused on profit, rather than their responsibility?
- When government policy about media law changes, does the media have to adapt/change also?
- Have you experienced any problems in your work? What has restricted your work?

The First Question

Respondent 6 from NBCT commented on the difficulty in establishing media law:

> *'The media should be controlled. In the past we have seen good and bad sides to control. In society, some people might think that the media has created many problems and needs to be fully supervised and that there should be serious sanctions if they create problems. On the other hand, the media has been very useful in shaping the law and making it easy to understand. People think that the media should be controlled. We are the media, and we do not deny that we should be controlled. But intensive supervision is like a double-edged sword. It has a good effect on the regulatory side, but it can cause problems if the media is not free enough.*
>
> *Also, we do not have the opportunity to act as a check on social media. It is like having someone infiltrate our organization. It can be argued that such a role could not function properly. This needs further explanation to understand. It is harder than having rules and legislation to deal with the concentrated media.*
>
> *The conclusion is that the media claims the right to serve society. However, when we perform our function, we reduce their rights, even with the government, or even to refer to whatever or about the stability of the country, it always has two sides.'*

Respondent 7 from ISRA gave details about the difficulty in establishing media law:

> *'The media does not have power over the law. Sanction is the punishment of the media in general, such as defamation or infringement or food and medicine. It is the only law, which carries no serious penalty. The NBTC has stated three ethical keys:*
>
> *1) Protection of awareness information;*

2) Protection of infringement by the media;

3) Protection of practitioners.

As we can see from the three keys, there is no reference to any legal sanctions.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT gave his opinion about the difficulty in establishing media law:

'I think that, in Thailand, the law of the media can be very difficult. Over 16 years, we have not operated under government control. In Thai society, it is the belief that if any organization is operating within the law, they are not believed. It would be problematic to implement anything <anyone or any organization do anything wrong>. We have no real power to deal with any newspapers. We do not have the legal authority to close a newspaper or give them a licence. We do not want these powers. The advantage of the Press Council is that we are independent from the government and other organizations. We are able to work independently.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC discussed the difficulty in establishing media law:

'We must distinguish between the different ways in which the media can break the law. For example, exceeding the time allowed for advertising (overtime advertising) and providing unsuitable content. The offences are not comparable. They are different offences. Thus, they need to be distinguished carefully. For overtime advertising, if asked whether it should be punished or not, of course it should, but it does not need to be excessive. Where content is unsuitable, the offence would be more serious because it is a violation of consumer rights.

Finally, I believe that we need a broad framework of control that specifies what is acceptable or not acceptable. If anything is outside this framework, we think that it is freedom and the media has a right to express an opinion.'

The second question asked if there was a concern about the media meeting its responsibility.

The Second Question

Respondent 6 from NBCT commented on whether the media has focused on profit rather than its responsibility:

'We just need to define what the media is and we need to separate the different types of media. Also, we need to understand what the purpose of the media is. It could be the tool of investors who seek to benefit. These investors could be a business group or politicians. The media regulators are important, as are the mechanisms and tools used to oversee it. What has happened in the media industry reflects that it cannot be regulated. This is what I mean; it is complicated. Mass media and television media are different. Free TV is one medium, cable TV is one medium, and satellite TV is one medium. In cable TV, Some people use the medium for business; others use it for the benefit of society. However, some might use it only for financial profit. We cannot presume that they all do it for profit. If it is being used for profit, do we still call them mass media or it is just a tool of business? We don't have mechanisms or the processes to intercept those people who use this channel for financial profit. People could understand that the media are bad, the media are not good, and the media can take sides in politics without thinking carefully.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA added more details:

'The NBTC should be able to handle illegal advertising but the problem is that it cannot, because there are a lot of instances of advertising breaking the law. If they could control advertising, it would be ok. Now, the focus of cable TV is on business, rather than producing news. ASTV and TNEWS are cable TV channels, which are the tools of politicians. ASTV is an important channel of the Yellow Shirts or opposition of the Pheua Thai government. TNEWS supports Thaksin and the Blue Sky the Democrat party. They are clearly political tools, but they still need to earn a profit too. The easiest way to earn money is through advertising. They are this kind of channel.

Illegal advertising is another matter. Additionally, Matichon doesn't do advertising because they don't have their own channel. Bangkok Dhutharakij tried to have their own channel but did not achieve it. However, they can do commercial business on channels because there has been a regulation of the length requirement for advertising. For example, for cable TV, advertising is limited to six minutes per hour. This affects the profitability of broadcasting, because advertising can generate a lot of money. Thus, they cannot avoid being dominated by advertising. In the past, government or state powers dominated the media; it was normal. Therefore, should we have a concept that small news channels should have a short duration of advertising? Sometimes, the government pays for advertising. Being independent of the media depends on the structure of the media ownership.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT provided details on how the media has focused on profit, rather than responsibility:

'Good media is media that adheres to the principles of truth. We say what we see, don't say what we listen to, and don't say what we think or what others think. Images that we see do not mean visual truth. We have to scrutinize the judgments to see if it is real or not.

The principle of being good media has two parts. The first part is to adhere to the facts; present the truth about what actually happens. The other part is consistency. We might have to look back into the past at what they did and ask whether they were honest. Have they changed? Do they take any side in politics? At present, a few groups own most major media companies. They have used the media to seek their own benefit in both direct and indirect ways. For example, Central Group has owned the Bangkok Post. Of course, it presents news relating to its business. Additionally, some media take sides in an obvious way, for example, ASTV, Matichon and Naewna.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC gave details about the media's focus on profit rather than responsibility:

'Good media should be concerned about ideology and benefiting society. The media should take an ideological standpoint in what it supports. For example, Matichon supports Red Shirts and ASTV supports Yellow Shirts. Therefore, they cannot say that the opposition is bad, or otherwise, because it is a political ideology.

I think that the process of presenting news can be judged. For example, words from the news source should not be distorted. The news report should be straightforward and disclose the conflict of interest of your stakeholder to the reader group. You can decide whether the news is bad or good. If you see that some news agencies distort the news, or try to control the reporter, you can judge for yourself.

Currently, there are several power groups in Thailand entering the media industry, such as the Bangkok Post group. The Jiratiwat Central Group family owns the Bangkok Post. If the Bangkok Post reports in their news that Central Group Company has increased its profits, it should also announce to its readers that the company is the largest shareholder in the Bangkok Post, in order to let them know that there is an advantage to them in reporting that news. This is very common practice in other countries but it is very rare in Thailand.

The dominance of business or political investors, both internally and externally in Thailand, is critical to the media industry, especially within the Association of Journalists. The big fish-eat-small fish system is undeniably present within journalism.

The giant TV channels can ignore the consensus of the Association of Journalists and blame the moderator. We cannot control them. Additionally, political parties have established several programs on Satellite TV to attack opponents or to advertise them. It is the choice of the people to consider the image of the media.'

The Third Question

Respondent 6 from the NBCT responded on media laws as follows:

'Changing policy or changing government does not affect any part of our organization. It is not related to the policy.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA commented:

'It does not matter whether or not a government administrates.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT discussed details about changing the government policy and how it is related to their organization:

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'Policies should not be called a policy but a principle. All members of newspapers in regions and provinces have a mission to take care of themselves. The independence of the organisation has continued for 10 years. It does not change, even though the government changes, but the function of the Press Council would be unchanged. If asked would we change the policy according to government policy, we would not; we have our own mission, and it will continue.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC explained:

'The NBTC is a state agency. It is not a government agency and it is not under the government. Its status is similar to that of independent organisations, such as the Election Commission. The committee is made up of public officials so we don't have to listen to the voice of politics. It is the role of the NBTC to be set apart from political interference.

The international prototype will be similar. The independent agency is not under the government. In fact, if there were a change in the government, it would change little. The policy direction would have virtually no effect. What we should be more careful of is the influence of capital, particularly investors from media businesses because they would like us to issue policies to benefit themselves. But the influence of politics rarely affects the Commission. There may be some changes in the ICT Ministry if a minister has changed because we have some projects relating to the NBTC. However, there has been no effect on its primary role.'

The Fourth Question

The last question was about problems or limitations in working practice.

Respondent 6 from the NBCT commented on the problems of work and restrictions on working practice.

'If you say that the media controls itself <they investigate and look after each other as a controlling organization> then when something happens, they don't do anything, they are not punished. Supervision does not mean only to punish. Supervision also means campaigning or educating to make the media aware and understand.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA presented the problems of work and restrictions on working practice:

'Funding is the primary issue because we do not want a big lump of capital from an individual; it would dominate and threaten. But it is possible that capital and government dominate the mainstream media. It is like the government does today, distributing money to whomever the government would like to see advertising. The influence of government and capital started in the Thaksin era and it has continued a little under Abhisit. Abhisit did not do much but this government <Pheua Thai> was very clear. The right way is that media should be free from the domination of capital and the government. We will be sharing the good news but it is difficult. In fact, we share the ridiculous news.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT gave details about the problems of work and the restrictions on working practice, as follows:

'The limitations we have discussed over 16 years are that we are not an organization established by law, to be supported by other organizations or by the private sector; it would be observed that credibility is low. This is because there is no legal framework supporting our organization. This is the belief in Thai society; if any organization is not under the law, it is problematic to implement it and if it is not the government organization so we have no power to deal with anyone. We were told that we do not have the legal authority to go off or to get a licence to print newspapers that we

do not want. However, the advantage of being a newspaper council is that we are independent of the government and can work independently without worry from any side.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC gave details about the problems of work and restrictions on working practice, as follows:

'As I mentioned earlier, the important influence is our independence. The NBTC has been questioned about the freedom of work and how we have been independent from capital. In the recent 3G bid, we were questioned about the benefit of telecommunications. They doubted that we might have made decisions beneficial to media investors or other business interests. However, even though we have independence in working, sometimes it might be seen that we could have a hidden agenda from some perspective. Currently, we do not have any organization to control us. In theory or from our administrative structure, the Senate Council is our boss. However, they have never checked on us. We are supposed to have a supervisory board to check on us or control us and report directly to the Senate Council, but we still have problems in this regard, such as financial problems. So the supervisory board could be very difficult to work in this term.'

