

Broadcasting Policy Research of Japan : A Historical Overview from 1950s to 2000s

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Abstract : This article focuses on Japan's broadcast policy, based mainly in television broadcasting policy-related research from the pioneering period of analog terrestrial television operation after World War II to the latest period of digitization of terrestrial television. It has two main parts. The first part is about a general broadcasting research trend synchronized with Japan's historical time period, including (1) establishing a television network system, (2) the change from black and white television to color television in 1960, (3) the first subscription-based satellite television system that started in 1984, (4) digitization of satellite television broadcasting that started in 2000, and finally (5) digitization of terrestrial television broadcasting that was launched in 2003. The second part deals with a more detailed policy research focus both on international and domestic aspects. In sum, Japan's broadcasting policy research has been shallow due to focusing on policy and/or policy-making trends and descriptive futuristic aspects. There is neither much theoretical underpinning nor empirical research in broadcast policy-making. This is the setting within which the current research is being conducted. The researcher concludes that looking at the role of government and policy process in studying Japan's broadcast policy-making is appropriate because so little research has been done. In other words, without critical research on broadcast policy-making and future planning of broadcasting under the dramatically changing media environment in Japan, no significant forward-looking argument in broadcasting and its related media perspectives would happen. From a historical overview of Japan's policy-research in the period between the 1950s and 2000s it seems clear that Japan's conventional broadcasting system has been influenced heavily by the U.K.-related BBC type public broadcasting system and the U.S. commercial broadcast network system. After the 2000s, due to the dramatically changing media landscapes in the globalized world based on the fast pace of diffusion of the Internet, this study needs to be updated under the more deregulated and internet-friendly broadcast policy-making trend.

Keywords : broadcasting, television, policy research, policy-making, media, NHK, public broadcasting, commercial broadcasting

Introduction

This study focuses on Japan's broadcast policy, mainly based on television broadcasting policy research from the pioneering period of analog terrestrial television operation after World War II to the latest time of initiating the digitization of terrestrial television planning in the late 1990s through its transition in December 2003.

The general tendency of Japan's public policy generally has been understood based on the elitist

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approach symbolized by the state-centered model often desiring to lead rapid growth and development in the industrial society of Japan after World War II until the early 1990s. The state-centered model was proposed by Chalmers Johnson, whose academic perspective on a bureaucracy-dominant model introduced the role of strong state bureaucracies in rational policy-making leading to industrial success.¹

Another related perspective is the elitist model, the most accepted approach for policy-making in contemporary Japan. Haruhiro Fukui indicates that policy making in Japan belongs to the state-centered elitist model and that it utilizes the concept of “a tripartite power elite composed of leaders of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), senior bureaucrats, and big businessmen.”²

The bureaucracy dominant model and the elitist model seem to have had strong and broad scholarly support in the field of public policy-making in contemporary Japan, mainly during the period from 1955 called the 1955-system, realized by the dominant conservative Liberal Democratic Party and progressive Socialist Party of Japan which lasted until 1993.

This suggests that Japan's broadcasting policy as a part of public policy and its policymaking of Japan most likely would be influenced by the elitist and bureaucracy dominant model particularly in the case of government licensing of the frequency allocation for each terrestrial television station and supervising its decent use in the daily operation in regulation in the context of the Radio Law and Broadcast Law of Japan. It can be said that the period from the 1950s to 2000s was the period broadcasting policy was made and put into practice under the traditional public policy and its policy-making of Japan based on the elitist and bureaucrat centered model.

However, due to the advent of the Internet media and its rapid diffusion in the world, the current media situation has been changed dramatically and yet broadcasting policy has been forced to change because broadcasting could no longer exist by itself being influenced by conversion and ubiquitous concept in the age of broadband. The Internet-led new media environment emerged in the late 1990s and started diffusion in 2000s, pushing the broadcasting industry to merge into other related communication industries such as internet, cable, satellite, telephony, and newspaper. In making media policies it cannot be avoided that borders among those media fields should be integrated.