5.2.3 Roles of the Media relating to Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainable Practical Approaches

There are two questions in this part referring to roles of the media relating to CSR and sustainable practical approaches. The first question was:

- What do you think about businesses employing CSR in their organizations?

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Respondent 6 from the NBCT commented:

> *'I think that in any society, it is a problem. It is not only the responsibility of the media, but also of everyone else, to help to make society better. I think that we could play our part, but it would depend on our reason for doing so. I don't think it is wrong; however, it depends on the objective of helping.'*

Respondent 7 from ISRA gave details about employing CSR in the organization:

> *'CSR is not about public relations. For example, getting donations to help flood relief or giving help to the Philippines can be called CSR. However, media should act first and not pretend to audiences, because these are duties of the media. If you do your best in your duty, it is like doing CSR. Furthermore, you should look after the staff in your organization because this is CSR as well. If you can do this well, you can influence society around you.'*

Respondent 8 from NPCT added that:

> *'We provide knowledge and ideas to media organizations in other provinces, including a book about ethics. We have to admit that perhaps they are far from providing knowledge on technology. Sometimes I organize meetings or seminars relating to media ethics.'*

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC presented as follows:

> *'We have several events relating to CSR. Legally, we have money from fees and the auction <of bandwidth>, and we allocate this to the fund. We spend this fund on CSR and other events for society. For example, we use these funds for research into telecom satellite communications. We also installed a telecommunication tower in a crowded community so they could communicate with people who had access to the Internet. It is their right and this is a basic service.'*

The Second Question

- Do you think media organizations apply CSR?

- What is a suitable approach to applying CSR in a Media Regulation body?

Respondent 6 from the NBCT commented on an appropriate approach to the application of CSR in a Media Regulation body:

'I think we can, but it should be done in the right way. It should be ethical too. We should not take advantage of this. For example, suppose you have money from some sponsors and you would like to spend some of this on CSR; should you include the name of the sponsors on your event?'

Respondent 7 from ISRA said:

'I think it can, but it must be accurate and must not exceed or neglect their duty. Reporting is at the forefront of the media. It is to present information and facts. So they have to be careful about presenting ridiculous news. Furthermore, our duty is to educate audiences and entertain them. The social services have two forms available in the community: the first one is paid advertising, and the second is not paid.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT discussed an appropriate approach to the application of CSR in a Media Regulation body:

'I strongly think that we should do, but CSR is not about promoting the organization or gaining more profit or more sales. Ideally, CSR should be done with altruism. I have seen that some organizations profit from CSR. It is not correct, and if you do profit it should be returned. I asked the principal of our society to act together for CSR wholeheartedly and not for profit. I think we have many forms of CSR, but we have to be careful about their objectives.'

Respondent 9 from the NBTC gave more details:

'I think that we should do it <CSR>. We can see that Thais do not understand the true meaning of CSR, or cannot imagine which form of CSR we should concentrate on or make happen. We use a standard approach to CSR, for example, reforesting the forest or donating flood bags, mobilizing staff to build a school. I don't think this is really useful. In my opinion, I think media organizations should use their own expertise to help society, rather than giving entertainment news or other news that is topical. If the media would like to demonstrate actual CSR, it should use its expertise in producing news about underprivileged persons in society in various dimensions. For example, Channel 3 is located near a slum, but they have never produced any documentaries about it. They might think that is not effective in a business context.'

5.2.4 The Model for Developing and Managing the Media in Thailand

There are two questions in this part relating to the model for developing and managing the media in Thailand:

- Should the media be controlled by a media regulation organization? How should it be controlled?
- Could Thailand have a free media organization such as the BBC?

The First Question

Respondent 6 from the NBCT comments about being controlled by a media regulation body:

'Our Council is an independent organization formed for overseeing the media. If you ask us how well it works, it doesn't work well and we have regulators to control our members <television channels and radio

organizations>. On the other hand, if you look at what the media does when there is a breach or a problem with the rights of others, it has found a little and it is less than before. About the infringement of crime, it has dropped further than before but it cannot be bereaved (?). Some times, they <news producers> are careless so we have to distinguish between negligence and intention.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA made more commented:

'In my opinion, I think that before we will be able to control any organization, Thai media should invest in personal development, because our human resources are of very poor quality. In the past, they had no chance to get training so we set the training for them. The problem for those working in the field of media is they don't have enough knowledge <of the field of media> even though they graduated with a bachelor's degree. I can say that everyone who graduated from university needs more knowledge in our field, so they need training.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT saw the role of the NBTC as important:

'NBTC looks to be a media organization. The news broadcasting council is supposed direct the content of news. Currently, we have the issue of Section 37, which is restricts the content of television and radio programs. It is copied from the regulations of the board of directors in radio and television, which was set in the past. It has no flexibility. It allowed officials to use broad discretion. I would say that if NBTC should have their role in inspection, from the law, it has to be written that NBTC must have their role but, however, it is not only one main organizations to do this duty. It is a central organization to connect between media organizations and to lead in the control of the media.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC gave details about the way the media has been controlled by the media regulation body and how it should be controlled:

> *'Media control is out of date. Controlling ourselves is the best way and this has been recognized globally. For example, media organisations come together as an association and form committees to oversee themselves. Also, there are penalties within the association, which are not strong penalties as a country penalty. It is another level up. If it does not work, it could be the government's duty. For example, in the advertising field, they have an association to control each other. When they have their own problems, they talk to each other. However, a model like this might not work well because associations have their own beliefs and politics, which could affect the association.'*

The Second Question

Respondent 6 from the NBCT commented on the reason Thailand does not have a free media organization like the BBC:

> *'If media organisations are owned by the country, it would be hard to expect the media to transcend the limitations of being representative of government authority or being a machine to maximise profits to the shareholders. What is missing in the Thailand media system are public media and community media. These are the main pillars of media reform. Radio and television companies, such as the BBC in England or the NHK in Japan, are examples of public media ownership. They are managed by a public organization to be truly useful for the public. They are independent from investors and the government. Law establishes this independence. Politicians cannot interfere.*
>
> *I believe that if we sit and talk to people we will know who takes sides or not. A member of an association <regulating the media>should be neutral.*

People in the media should not take sides and should present news from the facts. I think it is more important that the media should act as transparently as possible. I think that being neutral is doing your duty as good media. You present news from the facts and do not add personal comments to the news. However, I believe that we still have a neutral media in Thailand.'

Respondent 7 from ISRA explained why Thailand does not have a free media organization like the BBC:

'In the past, councils relating to radio and broadcasting could use their regulations to control each other effectively. In the last eight years, the media has been divided into groups determined by which political party they favour. Presenting the news should be factually accurate. As we can see, it is now politically biased. I think that if Thai politics were not strong, then the media would not be strong either.'

Respondent 8 from the NPCT presented:

'It isn't neutral in newspaper media. They take one side, but we use the term 'non-biased', it would be better. We do not think that we like one side or like any media, especially. How should we present news? We cannot share two parts in the balanced side. We don't have any organization in ideology not to take any sides.'

Respondent 9 from the Office of the NBTC responded:

'Theoretically, we don't have the word "neutral" in journalism. It is very difficult to measure. It is rare to find neutral media in Thailand. For example, Thairath newspaper has its own business related to Polyplus (entertainment on TV) so it advertises itself in its newspaper. As another example, the Daily News newspaper has other businesses, such as Yakult

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(special milk drink). Nowadays, several media are related to business. Therefore, they should declare their own business interests.'

5.3 Qualitative Data for the Academic Readers

In the group of academic readers, four academic readers with experience in the media industry were chosen. These academics have good knowledge and skills in this field. Additionally, some of them have a business perspective as they have worked in business for a considerable period of time. However, the interviews were conducted carefully so that interviewees were neutral, in order to minimize bias.

The first respondent is well known in Thai media circles. All journalists know him well. He is also a co-founder of Pacific International Communications Limited, a former member of the Constituent Assembly in 1996, a former senator of Suphanburi in 2000 and a former member of the National Assembly in 2006. He used to work as a news producer and anchor at a television station in Thailand. There is no doubt that he has a very good knowledge of politics and the media, and experience of politics from a different period in Thailand.

The second respondent is proficient in the media, as well as being a lecturer in leading universities and a guest lecturer in several other universities. His brother, Ongart Klampaiboon, has been a member of the House of Representatives in Thailand. He has written a number of books, which are popular in Thailand.

The third respondent is a person with a variety of professional roles. These include Assistant Minister of the Ministry of Commerce and a businessman and columnist of a newspaper. Furthermore, he has taught at a number of universities.

The last respondent has a wide knowledge from her experience in working in the media and in politics at Suan Dusit Poll. This poll is well known as providing an important

measurement of public opinion in Thailand. This experience gives a perspective of measuring community attitudes towards the role of the media and politics. She has also taught in universities. Key academic reader informants are summarised in Table 5.6

Table 5.6 Key Informants of Academic Readers in Thailand

Academic Reader	Field	Media
Respondent 10	Communications and Politics	Television and Press media
Respondent 11	Economics and Politics	Television and Radio
Respondent 12	Administration and Politics	Press media
Respondent 13	Education and Politics	Press media

5.3.1 Roles of the Media

There were two questions (Appendix 3) in this part targeting the roles of the media.

The first question was:

- What do you do now? Is it releated to the media?

- Which media have you often recived between television and newspapers?

   Which section of the newspaper, e.g., society, economics or politics do you read?

Respondent 10 from the academic readers described his experience in media as follows:

   'I am retired. I worked in the media for 45 years and was also a member of an important organisation in Thailand. Additionally, I worked as a commentator in the media industry for Channel 3. I use the Internet, rather

than television. I stopped reading newspapers 10 years ago but read online newspapers instead.'

Respondent 11 from the academic readers described his experience as follows:

'My main role is as deputy director of a TV programme called Voice TV and I am also a committee member for this programme. Additionally, I have my personal programme, which is "Thailand", about politics, economics and contemporary society. I also work as a columnist in Matichon weekly and as a newspaper editor. Usually, I write articles focused on the political economy. Furthermore, I also write books relevant to media and politics in Thailand. My academic experience is as a part-time lecturer in some universities.'

Respondent 12 from the academic readers stated:

'I have been a businessman working in the Fire Truck Company, a part-time lecturer at the Siam University and, in the field of media, I was a columnist in the Thansethagij newspaper, which is focused on politics and the economy.'

Respondent 13 from the academic readers stated:

'I was a lecturer at Rajabhat Suan Dusit University and I also worked in Suan Dusit Poll as a director of international affairs for more than 12 years.'

The Second Question

- Do you think that media owners have other businesses? If so, where are those other interests?
- Does the media owner do anything to make theses interests transparent?
- Have you ever heard or seen these influences?

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Respondent 10 of the academic readers explained the other business interests of media owners:

> *'As far as I know, the Daily News has other businesses relating to Yakult (probiotic dairy product) and also a security car company that carries money. These were started after the establishment of the newspaper. The Daily news was established from news mainly. They wouldn't want to do a magazine even if they could. The Nation Group has been expanding its media business to digital TV and other newspapers. It is a mega project relating to media. Thairath, the Daily news and Matichon already have their own channel on television. These owners are not actually in journalism; they just want to sell advertising to build their businesses.'*

Respondent 11 from the academic readers described the other business interests of media owners:

> *'I don't think there is a problem about owners' other businesses. I don't think the owner has any problem, in terms of the media. In the perspective of media, such as television, newspapers and the Internet, there are two sides that are intertwined; ownership in a business sense and ownership as a profession. In each medium, it has to be negotiated with the owner in the sense of the business and the sense of the media profession. Even at TPBS, which is not owned by one owner, I think the person who works as news editor may negotiate in producing work with TPBS executives. The ownership of the media is not an issue, but power administration between CEOs in organizations with the editors would be more concerning. Therefore, I think that the relationship between CEOs and editors would be the main issue.'*

Respondent 12 from the academic readers group added more detail:

'I think, they <the other interests of media owners> are related to business in almost every medium. As we can see, newspaper owners are starting to work in digital television, such as the newspaper giant Thairath or the Daily News.'

Respondent 13 from the academic readers commented on the other business of media owners:

'Suan Dusit Poll is one kind of medium because we gather public opinions from hot issues in society or raise issues by questioning people, analysing the data and publishing the results. Additionally, we have other offerings relating to surveying or researching for private or government organizations. However, this tends to have been in the form of employment in universities. Even though we do work other than gathering public opinion, it is not related to our public work at all.'

5.3.2 Factors that Affect the Media from the Perspectives of Society, Economics and Politics

There were four questions in this part:

- Which media do you think is the most reliable: television or newspapers?
- When the world economy changed, do you think that media organizations adapted or improved their direction?
- Do you think that media organizations can help solve some conflict issues in Thailand; for instance, the violence in Naratiwat-Pattani- Yala Southern provinces or the PAD and UDD?
- In your opinion, do you think the media is free to produce news?

The First Question

Respondent 10 from the academic readers analysed the question of the most reliable media between televisions and newspapers, as follows:

'Overall, newspapers are more reliable than television in the data aspect but television is more reliable than newspapers in regard to presenting images to the viewers. There are different views. For example, newspapers have more detail and do not have to rely on pictures. They can present the news without pictures. On the other hand, it would be difficult for television if it could not obtain pictures or clips. Television would be disadvantaged in terms of detail but would be at more of an advantage in terms of sound. Moreover, television is beneficial in terms of entertainment, which is popular in Thailand. The advantage of newspapers is in the deep analysis of topics compared to television.'

Respondent 11 from the academic readers gave his opinion regarding which medium is the most reliable:

'I think it is difficult to answer this because it depends on the culture and nature of each organization. Some newspapers are reliable, while some are unreliable. Similarly, some television channels are reliable while some are unreliable. Television can be a tool to direct or dominate people in society, much faster than some would think, and this is dangerous. Most people in newspapers say that their real competitor is television. Newspapers are printed every 12 hours and they are distributed to a wide circle.'

Respondent 12 from the academic readers commented on which medium - television or newspapers - is the most reliable:

'I think the country has little trust in the newspapers, especially on political issues, because of the different mind-partisan separation and writing on their own opinions and trying to control the readers minds. On the other hand, newspapers still present news content to consumers very well. Television lacks perspective in the news and does not mention much detail beyond the headlines.'

Respondent 13 from the academic readers commented on which medium is the most reliable:

> *'I think that newspapers are more reliable for news than television because newspapers give more detail and have editors to review the news before producing it. Moreover, Thailand has a variety of newspapers to choose from, such as political, economic and sport. News in television is presented in such a short time. They are not very clear on detail and sometimes present only the highlights of an issue to influence audiences. With regard to newspapers, I would choose to read from a specific column, such as political analysis in a weekly newspaper rather than a daily newspaper. Additionally, as we know that media in our country have different mind sets as well, thus, we have to choose which newspaper to read. Otherwise, we won't get the true information.'*

The Second Question of this part is whether or not the media can adapt when the economy changes.

Respondent 10 of the academic reader's commented on whether or not the media can adapt when the economy changes:

> *'Overall, it is good for the press media. It is good in terms of quantity but not in terms of quality. I think Thailand has a very small number of quality newspapers. Good quality newspapers in Thailand are the Bangkok Post and The Nation, but they are not in the Thai language. We can do well in English but not Thai, I don't understand.'*

Respondent 11 of the academic readers gave his opinion on whether or not the media can adapt when the economy changes:

> *'I think recently the Amedia Group has been the most adaptable group. The audience numbers watching TV programmes on the Internet and on mobile*

devices has been increasing. In the USA, the number of people watching on the Internet or mobile devices is almost equal to TV viewing. Even in Thailand, they have adapted to watching on satellite rather than normal TV. I think that we will see an adaptation to new media, such as digital TV and TV mobile.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers commented on whether the media can adapt when the economy changes:

'Nowadays, most people don't watch much TV or listen much to the radio. They focus on social media rather than traditional media. Therefore, media organizations have to adapt themselves to present or spread their news and information on social networks instead of the usual press. Moreover, young people do not support the political bias of the media.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers comments on whether or not the media can adapt when the economy changes:

'In my opinion, it might not be directly affected. However, the economic changes will have an indirect effect. For example, we might have less offering work due to the change in those private and government organizations.'

The Third Question involved an opinion on solving some conflict issues in Thailand, for instance, the violence in three provinces or the PAD and UDD groups.

Respondent 10 of the academic readers responded:

'No, I do not see anyone doing anything to solve the conflict. Most of them will choose their side. In TPBS, I see them trying to make a relationship between the two sides. However, that is their ideology. They are trying to bring people together to talk. TPBS is exceptional in the media because it has a duty of providing public television. Apart from TPBS, I don't see

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anyone presenting news like them. If we talk about the principle of political communication or the media, generally the media is a public stage for presenting their opinions; it is not specific only TPBS. They all could be a public stage, officially. They have to do so because it is their duty. As we see today, those media did not serve the public well and didn't make society better in any way. They have just carried out their business, such as renting time to produce their programme or advertise products. They don't have a policy about political reconciliation or making society better. They try not to interfere in politics or do anything that will make them trouble. Most television media focus on entertainment programmes.'

Respondent 11 of the academic readers discussed the solving of conflict issues in Thailand:

'I think they are trying to do something compared to five years ago, even though it might not be obvious. Presentation of the images of Muslims in the South is not good; for example, they are called terrorists and drug-addicted gangsters in the media. I think that the media presented them in a negative way that might have caused the violence at the Southern border. However, it is better than the Tak Bai incident[1]. I think they should show more sensitivity when presenting news about such violence. Whenever you speak to a specific group, you need to present both views. I think this matters to those people who are mentioned in the news.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers gave his opinion on the solving of conflict issues in Thailand:

'Personally, I think the media does not pay much attention <to solving conflict>. There is little presented about the conflict at the Southern border,

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[1] . The Tak Bai Case is an event during the South Thailand insurgency that occurred on 25 October 2004 in Tak Bai, Thailand, resulting in 85 deaths.

even in the social media. I think that if we want to solve this problem it will take a long time because this issue has lasted a long time in politics. About the political separation, I think we could adopt the approach of inviting all parties to negotiate together on this issue.'

Respondent 13 of the academic reader's comments on the solving of conflict issues in Thailand:

'We might help in terms of the publicity, but finding a solution has to rely on other organizations. I think now that the Thai media takes sides in politics and is unaware of the actual problem of the three provinces conflict.'

The Fourth Question of this part was about liberty and the right to present the news.

Respondent 10 of the academic readers commented on liberty and the right to present news:

'In this country, they have their freedom to violate others at any time and they have more freedom to abuse people, even though freedom is within the framework of constitutional law.'

Respondent 11 of the academic readers comments:

'Personally, I think that in our country, we have freedom of the press much more than in other media. We have little interference in the content of a newspaper in Thailand. We can see that the press media, such as newspapers, will be quite careful talking about sensitive topics, such as the royal institution. However, I think that the newspapers can talk about many issues and television is the media that is most controlled. Similarly, film has also been highly controlled. It <film> is a medium that requires large resources to produce. It has been controlled by the state because this kind of medium is easy to control and can spread to a large audience quickly.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers stated:

'I think they have freedom in presenting news, but this might not be in every topic, such as politics. If they are privately owned, I think they would have more independence to present politics.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers commented on liberty and the right to present news, as follows:

'I think the media has freedom to present the news, but the media is inclined to express its own views on politics. Currently, the media concentrates on entertainment programmes, rather than educating the public.'

5.3.3 CSR and Sustainability

There were two questions in this part. The first one was about the role of CSR in the media.

The First Question was:

- Apart from normal media roles, do you think that the media can develop society? Have you heard or known of this and can you give examples?