This paper studies the broadcasting policy research trend in Japan before the age of the Internet, covering the phenomena of conventional analog television broadcasting after World War II until the last conventional policy-making planning for the most updated digital terrestrial television. Prior to understanding Japan's conventional broadcasting policy, synchronized with the transition from an analog to a digital standard, it is better to understand the historical back ground of the development of broadcasting after World War II and related research activities that had happened during that time.

1. Development and Advancement of Japan's Broadcasting

After World War II Japan was occupied by the Allied Military Force led by General Douglas MacArthur's General Headquarters (GHQ) between 1945 and 1951. Under this circumstance all the communication related systems, particularly Japan's broadcasting television system adopted the U.S. made National Television Standard Committee (NTSC) in producing television and related products. For a while after World War II Japan had been a factory for the U.S. market and yet Japan appreciated all the industrial product orders including television manufacturing.

It was natural that Japan adopted the U.S. based NTSC standard when manufacturing a vast amount of television sets in Japan and exported to the U.S. market. On the other hand, when Japan did develop the

unique broadcasting system domestically Japan learned from the United Kingdom as well as from the United States.

Japan's dual broadcasting structure which is a very distinctive and unique model, raised from the well-balanced combination between the one powerful public broadcasting entity, such as NHK and commercial broadcasting stations. In addition to nationally covered public broadcaster NHK broadcasting signals from NHK Broadcasting Center in Tokyo there are one hundred twenty-seven commercial terrestrial television stations currently. It consists of Japan's representative major commercial network stations, such as Tokyo Broadcasting Television System, Inc., TV Asahi Corporation, Fuji Television Network, Inc., Nippon Television Network Corporation, TV Tokyo Corporation and the non-affiliated independent television stations.

It is said that Japan's television broadcasting industry faced five major turning points; (1) establishing television network system covering all over Japan after World War II in 1953, (2) television broadcasting transition from black and white television to color television began on September 10 in 1960, (3) introducing the first subscription based satellite television system as the ad-hoc television programming channel delivery on May 11 in 1984, (4) digitization of satellite television broadcasting and communication satellite television program distributions on December 1 in 2000, and finally (5) digitization of terrestrial television broadcasting starting on December 1 in 2003.

Japan's television broadcasting technically started back on February 1st in 1953 and it signed on the air from NHK Tokyo Broadcasting Center. And yet Japan's radio broadcasting started 28 years earlier on March 22nd in 1925 from the place named "Shiba" Tokyo experimental radio broadcasting site. Regarding television broadcasting Nippon Television Corporation in August 1954, NHK Osaka and Nagoya in 1954, and Radio Tokyo (currently turned to be Tokyo Television Broadcasting Corp.) in April 1960, followed the NHK's initiating television broadcasting operation in Tokyo.

After experiencing the shift from black-and-white television to color television, inventing the satellite television system uniquely, in the 1980s Japan had started moving toward advanced television, such as Hi-Vision, whose transmission had come from the satellite parking spot in the space- the geosynchronous orbit 22,600 miles above the equator. At that time, Japan's originally developed Hi-Vision was expected to become one of the world-wide standards for the next generation television in the world.

In the middle of the 1980s the U.S. had started to become interested in Japan's Hi-Vision for one of the strongest candidates in the U.S. advanced television (ATV) system development. It meant that satellite broadcasting would play a significant role in the U.S. advanced television system development. This leads that the Japan's new broadcasting technology and its operation utilizing satellite broadcasting transmission route would have a possibility to influence on the next television standard of the world, and yet the U.S. highly valued Japan's then-new technology advancement.

However, in June 1990 the reverse course occurred. It was the moment that the U.S. favored Japanese Hi-Vision standard in considering the U.S. next generation television, and the ATV standard changed the course. Critical technological development in the U.S. occurred and suddenly the U.S. had started seeking its own development for the next broadcasting digitization in the early 1990s, which mainly utilized a terrestrial broadcasting transmission route to develop the U.S. Digital Television called "DTV" in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

All things that happened from the 1950s and 2000s in the Japanese broadcasting industry were bureaucracy-centered or planned by elites and then with diligent contributions from the business sectors were made possible. However, in the latest event for a transition from analog to digital television standard it might be said that Japan's stable and conventional broadcasting policy received a great impact from external

forces, specifically the U.S. technological advancement in developing DTV. Eventually this situation moved Japan's broadcasting policy to go back and force open the new door for the next stage of the broadcasting policy planning and development in the age of the Internet.