Respondent 10 of the academic readers described the role of CSR in the media, as follows:

'The important function of the media is to benefit the public or readers or the audience: to serve the public interest. The direct meaning of CSR is that we take responsibility ourselves and, in turn, society benefits. We have to operate as a service to society and not as a business. Today, the PTT Company has to pay for reforestation. It is such an enormous investment to advertise the reforestation campaign. I will give an example: last year, the PTT Company came to offer to do a documentary on reforestation, but I did

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not want to make it because we wanted to do a good documentary about the environment and the forest, but they wanted to make it related to the PTT. If they are demonstrating CSR regarding reforestation, why do they have to make such a huge investment in advertising?'

Respondent 11 of the academic readers explained:

'We need to look at each type of medium. I cannot comment on the general view. It is difficult to answer this because I think there is a specific function of each medium, such as television, radio and newspapers. It depends on their role.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers commented:

'Currently, the media has begun to realize more about CSR but it hasn't done anything in practice. I always see them demonstrating CSR regarding reforestation or donating money to orphans. I don't think this is real CSR. I think that they don't know much about CSR or their true responsibility.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers commented:

'In the organizations that I have been working for so far, we have focused on the internal welfare, such as serving lunch for free or giving staff a bonus. It is extra money for them because other departments in our university don't have a bonus, since we are part of a government organization and not a private one. Furthermore, we do CSR for our staff first, rather than externally. However, recently we did some CSR on the flooding situation. We donated essential utensils and life vests to flood victims. We didn't do public relations much on CSR; we just posted on our Facebook page of Suan Dusit Poll.'

The Second Question was:

If the media give importance to corperate social responsibility, do you think they can do it sustainably?

Respondent 10 of the academic readers commented on the sustainability of CSR:

> *'I think all media have CSR and should make it sustainable. For example, they should create an activity for society. It is not about asking people to donate or asking for a sponsor and we would do CSR for you. In an easy way, if you are a journalist, you can write a good column or a good article to sustain society. For example, we didn't accept the PTT's work to do a documentary last year because it did not suit our ideology. I did not like this kind of business. We had a good programme called "our school" on Channel 5; it is still showing now. They go to impoverished schools around Thailand and the programme raised a lot of money through donations. I would like to see television channels do CSR like this.'*

Respondent 11 of the academic readers commented on the sustainability of CSR:

> *'The thing is, I cannot imagine the role of the media in CSR. As far as I know, it seems that they would rather be about helping victims of flooding or disasters or maintaining some area of a nearby company, rather than doing other things. However, I think observing CSR doesn't make an organization sustainable; that depends on a good management system and on gaining reputation. CSR is a way of creating a good image for the organization.'*

Respondent 12 of the academic readers added more details on the sustainably of CSR:

'I think that sustainability of CSR can be created, but it would take such a long time to achieve and, also, it needs good planning and administration. Most importantly, it requires a huge investment too.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers commented:

'During the year, we don't do much but the New Year is the time that we thank all media in Thailand or international media for publishing our poll results. It is not like CSR, but it is a way to promote ourselves, for example, we meet them and we tell them to let us know if they have a specific issue in society and we could survey those topics. It is a way to do something for society or the public.'

5.3.4 The Model of Development and Management in Thai Media organizations

There were two questions in this part. The first one was whether or not media should be controlled.

- Do you think media should be controlled? How should they be controlled in practice?
- Do you think Thailand should have an organization to control the media?

Respondent 10 of the academic readers gave his opinion on whether or not media should be controlled:

'I think that the media should not be controlled; this world is about freedom. Everyone has freedom, they can think for themselves. We cannot block the freedom of mass media, whether through law or ideology. Even though we tell them that we have a censor unit, that program cannot be launched or this one cannot be done. You cannot do like NBTC is doing.

You could control some programs that asked for concessions from you. However, we still have other media, such as satellite channels and commercial media, which are difficult to control. The media organization has to create awareness of the ideals of professional ethics and can be directed from within the organization itself.'

There is a condition of concession allowance. You have NBTC but it cannot control ASCB or Blue Sky, because they use satellite channels from Hong Kong or Laos Star. The government is likely to offer a channel to make media laws. I used to say when I was a member of the Constituent Assembly, don't control the media, we should manage a professional council to allow members to control each other. Technology allows a person not to be in the control framework. Technology is an important factor that makes men good and bad today. The newspapers must control themselves; in particular, the media, which transmits information to the public.'

Respondent 11 of the academic readers commented on whether or not the media should be controlled:

'I totally disagree; we have to believe in the judgment of the media. Most people don't want to see bad things happen in this society. I believe people in society can choose to believe anything and do not choose their own beliefs. In fact, there are some media organizations that make very seditious newspapers with content about political issues between the groups. I think people would put pressure on these media and tend to get rid of their stance at the end. Of course, they would have no credibility in the profession in the long term. As you can see, the newspapers taking their side are Matichon, Neawna, The Manager or Thaipost. I don't think they are selling many per day and, also, they have little reliability in terms of professional standing. I have haven't seen anyone reading Neawna for a long time. Absolutely, they

have less space in the end because people have learnt more from society and get ideas from intelligent people.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers commented on whether or not media should be controlled:

'I totally agree, because our country cannot have too much freedom, even though we say that we are democratic. Many media are not censored well in content.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers discussed whether or not the media should be controlled:

'In the past, the media got polling results from us, then they chose to show just certain interests in the issue. So when audiences, or readers, discovered this, they thought that we <Suan Dusit Poll> were biased from those selected numbers <that are published>. As many of you may know, the media in Thailand might take a side as Thais do today. How can you believe their news if you know that a newspaper takes a side? If we have a central organization, like a censorship centre, to scrutinize the news again, that would be good. At least, it doesn't make you feel that people choose to read those newspapers because it is on their side. Furthermore, I would like to see that the media has been controlled in the nature of the newspaper, such as the allusion to something, someone or somewhere, they should check the information, whether or not it is real or fake information.'

The Second Question

Respondent 10 of the academic readers considered whether Thailand should have an organization to control the media:

'The media shouldn't be controlled. It can't be controlled. Naturally, we cannot control the media. It cannot be controlled from outside organizations or be subject to legal control from the controlling council. Professionals can be controlled by professional ethics. The persons who want to work in this career must be trained like a monk. They need to have morals, the monks. The journalists could apply their professional ethics in producing news. Your organization should have your own professional ethics manual. If they don't have this, or they cannot accept it, they cannot work! It should be a requirement of working in the field of the media. If we have this, there is no requirement to have a professional council. It will enable organizations to develop themselves. On the contrary, if we have a professional organization and someone does something wrong ethically, they would punish them. Of course, they would not accept it! For example, we had a problem about Matichon, which referred to the institution of the King and the newspaper council issued a warning letter. Of course, we know that people don't like them and cannot accept it. Educated people like me cannot accept it! As you can see, you cannot control them, but they (Matichon) should realize themselves that people don't like them. They should accept that they couldn't compete with Nawnae. Nawnae has their ideal and standing point. It is not like Matichon that always hides and supports Thaksin in an underhand way and blames the Democratic Party directly.

Nowadays, we need reliable media. When the media is not reliable, people have to judge for themselves. If you think clearly, if you read an article, you should know where this information came from. You can find several articles that have similar content by different authors. Some of them use their real name and some use a pen name. How could you know that they are not the same author?

Media cannot be controlled because the technology is available everywhere and easy to access. It makes it difficult to control. For example, suppose you are framing the content while it has about fifty channels. How could you control them? It must be controlled from within them and raise awareness of professional ethics.'

Respondent 11 of the academic readers criticized the notion that Thailand should have an organization to control the media:

'I think Thailand shouldn't have an organization to control the media, because it would be like authoritarian control. Most of the controlled content would be very conservative. They would be some political content relating to a specific topic. I think controlling the media is difficult in Thailand because people who don't understand social change control it. They don't understand how diverse society is and how it has moved forwards. When we talk about controlling the media, they would think about what they cannot say out loud or what they should not ask! Controlling the media in Thailand is not like in other countries. In other countries, they would talk in the sense that the media should not touch or insult other religions or nationalities. For example, in the USA and France we can see this phenomenon: if the media has racist content, you will be criticized, or if you insult religion, you will be punished, if you talk about politics in supporting the use of force, you will be criticized or condemned. Whereas in Thailand, the media is free to talk about this, even if it is concluded that it is criminal. You could accuse them without evidence. The media has never been questioned about this. Whenever you criticize the monarchy, army or officials, you have to be censored. This is a problem of Thai society.'

Respondent 12 of the academic readers commented on whether Thailand should have an organization to control the media:

'I think we should have but it should not depend on any political group or business groups. It is should be a selectively neutral party that administers it.'

Respondent 13 of the academic readers added more comments regarding whether Thailand should have an organization to control the media:

'I agree, because even though we a have controlling regulatory body in Thailand, it seems that they can't do anything, perhaps because they don't have real authority to exert control. It is not like an independent organization.'

CHAPTER 6

Finding Results

6. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the primary data. It will focus on the qualitative data findings to revisit the research question outlined in Chapter 1, namely: (1) what is the relationship between the media and society in Thailand?; (2) What are the problems of political conflict in Thailand in terms of the media?; (3) Can CSR improve the media industry?; (4) What is the best way to develop and manage media in Thailand? In this research, we focused on the media from the perspective of the producers, regulatory bodies and academic readers to identify the development and management of the model in Thailand.

Access to political power means opportunity in both business and the economy. Entrepreneurs and politicians often would like to enter the media industry due to its great advantages. If they could be in this area, they would have the authority to allow concessions to any person or any organization, even their own. As can be seen, politicians can become rich in a very short time. Misconducting power could be applied in the developing countries, such as Thailand. The usurpation of political power has been an excessive completion in a national election. This has had a major effect on the political system in Thailand.

As argued in Chapter 3, the Thai media sector is relatively well developed compared to neighboring countries. For example, neighboring Myanmar could not broadcast freely because of strict censorship and regulation since 1962. Any study of the media in Thailand would not be complete without mention of Thai politics, especially in the era of former Prime Minister Thaksin. Since that time, there has been increasing restriction and censorship of the media.