2. Overview of Broadcasting Operation and Related Research in Japan

It is important to know that nothing would happen without policy and policy-making in each related industry or society. Prior to understanding Japan's broadcasting policy, it is better to comprehend policy-making from the aspect of trends of Japan's broadcast policy research which have not been theoretically well-developed and systematically organized. By looking at Japan's broadcast policy-making research trends from a historical point of view would be to appropriately understand its status. Therefore, this section is situated as an overview of the nature of broadcasting operation and its related research in Japan.

Broadcasting research and studies took off with the establishment of the Broadcasting Culture Research Institute at Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK in English Japan Broadcasting Corporation) in June 1946 only ten months after the end of World War II.³

NHK was obliged, per Chapter 1 Section 1 of the Broadcast Law, to facilitate research which would contribute to the improvement and development of broadcasting of Japan, and according to Chapter 44 Section 2 of the Broadcast Law, to discover the wants and needs of the public. It means that NHK was expected to periodically conduct scientifically executed public opinion polls and make the results publicly available.⁴

In the early 1950s, the Institute gathered data for the effective development of programs, such as diffusion studies of radio and television⁵, use analysis of educational programs and educational production soft-ware, and needs of schools for programming.⁶

The Institute played a central role in diffusing a common language all over Japan. The broadcast language utilized by NHK's announcers was considered the typical Japanese language which all Japanese people should learn. In this sense, NHK served as the living text for a model language acquisition of Japanese.⁷

The Advent of TV Broadcasting [1953 ~ present]

In February 1953, NHK began its television broadcasts followed by commercial television broadcasting by Nippon Television Network Corporation (NTV) in August 1953. Research on television broadcasting began in 1959, the year an Office of Studies of Broadcasting was established inside the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute.⁸

Also, in 1959, because of the live television coverage of Prince Akihito's wedding ceremony, Japanese households rushed to purchase television sets. The total number of black and white television sets tuned to NHK in 1958 was only one million, but the in the year following the Prince's wedding, the number dramatically increased to five million households paying viewer fees to NHK.⁹

The increased number of home television viewers stimulated the NHK to examine in greater depth its audience response and the social impact on Japanese society of aired television programs.

The NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute pursued three basic research themes such as:¹⁰ (1) to study the sociological significance and meaning of broadcasting and the ideal philosophy for television programs, (2) to study the social impact of television on the younger generation from the aspect of negative influence, and (3) to respect to the need to integrate and systematize broadcasting within Japanese society.

The problem in conducting research on these themes was the scarcity of academic researchers capable of carrying out broadcasting studies. To overcome this problem, the Institute in the early 1960s established a research committee. This committee invited outside scholars to be involved in and contribute to specialized broadcasting research projects. Research committee members came from the fields of sociology, social psychology, psychology, philosophy, aesthetics and political science.¹¹

NHK's practical research, such as audience reception data and programming research, was shared with theoretical researchers in universities. By the tenth anniversary of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, the Institute was publishing three scholarly journals and the research results were getting the attention of communication scholars inside and outside Japan.¹²

By 1962, the Institute was welcoming distinguished communication researchers around the world to make use of its research data. Some of them, such as Wilbur Schramm, were scholars from the U.S. communication schools.¹³ This was a very early academic open door toward international research. Some of these scholars, such as Wilbur Schramm, were distinguished communication scholars who led schools of thought on communication in the United States and elsewhere in the world.