In this chapter, we shall describe the triangulation for the collected data and then analyze the following topics: (1) factors that determine the role of the media in Thailand; (2) factors that affect the media from the perspective of society, economics and politics; (3) roles of the media, relating to CSR and sustainable practical approaches; (4) a model for developing and managing the media in Thailand. Each topic will be considered from the three perspectives of producer, regulatory body and academic readers, respectively.

6.1 Triangulation

The triangulation examination is significant in comparing several views in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings and the accuracy of the data. Our collected qualitative data conducted from the in-depth interviews of key informants was categorized into three groups: news producers, media regulatory bodies and academics. Triangulation was employed to the data before the content analysis. Triangulation has been identified into four types: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodology triangulation, respectively (Denzin, 1978). To compare the interview data from the different opinions of different people, we have carried out into two types of triangulation in this research, as follows.

6.1.1 Data Triangulation

We conducted in-depth interviews and collected data from different sources, at different times, in different places and from different people. A key strategy was to categorize the type of media stakeholders for the research that we were carrying out. Thus, there were three groups of media stakeholders, news producers, members and academics. At a different time, interviews were conducted in different time such as the usual time without political issue and the unusual political-interfere time. Later, we questioned them in their usual working place and in the political protest to compare the validity of the data. Additionally, those interviewees in each group were selected in a

variety of significant persons. We triangulated the conducted data by looking for outcomes that were agreed upon by all stakeholder groups.

6.1.2 Methodology Triangulation

We applied the methodology triangulation in the research involving the use of two qualitative methods. We used in-depth interviewing and document analysis to evaluate the results. For the document analysis, we gathered data relating to the media and politics from the 2006 coup until the present time. The validity in our findings was established by comparing the conclusion from both methods.

6.2 The Role of the Media in Thailand

The duties of people who work in media in Thailand are not very different to those who work in the media in other countries. However, working in the media in Thailand has been limited in several ways. The duties of people working in the media will be classified by applying the data from our interviews. This data will show how the media has become an important tool in society. Additionally, the intention is to present to people outside Thailand, knowledge of how Thailand's political problems, which have lasted for a long time, have affected the media. We focused on media power and how the media relates to politics and plays an important role in the regime of Thailand. We divided the key informants into three groups for this research. These groups were: producers, members and academic readers. Respondents were selected to represent each group. We shall analyze and discuss each group with the help of content analysis.

6.2.1 (a) Produce

The first group of key informants represents two television channels: Channel 7 and Channel 3; and three newspapers: *Matichon*, *Naewna* and *The Nation*. The respondents are referred to as Respondents 1 to 5, respectively. The role of news

producers differs between television channels and newspapers. For television channels, the news producers' focus on video clips for detail rather than writing. Also, television channels place emphasis on presenting to audiences as soon as the news happens. Television tends to be more commercial than newspapers. This is made obvious by advertising during television airtime. The proportion of content allocated to the news is the main difference between television channels and newspapers. For Channel 7, the news makes up about 25% (from the interview) and Channel 3 about 35% (AGB, 2014). The main responsibility of the newspaper is to disseminate news and current affairs.

When the other interests of television and newspaper owners were examined, it was found that television has been extending their business in online media. For example, Respondent 1 explained that Channel 7 has invested in an online business called *Bakaboo* and Channel 3 has news online at <www.krobkruakao.com> using social networks, such as Facebook and YouTube. Channel 3 has invested in entertainment companies organizing and promoting concerts, record labels and the production of film and television shows.

Apart from media businesses, newspapers engage in other business activities, such as developing a centre for training professionals in the media (*Matichon*), publishing pocket books (*Matichon*), and a running a university (*The Nation*). *Naewna* has invested in tourism, including golf clubs and hotels. All of these other businesses are not about politics at all. If these interests cause bias, it could be from the personal relationships or personal behaviour of journalists, or the editor or the owners.

6.2.2 (b) Media Regulation Bodies

From the qualitative data in Chapter 5, firstly it was found that media regulation could be carried out by the NBCT and the NBTC (Respondents 6 and 9, respectively). The second was control of the newspapers, which is a function of the NPCT (Respondent

8). The third is control of media coverage in investigating media behaviour and hot issues in society through the ISRA Institution (Respondent 7). The respondents stated that the media should help to disseminate information and structure the democratic norms of politics in society. Thai media can learn from other countries' experiences, where the media has supported democratic rights and civil liberties. For example, the media in the UK has more freedom to present news, especially about politics and royalty, as we mentioned that Britain has a long tradition of a free, inquisitive press (The Editorial Board, 2013). To regulate television broadcasting, the NBCT and NBTC act in a similar way; that is, to control and promote professionals working in radio and television broadcasting to be responsible and to maintain the ethical conduct of the profession. This includes upholding the honour and dignity of the members.

The NBTC involves telecommunications through the authority to allocate the spectrum of radio, television and telecommunications licences. This allocation is required to provide the most benefit to the public. The NBTC operates this responsibility by acting as an administrator. In controlling newspapers, the NPCT is supposed to act to ensure that newspaper organizations work within an ethical framework. It regulates news in the form of texts or pictures and articles of all kinds. When ethical principles have been breached, the Council notifies the offending newspaper and asks for a pronouncement to be published within seven days. Occasionally, the NPCT may require that the newspaper publish an apology to the victims.

The ISRA Institute controls media coverage informally and focuses on corruption presented in the news, the conflict in the three Southern border provinces, and hot issues in Thai society. Furthermore, the Institute monitors what is going on in society. Control of the media in Thailand can be categorized into two types. The first is to control through direct authority. The second is to influence through moral culture. According to the interviews, when exploring the difference between television and newspapers in controlling the media, it was found that television broadcasting was considered to be

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more difficult to control, in particular, where broadcasting is filmed in real time or presented live. However, when it has been broadcast, if anything goes wrong in the TV programme, the issue can be ended quickly, unlike in the newspapers. Newspaper publishing lasts longer than television broadcasting and can also be read many times.

6.2.3 (c) Academic Readers

The academic readers included a university instructor (Respondent 10) who has considerable experience and is well known in the media. He was previously a newsreader for several channels. He has an interest in political and economic news, following it on the Internet, rather than reading newspapers. Furthermore, he is a columnist for a newspaper, writing about society, economics and politics. Respondent 11 has held various working positions in the media, including a director and a committee member of the TV programme called Voice TV. Additionally, he has his own programme, which is called "Thailand", relating to current political and economic issues. Respondent 12 has his own company, the Fire Truck Company, and has been a columnist in newspapers in which he wrote mainly about society and politics.

Respondent 13 has been a lecturer and has worked as a director of foreign affairs at Suan Dusit Poll, which is a research and survey centre. She worked with the media, presenting the results of polls to be published in newspapers or broadcast on television. There have been some media owners who have other business interests. For example, most newspaper owners would expand their business into digital television broadcasting; some might not be related to the media at all. Additionally, government organizations, such as Suan Dusit Poll, find it difficult to do other business. Meanwhile, Respondent 11 thought that owning another business was not a problem, but it could be a problem between CEOs in an organization with the editors.

6.3 Factors that Affect the Media from the Perspectives of Society,Economics and Politics

The media is an important mechanism for informing and increasing awareness of political and economic issues to the Thai people. As such, it has had, directly or indirectly, a wide input into Thai society. In the following section, the conclusions and discussions have been presented for each group of key informants.

6.3.1 (a) Producers

Threats to media freedom have existed throughout the history of Thailand. Controlling the media started at the same time as Thai democracy emerged. It became more obvious in the authoritarian period, when public information was highly censored. Even though Thailand is currently in a democratic period, the media is still under pressure from the powerful elite in society. For example, it was asked not to report the truth or to distort news. Therefore, the threat in the media has been in several different forms, depending on the circumstances, relating to events and issues, the time period and the media.

From our data, it can be seen that two television channels, Channel 7 and Channel 3, were threatened when they were going to broadcast about specific political issues, such as mob protests. Channel 3, a big media organization, has not been threatened as much. One newspaper (*Matichon*) was threatened by calls asking it to report less on hot issues, such as fraud in the rice mortgage scheme. Those calls came from ruling political leaders or ministers. A journalist who referred to the issues in a newspaper column (*Naewna*) was physically assaulted. If newspapers reported too much about dangerous topics, such as corruption, they could be threatened in several different ways. Examples of threats include a printing press of one newspaper being chained up and advertising being reduced by some sponsors. Another threat was the purchase or investment in the media by people in order to protect their interests or portray themselves in a good light. For example, the former Prime Minister, Thaksin, bought iTV television broadcasting in the

name of the Shin Corporation. However, threats have been more difficult to apply to a big newspaper company (for example, *The Nation*).

In terms of economic change, the media has different ways of addressing problems presented by the economic crisis. Some reduced the salaries of executives and employees to enable the company to survive. They reinstated the salaries after the business recovered (Channel 7 and *Naewna*). Channel 3 reduced some programmes, but kept some popular programmes such as the news and entertaining game shows. One newspaper (*Matichon*) did not have a policy of eliminating employees, but they asked them to reduce unnecessary costs, such as electricity instead. One big newspaper (*The Nation*) solved the problem by asking some employees to stop working and by cutting their bonuses, which were reinstated after the crisis and employees returned to previous working hours.

In summary, a range of initiatives was used to manage the economic crisis. All were temporary. When considering the political conflict in the three Southern provinces, there were several different opinions about the role of the media. One television station, with a relationship to the military (Channel 7), did not like to be specific about politics. The station tended to provide coverage of all of the conflicts, including the one between the Yellow and Red Shirts in three Southern provinces, equally. Channel 3 tried to present the news very carefully about the political conflict in the three Southern provinces. They were sensitive about the issues that are deeply rooted in society. On the other hand, newspapers were viewed that they were biased towards either the Red Shirts or the Yellow Shirts (*Matichon* and *Naewna*); they presented the news by supporting their sides. One newspaper (*The Nation*) is supposed to be neutral, but it has been suspected of being a little biased towards the Yellow Shirts, as some news or pictures have been chosen unequally. For example, a senior vice president of *The Nation* said: "*I am ready to be friends with everyone ... except the Red Shirts! You can see that whoever*

is red, including journalists, reporters or producers in the Nation I would rather not be their friend" (Ratwongsakul, 2013, March 23).

6.3.2 (b) Media Regulation Bodies

Media regulation bodies generally thought that establishing media law was of benefit, but were equivocal in identifying the problems associated with regulating the media. They argued that such control has both advantages and disadvantages: it has a good effect on the regulatory side, but it could be seen that the media is not free enough and not effective enough (NBCT). Some media regulatory bodies thought that media law should exist, even though it would be very difficult to enforce because the media has not been under government, or any law, for over 16 years (ISRA Institution and the NPCT). Additionally, the media could have a wide framework of control as to what is acceptable or not (NBTC).

The media in Thailand could attract some businesses looking for opportunities to invest. If businesses are attracted to advertising in a media organization, the result is improved profit. Therefore, this could influence people in the media to pay less attention to the quality of their presentation. Political groups and other business investors also use the media as a tool to their advantage and benefit (NBCT and NPCT). Additionally, there are many cable television channels. Their quality is often poor, as they focus on advertising products, rather than being communication channels or disseminating knowledge to their audiences. It is very difficult to control these cable channels. It has been a discussion within the media for a while (the ISRA Institution). Being a good media producer means being concerned about the ideology and the benefit to society.

If the media is biased, it makes working difficult, as people cannot trust it to report the truth (the NBTC). Changes in government or to government policy do not affect the media. Their regulatory bodies have been independent for over 10 years and they are

not under the direct control of the government. They have their own independent policy and mission. The problems and limitations of working as a are as follows. They have their right to control the media when anything goes wrong, but they are comprised of media organizations and, as such, they control each other.

Apart from controlling the media organizations, the should be able to supervise them. Supervision could mean campaigning or introducing something to make the media aware and understand (NBCT). If possible, the media should be free from the domination of capital and government (ISRA Institution). Media regulion bodies have not been under the control of any law or regulation, but they have no power to deal with, or punish anyone (NPCT). NBTC has not been under any organization practically, but in theory they are supposed to be under the Senate Council and, therefore, should have *a super board* to directly report to the Senate Council. However, they do not have the finances to do this.

6.3.3 (c) Academic Readers

The academic readers agreed that newspapers were more reliable than television. Newspapers have more detail because they are printed every twelve hours and are distributed to a wider circle of people. However, one informant suggested that newspapers in Thailand have low trust ratings, especially in regard to political issues, because of the partisan writing and opinions of the owners, they are seen as trying to control the readers' minds. The sound and picture presentation of television can produce more understandable news. This requires the finding of pictures or video clips to describe the details. One informant was of the opinion that presenting news should have more detail than just the headlines.

The impact of economic change (in the economic crisis) affected sales but did not impact on quality. However, respondents were critical of the quality of the Thai language newspapers, although they had a higher opinion of the English language

newspapers. Respondent 10 considered that the quality of the Thai newspapers was not of a good standard. The English language newspapers, such as *The Nation* and the *Bangkok Post*, were both thought to be of very good quality, but Thais are not very familiar with them because of language issues (many Thais do not read English).

Social media has influenced the role of the media, as Respondent 11 discussed. He also gave an example that as many Americans accessed the Internet as watched TV. In the future, more new media, such as satellite TV or Internet TV, may become the norm. Similarly, Respondent 12 agreed that young people have begun to ignore print media and give more attention to social media or online news because they think that newspapers are not neutral. Younger people are more likely to see owners of newspapers as using their newspaper as a business tool. Respondent 13 considered that the economic crisis resulted in a reduction of the amount of research, as government organizations and private companies cut costs.

In terms of the role of the media in the political conflicts between the PAD and the UDD and the conflict in the three Southern provinces, one respondent (Respondent 10) did not consider that the media had made the situation better. Most of them choose to fight to each other. Even though some media companies have tried to build relationships, such as Thai PBS (a television channel), the media has not improved society, as it should. It tends to do business and think that it does not have a specific duty to harmonize society. Regarding the conflict in the South, the situation has been getting better in terms of news. The three Southern provinces and the government are in a process of negotiation. It could take a long time to resolve (Respondents 11 and 13). Public relations could help to build a better image of the conflict (and not make the situation worse), while the media should not present only their side (Respondent 13).

All key informants agreed that Thai media has not as much freedom as Western countries, especially when the country is under martial law and the press media would be limited in presenting such news.

6.4 Roles of the Media relating to CSR and Sustainable Practical Approaches

Media businesses are professional organizations and they cannot ignore their responsibility to help society. Helping society is a process of promoting development and sustainable growth. However, there is difficulty in implementing CSR due to a lack of understanding about its effects. Operating CSR affects the competitiveness of the organization and communicating CSR to the stakeholders of the organization can realize advantages to the organization. If organizations learn to take CSR into their mission and vision, they will systematically encourage the responsibility of members of organizations. The organization can gain advantages, in terms of the public's recognition of that organization's social responsibility.

6.4.1 (a) Producers

CSR has not been a significant issue for media organizations. They do make an effort occasionally, especially with the problems or issues in society, such as the big flood in 2011, (all key informants, two channels and three newspapers). All organizations volunteered to contribute aid packages to flood victims in Bangkok and the surrounding provinces.

Channel 7 has had a CSR policy focused on building up a good image of the army, reflecting the control the army has of the channel. Channel 3 has approached CSR internally and externally. Internal CSR is where the human resources department manages the legal welfare, health checks and a retirement fund for employees. External CSR is implemented through a foundation called "family three", established to help society through donations and gifts to impoverished people.

For newspaper media, *Matichon* had a project for water resource development and canal development. Other newspapers did not identify CSR as important, but participated in volunteering to give information to children or to make books for blind people (*The Nation*).

The media producers primarily saw CSR as doing good works and helping society through charitable organizations. In the case of army-controlled television, CSR also entailed maintaining a good image of the army.

6.4.2 (b) Media Regulation Bodies

The NBCT, the ISRA Institution, the NPCT and the NBTC think that media organizations should have a CSR unit/department for society. These regulatory bodies said that media organizations should demonstrate CSR by following ethical guidelines and being aware of not taking advantage for their own profit. They should bear in mind that CSR is not public relations. Therefore, they should not put their own interests first and pretend to audiences (ISRA Institution). Additionally, there have been different ways to implement CSR, for example, the NPCT saw CSR as giving their knowledge and ideas to media organizations in rural provinces.

The NBTC spends its own funds conducting research into telecom satellite communications and installing telecommunication towers in overpopulated communities to enable those communities to access the Internet. The regulatory bodies have a much more sophisticated view of CSR than the media organizations themselves. Their idea of CSR moves beyond doing good works through charities and for emergency situations, to a view that sees CSR as embedded in the daily role of the media in society.

6.4.3 (c) Academic Readers

All key informants considered that the main duty of media is to benefit the public. If the media performs its role well, it means that it demonstrates CSR for society. The direct meaning of CSR for the media is doing its duty; then society as a whole can benefit (Respondent 10). The media was described as having begun to realize more about CSR, even though it has not done anything in practice (Respondent 12). Additionally, Respondent 13 commented that the media should practice CSR in their organization too. There have been different ways of applying the CSR approach depending on the type of media.

6.5 The Model for Future Development and Management of the Media in Thailand

6.5.1(a) Producers

All key producer informants, except one newspaper (*The Nation*) and one television channel (Channel 3), agreed that the media should be controlled. For television broadcasting, Channel 7 argued that the media needs a strong, new controlling organization to control or supervise it, especially if it can set acceptable and practical regulations. For example, more attention should be paid to news relating to women and children and there should be more awareness of the impact of news on these vulnerable groups. It is the way in which the media presents information, rather than the content, that the producers see as requiring control. Channel 7 also considered that the NBTC has a duty in an auction regarding the spectrum allocation. They should control the quality of those channels, which were obtained from the allocated spectrum, in order to ensure maximum coverage.

Furthermore, even though the media already has several regulatory bodies, they do not act as effectively as they should. Media regulations should have clear penalties in order to be effective. To date, they have not had the power to impose serious penalties. Current penalty actions are given in warning letters or condemnation (*Matichon* and *Naewna*). One newspaper (*Matichon*) considered controlling cable channels. They noted that such channels as those supporting the Red Shirts or Yellow Shirts political factions could be controlled, so as to improve the direction of news presentation.

However, one newspaper (*The Nation*) disagreed about being controlled by regulatory bodies. They argued that because we are in the world of technology and there are many new forms of media, such as online TV and social media, audiences should not be blocked from accessing this information. *The Nation* considered that audiences have the ability to judge and can choose what to believe. Audience judgment is faster than any media regulatory organization. Additionally, media organizations could control each other. If anything happened, they could warn each other to be more careful. Similarly, Channel 3 said that the media should not be controlled by any organization because Thailand is a democratic country and should have the freedom to present the news. However, it was noted that Thailand already has a media-controlling agency in the NBTC.

6.5.2 (b) Media Regulation Bodies

All media regulatory bodies, except the NBTC, agreed that the media should be controlled in the way that they are currently. The NBTC described itself as an independent organization formed by media organizations for self-regulation. The , NBCT, commented that it did not need to do much because it had the regulations to control itself. However, the number of infringements has fallen, compared to previous periods. In addition, the ISRA thought that media organizations should invest in human resources and business management before controlling media organizations. People

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who work in the media should continue to participate in training because the knowledge they gain in their degrees is not enough and they need to develop through experience.

One important media regulation organization (NBTC) considered that, even though it would be difficult, it would like a self-regulated system. This was seen as international best practice. They suggested a system with penalties within the association. If this did not work, government regulation would be required. The BBC in the UK and the NHK in Japan are examples of public media ownership. Both are established by law and managed as a public organization. They are independent from investors and the government. The NBCT was concerned that public ownership in Thailand would have difficulty in transcending the control of the government and representing government interests. The other key informants did not comment.