NABJ Research Institute

In 1952, the National Association of Broadcasters of Japan (NABJ) established its own Research Institute. The primary emphasis of the NABJ institute at that time was to study influence of television broadcasts on children. The NABJ wanted to collect data using a scientific approach which would be effective in defending itself again undesired government regulation. During that time, the Japanese government was concerned about the educational impact of broadcasting in licensing new television stations.¹⁴ It can be imagined that NABJ's commercially based research was less than pure academic research.

Transition to Color TV from Black-and-White TV

In 1960, when color television broadcasting started, NHK had 5 million license fee paying households. Japan was enjoying an economic boom. In 1965, the year of the 20th anniversary of the Institute, two main divisions were established. They were the Synthesized Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, which emphasized research from the program sender's perspective and the Public Opinion Poll Office of Broadcasting which focused more on a program receiver's perspective.

Also in 1960, the Office of Studies of Broadcasting created four main theme divisions: (1) theory, (2) history, (3) system and (4) culture.¹⁵ In the 1960s the Institute produced books which included its accumulated research results and started gathering information on the broadcasting systems of foreign countries as a basis for revising Japan's regulatory framework for broadcasting.¹⁶

In 1971, the NHK general channel accomplished full color television signal transmission and had 10 million color television contract holders. During 1970s, the main theme of broadcasting research was to study the future broadcasting society and the public needs for information. Thus, the research trend shifted more to a longer-term approach. In 1973, the NHK Public Opinion Poll Department started its lifestyle survey, which has been conducted every five years since then. There was also an increasing interest in politics. Since 1976, annual political surveys have been conducted.¹⁷

The Institute produced many reports about foreign broadcast production and programming strategies based on comparative studies. In the early 1980s, before the New Media age, the Institute spent three years focusing on the role of local broadcasting. From 1978 to 1988 both broadcast stations and communications

scholars were critically examining Japan's system of public broadcasting by reviewing NHK operations and its problems.¹⁸

Multimedia Era [1984 ~ 2003]

This period has been called the multichannel era and the era of multimedia, in Japanese *Ta Media to Tachannel Jidai*. Japan (NASDA) in 1984, the same year NHK started experimental DBS television service. This period includes the start of HDTV experimental broadcasting, the advent of metropolitan cable television service, and the inauguration of commercial DBS and communication satellite television service.

In response to these events, the research institute of NHK was integrated into one entity and renamed the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute which is the same name of the first research institute.¹⁹

Early in the 1990s, comparative studies between Japan and the U.S. became core research themes, and a cooperative symposium was held under the title of "What Has World Television Reported? [Sonotoki Sekai ha Nani wo Tsutaetaka]".²⁰ Within the rapidly changing world-wide broadcasting framework, the Institute also aggressively collected up-dated information on broadcasting regulation in advanced countries.

As media economist Robert G. Picard has pointed out, the main concern of commercial broadcasters was always with how audiences and advertisers choose and use media. For them, the research priority has been understanding the activities of consumers in the market place, that is, understanding how and when audiences consume media products and services.²¹ The function of the NHK Research Institute has been of a slightly different orientation, since NHK has its obligation to the Broadcast Law of Japan. Whether it liked it or not, NHK has been given the mandate of conducting and maintaining a high academic level of research on a much broader range of issues.

Toward the end of this period unique phenomena would be found that due to the digitization of broadcasting in the age of world media and communication trend NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute as well as the Research Institute of National Association of Broadcasters of Japan back by all the 127 commercial broadcasters of Japan eagerly focuses on the research on how Japan's broadcasters should well-prepare for digitization of terrestrial television in transition from an analog to a digital standard.

The Era of Media Convergence [2003 ~ present]

In the age of media convergence, the occurring phenomena as digitization of terrestrial television would not well-understood in the newly emerged media environment. It means that broadcasting related research could not stand alone and it would be impossible to research only focusing on broadcasting operation and related phenomena including broadcast policymaking. Due to the advent of smart media and strong influence by the over-the-top media channel more and more telecommunications related studies would be needed in understanding rapidly changing media environment by inviting internet related policy and policy-making studies.