All media regulation organisations accepted that it has been difficult to find neutral media companies, but considered that some media were neutral. They argued that people who work in the media should not take any side and should present the news from the facts and not personal comments (NBCT). In the past, the media could use their regulations to control each other effectively, but it has become separated into groups, based on their political allegiance over the last eight years. The ISRA Institution commented that the regulations could not be implemented as before because of the influence of Thai politics.

Similarly, newspaper media organizations have not been seen as neutral. They all take one side or another and do not have an organizational ideology not to take sides (NPCT commented). It is difficult to measure the word "neutral" in journalism. Some examples of non-neutrality are advertising their own business without declaration. For example, the *Thairath* newspaper has an entertainment company on TV. It advertised in its newspaper without disclosing the ownership of that company. Another example is the

Daily News newspaper, which also advertised its own business, Yakult (NBTC discussed).

6.5.3 (c) Academic Readers

Half of the key informants (Respondents 10 and 11) did not think that media organizations should be controlled. Respondent 10 commented that everyone has the freedom to think for themselves. The law or an ideology should not block the freedom of mass media.

However, they argued that other media, such as satellite channels and commercial media, should be controlled. The media organizations should create an awareness of the ideals of professional ethics, directed from within the organizations themselves. Representatives of media organizations controlling each other should manage professional councils. People in media should be controlled by professional ethics. This requires all employees who work in the media to have training. They would be able to apply their professional ethics in producing reliable news. Media organizations should have their own professional ethics manual. They should apply the practice of the ethics manual as a requirement for individuals to continue working. This requirement is necessary to ensure the reliability of the media.

Similarly, Respondent 11 discussed that we have to believe in the judgment of the media and that readers or audiences can choose to believe what they choose. Biased media should be pressured and got rid of. For example, newspapers such as *Matichon* and *Naewna,* who take sides in the political conflict, do not have strong sales and have little credibility. They are not considered to be professional. If they were controlled, then the content would be very conservative and focused on specific political topics. Furthermore, controlling the media would be difficult in Thailand because it would involve people who do not understand social change or the divergence of society, and

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how they are moving forward. Regulating the media does not mean specifying what they cannot report or what they should not ask. It means more than that.

On the other hand, half of the key informants (Respondents 12 and 13) agreed that media organizations should be controlled. Respondent 12 considered that Thailand is not ready to have too much freedom and much of the media is not censored as carefully as it should be.

The controlling body should not depend on any political group or business groups. It should be a selectively neutral party. Respondent 13 added that it would be good to have a controlling organization as a censorship centre to scrutinize the news. At least, it would not make people feel that they could choose to read those newspapers because their type of politics is the only one presented. Even though controlling regulations are currently in operation in Thailand, they do not have the real authority to exert control. It is not like an independent organization.

6.6 Conclusion

The results represent the findings of primary data from three groups of key informant interviews: producers, media regulatory bodies and academic readers. They were focused on the qualitative data to revisit the research question. For the role of the media, most media owners have other related businesses, such as publishing, Internet entertainment and digital TV. The problem about bias in the news and taking sides could be a problem for CEOs, or editors, within the organization, rather than for the staff. Once the fighting was over, establishment statesmen and anti-Thaksin newspapers sought to sensationalize the riot smear the police and government (Marshall, 2014) 'Bloodbath in Bangkok' was the font-page headline in The Nation. The media was not affected much when government policy changed. According to social issues, such as politics and the conflict in the three Southern provinces, the media tends to be businesslike and think that it does not have a specific duty to harmonize society. Taking

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responsibility in society, it does not implement CSR continually and sincerely, but for public relation objectives and gain for its own benefit. It would not be a sustainable practice in the long term. Additionally, all key informants commented that Thai media does not have as much freedom as Western countries, especially when the country is under military control. On 22 may 2014, outspoken journalists and academics were rounded up and intimidated, held in military detention for days, and warned upon their release to keep quiet or face jail (Marshall, 2014). Finally, half of them agreed that the media should have a regulating organization, which is not dependent on any kind of business or government.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and Recommendations

7. Introduction

Thailand has been a democratic country since 1932, but unlike other countries in the world, democracy has not been fully functional in Thailand. Political turbulence has influenced the way the media functions in the country. This thesis has studied the role of the media in Thailand through qualitative research with three stakeholder groups: news producers, media regulators and academic readers. The focus of the thesis has been on the extent to which CSR has been taken up by the Thai media by examining the political, economic and social factors that have affected the media. This chapter will present a discussion of the findings and conclusions. Additionally, we shall propose a solution for the development and management of the media in Thailand.

The main contribution of this thesis is to understand the reason why Thailand has been unstable in terms of democracy for a long time. The power elite such as politicians, business tycoons, and the military has influenced Thailand. According to actual media's role, they are supposed to help society by providing accurate and neutral information and knowledge. From the results of our research, we found that Thai media organizations, including newspapers and television, could not effectively play this role. However, media industries could be developed along the lines of CSR and ethical codes. This means that the development of the media, in line with the changing society, is to be more responsible towards society. Regulation should include a breaking up of the media monopoly. Additionally, media organizations should adapt the strategy and mission to be more involved in society, and take more responsibility for the country. Finally, the government should be involved in developing and managing the country by making the existing media regulation bodies more effective in producing and presenting news.

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More of our detailed findings are shown in Section 7.1, and the future development and management will be in Section 7.2. Recommendation for future research will be in Section 7.3.

7.1 Conclusion of the Findings

The conclusion of this study is as follows:

1. The research examined newspaper sand TV broadcasting media in detail. The role of the media in Thailand is to communicate information and knowledge to audiences in a neutral and objective manner. The main duty of journalists is to look for news and present it. The interests of media owners often hamper the objective presentation of the news, the level of training of journalists and weak self-regulation. One way in which media owners often influence media output is through their undeclared interests. Most media owners have other businesses, most of which are in related media. However, they take advantage of their ownership by advertising their own businesses without a formal announcement that those businesses belong to them. Even though this was not considered by the key informants to be entirely wrong, and there is no legal requirement for interests to be declared, it is not ethical. This shows that the media industry in Thailand does not have its audience as its main focus from an ethical point of view. In other words, the media industry in Thailand has not developed a code of ethics, as well as those in Western countries. It does business as a big family. Technological advances have resulted in a proliferation of different forms of media, including cable TV, Internet, social networking and satellite TV. Nowadays, newspapers have extended their work into digital television channels and online news. As a result, newspapers and television are more competitive. The media cannot think just of its own interests, but is expected to act in a way that will be of benefit to its audiences.

2. Nowadays, the media business is highly competitive in appealing to audiences, leading to a war of information. Informants believed that the media tended to be biased

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by secretly accepting financial sponsors. Generally, the audience chose to read the news, especially the political news, from their politics favours (Kobayashi & Ikeda, 2009). Therefore, taking a side in politics or presenting a positive perspective, when presenting news stories could be the result of the political influence of the media owners or the personal opinion of journalists. Additionally, various entrepreneurs hope to invest in, or be part of the media industry in order to gain benefit for their businesses. It is difficult to control. If there were effective controlling bodies, the image of the media business could be improved. As Duncan (2001) discussed, politicians may make expensive gifts to columnists, or even offer regular "salaries" in return for favourable coverage.

3. If the media does not carry out its role, as it should, for example, if it ignores its duty to present the truth or the main idea of the news, it would not be beneficial to consumers. As one respondent suggested, one of the main problems faced by the Thai media is how to make the content diverse and yet not biased. Also, journalists or editors do not have the same level of freedom in presenting the news as those in Western countries. TRF (2013) found that the problem issue of the media in Thailand is about ethics because there has been a rapid increase of media organizations. New media and local media organizations lack support from media professional organizations.

People in the media should adhere to moral and ethical conduct. If they did this, they could help society by providing accurate and neutral information that can give the audiences knowledge, help solve conflicts in Thai society, and assist in the society becoming more peaceful.

4. The political instability reduces economic growth, but a lack of economic growth creates instability within the political regime as well (Jong-A-Pin, 2009). However, the media industry has a high capacity to adapt to changing economic circumstances in order to remain competitive. From the qualitative data, it was shown that media organizations

were able to be flexible during the economic crisis through actions, such as cutting unnecessary expenses or laying off staff.

5. The changing political situation in Thailand has created a climate of instability in recent years. The political instability has affected the whole of society, including the media industry. There have been divisive opinions arising from the political conflict between the two main political groups: the Yellow Shirts (PAD) and the Red Shirts (UDD). This has resulted in threats to the media. However, from the data obtained through interviews with news producers, television broadcasters and larger newspapers, the companies have not been threatened. Television channels and newspapers have not taken much action on social conflict. They tend to focus on the business of presenting the news, rather than taking responsibility for society as their duty.

6. The media regulatory bodies in Thailand, such as News Broadcasting Council of Thailand (NBCT), National Press Council of Thailand (NPCT) and National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) have their own members. They control their members, but the control is moderate. Currently, two pieces of legislation have been used in television broadcasting. They are the Organization to Assign Radio Frequency and to regulate the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Services Act (2010) and the Operation of Radio and Television Broadcasting Business Act (2008). The Printing Act (2007) regulates the newspaper industry. We should have a specific act relating to television and the press media to control their actions properly.

7. The quality of human resources in the media industry has been another important factor in the capacity of the industry to present objective news in an ethical way. The majority of people working in the industry have not graduated in communications and do not have the capabilities required for applying communication skills in journalism. Limpattamapanee (2015) showed that people who work in the media industry, especially news reporters and editors, have been required to have a communication and analysis

skill in reporting and interpreting news, rather than the usual method. There has not been a culture of ethics strongly established in the media. The lack of skills could lead to journalists not to be neutral in disseminating the news to the public. Thus, it is important for their attitude and ideology to change for the better. There are two solutions to the problem of a journalist's capabilities. Firstly, communication courses in universities should include training in ethics and ideology; and secondly, certification through short courses for those working in the media, could help those who did not graduate in communications to learn about the principle of being a good journalist or working in the media industry.