At the same time, another focus on the media research would be the audience access to the conventional legacy media and newly emerged or emerging media. For example, how the conventional broadcasters would handle decreasing access time by the audience to the conventional media and in what way conventional broadcasters particularly could survive under the so harsh competition among broadcasters and other media competitors, including cable television, satellite television, and social media including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and others.²²

It is said that Japan's broadcast digitization policy-making was influenced by the U.S. and U.K television digitalization back in middle of 1990s. U.K. had a head starter of terrestrial digital broadcasting back in 1998

and U.S. traced U.K. immediately after the launching terrestrial digital television broadcasting. In Japan, too in 1998 the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT later became the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) announced its plan that Japan would launch the terrestrial digital television broadcasting aiming around the year 2000.²³

It became true in December 2003 based on the government policy making decided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications for Japan that it will follow the world trend toward conventional terrestrial broadcast digitization. Now Japan's broadcast industry has faced a time of great upheaval, which is called "CHIDEJI-KA", digitalization of terrestrial television broadcasting in Japanese. The terrestrial digital broadcasting operation started on December 1st of 2003 in the Japan's representative big markets, such as Greater Kanto Area including Tokyo, Chiba, Kanagawa, Saitama, Gunma, Ibaraki, and Tochigi prefectures; Greater Kinki Area covering Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Hyogo, Wakayama, and Shiga prefectures; and Greater Chukyo Area in embracing Aichi, Mie, and Gifu prefectures.

Summary

Through overviewing broadcasting operation and related research in Japan, Japan's broadcasting policy research was not well developed and structured from the social scientific point of view and they showed strong characteristics of administrative research flavor in nature. All the broadcasting related research seemed to be dominated by NHK Broadcast Research Institute and NABJ Research Institute. At the same time the percentage of broadcast policy related studies are quite small.

It can be said that Japan's dual broadcasting players and related institutions as well as even academic scholars have looked up to the elitist and bureaucratic centered oriented broadcast policy-making currently led by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and in the past led by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. At the same time, not so many scholars have been involved in public policy and its policy-making research. It is also true that broadcasting policy researchers have relied on the government-led policy making a lot. Thus, there has been less appetite to conduct social science-oriented broadcasting policy research.

3. Two Dimensions of Broadcast Policy Research: International and Domestic Arena

There seem to be a small number of broadcasting policy studies based on the social scientific point of views in Japan. On the other hand, there are quite a large number of policy and policy-making related works conducted internationally. In this section broadcast policy research works are reviewed on either an international or domestic dimension. Eventually it tries to find out the different characteristics in broadcasting policy research between the international and domestic arena.

International Arena

Broadcasting policy research in the international arena mainly is divided by (1) comparing broadcasting policy aspect generally covering systematic explanations of broadcasting functions to be controlled in broader perspectives of broadcasting policy and (2) country-by-country approaches, which particularly focuses on the certain country, in this case, on Japan with the limitation of lacking in expertise information of broadcasting and in-depth relationships among political actors or stake holders.

Comparing Broadcasting Policy

Western researchers' interest in Japanese broadcasting started in the context of comparing broadcasting systems. In 1956, Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm proposed the Siebert-Peterson-Schramm Typology.²⁴ Burton Paulu in 1967 criticized this approach, noting that it was of little use in analyzing the European media systems.²⁵ Paulu favored the Namurois model developed in 1964, which proposed four different modes of control.²⁶ These are: (1) State operated, used by most communist countries and emphasizing government ministry, department of administrative agency operation, (2) public corporation, used by Britain (BBC), France, then-West Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, operating autonomously under state charter, (3) public interest partnerships, used by Italy, Sweden and Switzerland, functioning by legally private corporations with state stock interests, and (4) private enterprise, used by the U.S., Japan's private stations and Luxembourg, referring to the operation of private corporations with weak government regulation.²⁷

Bernard Krisher, a *Newsweek* correspondent in Tokyo, Japan from 1962 to 1974, was an early observer of contemporary Japan's broadcasting system from a professional journalist's point of view.²⁸ In his writings, he described the NHK operational system and programming, and the broadcasting culture of Japan. He emphasized the healthy independent status of NHK in the 1960s and into the 1970s. However, Krisher's writings were descriptive in nature and not based on systematic research.