8. The implementation of a CSR strategy in mass media has not been effective. CSR has not been continually employed in the working process, as it should be. It was reported by respondents that CSR would be applied occasionally following social or natural phenomena, such as flooding. Additionally, taking responsibility in society should be a matter of policy in order to support and help society, rather than being a part of public relations aimed at self-promotion. As shown in the research of Paireepairit (2013) the important issues that should be designated as media ethics are social responsibility, the public advantage and neutrality. As a result, this affects sustainable development in the long term in the media industry. Several media organizations have been established in recent years but they did not last long. The reasons for their short existence were not only based on economics, but also because of political influences. Politicians became involved in the media industry. They used the media as a tool to promote their party or themselves directly, or indirectly. Furthermore, elite entrepreneurs entered the media with the intention of using their power to interfere with political processes.

Finally, one solution for moving forward is to have an independent organization to control the media. This seems to be a long way away in Thailand. There are several reasons for this. Technology and social networking have increased in popularity worldwide. Thai people tend to access the Internet for news and television programmes,

rather than buying newspapers and watching television at home. The credibility of media, such as newspapers, began to decline due to disunity of opinion. Additionally, they do not believe in the media regulatory bodies, such as the NBCT, NPCT and NBTC. Their administrators do not have real authority and are not well respected by the members they represent. This could be attributed to the Thai working style. The administrators are supposed to have expertise and experience. The ISRA Institute is an established independent organization. It can work independently even though it might be threatened. However, the ISRA is a small organization and only publishes online. The fact that its news could not be disseminated to a wider audience means that the information it provides has little effect in society.

7.2 Future Development and Management

The government or ministry with communication responsibilities, such as the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, should adapt its control of the media industry to suit that of a democratic country. It should manage and develop the existing media regulatory bodies to be more effective in producing and presenting the news. The existing media regulatory bodies have not been systematically directed and have developed in different ways. For example, the NBTC has a strategy and goal of licensing radio frequencies and giving permission to media to operate broadcasting services. Its focus is on developing infrastructure and services to promote the use of telecommunications and radio communications resources for all sectors of the Thai population. It is rightfully an important control. The NBTC is a government-owned corporation and has a proper master plan, but it does not have the authority to control the media due to the absence of a proper media-controlling law.

1. In the past, the private media sectors attempted to displace the entrenched power of the military-dominated "bureaucratic polity" while the new business elite sought to

displace the old public sector elite and harness the rhetoric of democratization for its own ends (Laothamatas, 1992). Currently, there is co-operation between big business organizations, politicians and elite groups in the media industry. These relations could lead to the media becoming a tool to support and serve their interests. The Thai government bureaucracy has been generally highly politicized, with appointments and transfers of top bureaucrats in the hands of powerful government politicians (Bowornwathana, 2013). They can take advantage in direct or indirect ways. In practice, it could not intercept their opportunities in the business world. As a result, political profiles and business interests should be made public. Additionally, political parties should make donations public. Media reform is needed to develop and manage, since there has been political unsteadiness.

2. Thailand has had twenty constitutions since 1932. The temporary constitution of 2014 has been applied since July 2014. The National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) made a coup d'état on 20 May 2014 by Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha. The Constitution gave a legislative authority to the National Legislative Assembly (NLA) to administer the country and also the National Reform Council (NRC), which is in charge of reform of the country, including drafting the new Constitution. Even though, the issue of media reform has been talked about for a long time, it has been unclear in practice. The question for the reform is how the diversity could happen at the level of structure, ownership, and content within media organizations themselves (Seapa, 2013). This presents a good opportunity to restructure media regulation or for making media reform. The Constitution should clearly state the need for a service mind set and for ethical behaviour in all organizations, especially public ones. Additionally, taking responsibility in society should be for everyone and in all organizations in terms of CSR. It should be one of 12 national core values: putting the public and national interest before one's own.

3. The bureaucratic reform started in 2014 by restructuring, reducing working procedures and unnecessary work. The management system should be improved and new technology

should be introduced to facilitate government operations. Reforms generally mean the struggle over power between involved actors, such as politicians and government staff. Reform related administration is highly influenced by bureaucratic politics (Bowornwathana & Poocharoen, 2010). Regarding the development and management of media in the long term, bureaucratic reform should be focused on increasing good governance and ethics, along with national reform. Government staff should be able to report questionable income and to ensure that media income is checked regularly. As some sectors of the public have to work with politicians, the working relationship between permanent staff and political parties should be transparent in order to avoid suspicion of corruption.

4. Regulation is needed to encourage media development. There have been two pieces of legislation for radio and television broadcasting (the Organization to Assign Radio Frequency Act and to Regulate the Broadcasting and Telecommunications Services Act (2010) and the Operation of Radio and Television Broadcasting Business (2008) and one act for printed media (the Printing Act 2007). For radio and television broadcasting, their main functions are to determine the qualifications committees of the NBTC and to give licensing permission for radio and television broadcasting. For the press, the Printing Act concentrates on the registration of publications and publishing documents in the country. There has not been any act relating to the controlling and regulation of media industry content. Even though the NBTC has been an important media organization, it has no authority to regulate the media. According to the law, the NBTC committees have to be appointed by the senate. The members of the senate represent the interests of politicians and political parties. Therefore, the NBTC committee appointment could not avoid bias. They should be experts from outside Parliament or who have not been stakeholders in the media industry. Media law should be revised to ensure the independence of the NBTC committee appointment.

5. Media organizations, including television broadcasting and newspapers, must be ready to engage in society and acknowledge their social responsibility. They have to accept checking and monitoring by a media regulation organization. To facilitate this, they should reorganize their organization to have a regulatory unit, or department, to examine the content of their publications and to investigate their behaviour. Initially, the structure of these regulatory units could be in the form of a commission or quasi-judicial board to regulate staff under the supervision of a chairman who is an external expert. Later, the department could have an internal chairman, who is an important member of the company or administrative board. Furthermore, the media organization should set its strategy and mission to be more involved in society and take more responsibility for the country.

7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Firstly, the difficulty of this study to carry out qualitative data collection from key informants was that they were afraid of providing the truth. The limitation of the study was political instability. Secondly, the government or media relating organizations, such as the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology could apply some significant results in planning the policy, or pushing the new issues in the media industry. Thirdly, new media in the country should employ the results, as it would be easier to apply regulation from the beginning. Fourthly, further research is required to study the attitudes, behaviour and working practices of media staff in the country, in order to improve the working nature and management. Fifthly, due to the lack of credibility within the media, the satisfaction of awareness and believing in information or news from media should be conducted in terms of branding the media image. Lastly, further research from this study is to conduct quantitative research by using the answers to the questions and the findings of the study to develop a solution. Similarly, making a focus group to the relating stakeholders of the media industry could further do qualitative research.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaires for News Producers

The Role of the Media

1. What is your role in the media organization?
2. MISSING?
3. Does the media owner have other businesses?
4. What are the major and minor roles of the organization?

Factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics

1. Have you ever been threatened in reporting news, especially in political issues?
2. When the world economy has changed, has your organization been affected by economic circumstances?
3. When some political or social issues have happened, what can your organization do to support them?
4. What has your organization figured out about the problem of violence in the southern provinces and the conflict between the PAD and the UDD?
5. Has your organization ever had any problems in functioning? What are those problems? What are your functional limitations?

The perspectives of the role of the media to CSR and sustainability

1. Do you have a particular unit/department about volunteering in society? (Volunteer in society, public unit)?
2. What do you think that your organization should do/have/done to develop sustainability and corporate social responsibility at the same time?

The model for developing and managing the media in Thailand

1. Do you think that media organizations should be controlled? If so, how should this be done?
2. Have you ever known or recognized media controlling organizations in action?
3. Do you think that Thailand should have this kind of organization to control the media?

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaires for Media Regulation Bodies

The role of the media

1. What are you doing for work (your responsibility)?
2. What is your organization's role in the media?
3. Which media organization is the most difficult to control, television or newspapers?

Factors that affect the media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics

1. Do you think it is difficult to establish media law and decide when it will be applied?
2. Are you concerned that the media has focused on profit, rather than their responsibility?
3. When government policy about media law changes, does the media have to adapt/change also?
4. Have you experienced any problems in your work? What has restricted your work?

The perspectives of role of the media in CSR and sustainability

1. What do you think about businesses employing CSR in their organizations?
2. Do you think media organizations apply CSR?

3. What is a suitable approach to applying CSR in a media regulation body?

The model for developing and managing the media in Thailand

1. Should the media be controlled by a media regulation organization? How should it be controlled?
2. Could Thailand have a free media organization such as the BBC?

APPENDIX 3

Questionnaires for Academic Readers

The role of the media

The first

1. What do you do now? Is it related to media?
2. Which media have you often used, television or newspapers? Which section of the newspaper - society, economics or politics do you read?

The second

1. Do you think that media owners have other businesses? If so, where are those other interests?
2. Does the media owner do anything to make theses interests transparent?
3. Have you ever heard or seen these influences?

Factors that affect media from the perspectives of society, economics and politics

1. Which media do you think is the most reliable: television or newspapers?
2. When the world economy changed, do you think that media organizations adapted or improved their direction?
3. Do you think that media organizations can help solve some conflict issues in Thailand; for instance, the violence in Naratiwat-Pattani- Yala Southern provinces or the PAD and UDD?
4. In your opinion, do you think the media is free to produce news?

The perspectives of the role of the media to CSR and sustainability

1. Apart from normal media roles, do you think that the media can develop society? Have you heard or known of this and can you give examples?

2. If the media gives importance on corporate social responsibility, do you think it can do sustainably?

The model of development and management in Thai media organizations

1. Do you think media organizations should be controlled? How should they be controlled in practice?
2. Do you think Thailand should have an organization to control the media?