Mass communication was a major topic of interest in American academia and received great attention from students of journalism, mass communications, sociology, political science, and psychology. During that time, mass media distribution in the U.S. was dominated by the three major networks, such as ABC (American Broadcasting Company), NBC (National Broadcasting Company), and CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), but international comparative studies were to some extent focused and emphasized.

Sydney W. Head headed a team of advisers for the Sudan Broadcasting System in 1960. He realized he could never advise imitating American programming and production methods. His answers were incorporated into his 1985 textbook *World Broadcasting Systems*. Head was an editor of comparative regional surveys of broadcasting, which led to his own volume solely on Africa in 1974. He contributed to the volume on Asia by John Lent in 1978 and on the Arab World by Douglas Boyd in 1982.²⁹

By going through these different regional broadcasting systems as an editor, Head could establish his own attributes of broadcasting systems.

1986, comparative broadcasting systems scholar W. J. Howell Jr. published *World Broadcasting in the Age of the Satellite*. Howell pursued a highly-complicated methodology for world broadcasting analysis. Japan was placed in the same categories as countries of Western Europe. Howell emphasized the era of new technology and new media with cable and satellite distribution capabilities.³⁰ Information flow was a serious issue for international scholars during this period. Hamid Mowlana, in describing international flow of information, targeted Japan as one of the under-covered countries by the U.S. media.³¹

In 1987, William H. Dutton, Jay G. Blumler and Kenneth L. Kraemer reported on wired city projects in the U.S., Japan, France, then West Germany and U.K. in their book, *Wired Cities*.³² From the 1980s to the early 1990s, there was a movement among city planners which emphasized cable infrastructures to realize a future information society with highly advanced interactive capabilities. *Wired Cities* introduced the effort to study the driving forces and social implications of new communications technologies based on the hypothesis that variations in the technological and public policy approaches of different nations to the wired city would be influenced by their histories and cultures.³³ *Wired Cities* uniquely emphasized the importance of a political perspective and insisted that more attention should be given to the politics of developing new

communications technologies and policy. The *Wired Cities* authors pointed out the necessity of studying the actors and the motivations behind the development of such policies.³⁴

In 1988, Ralph Negrine in *Satellite Broadcasting: The Politics and Implications of the New Media*, examined the implications of technological change and government regulation.³⁵ He picked Japan as one of the cases. However, a limitation was that there was no Japanologist who could help him digest the Japanese political situation. The result was writing which did not go into much detail about the political arena of satellite broadcasting.

In 1989, a close academic colleague of Sydney Head, Donald Browne of the University of Minnesota, published a condensed analysis of world broadcasting systems focusing on six industrialized nations. In *Comparing Broadcast Systems*, Browne characterized the Japanese system as a nonwestern approach with a western structure.³⁶ Browne addressed several basic factors in looking at world broadcasting system, such as geography, culture, economy, politics, and demography which covers general broadcasting operations and systems pertaining to how they work. One of Browne's significant contributions was on the impact of politics on broadcasting systems:

The political factor seems the most crucial. So many major changes in broadcast systems have come about because of changes in political power, for instance, privatization in France and in West Germany, while lack of change in political power seems to have been accompanied by lack of notable change in broadcasting, as in Gaullist France, in Japan under the Liberal Democrats from 1950 to the present, and in East Germany and the Soviet Union before Gorbachev. The economic factor runs in tandem with the political factor, as the more conservative parties look upon broadcast technology (fiber-optic cable, satellites) and on the licensing of commercial stations as "engines" to drive the economy.³⁷ (underline added by author)

Browne touched upon Japan's political and legal system of broadcast regulation. However, within the context of a comparative framework, Browne could not go in-depth regarding the broadcasting policy-making process.

In 1990, Peter Dunnett conducted an economic analysis in the framework of comparative broadcasting systems, whose approach gave more serious consideration to politics:

Government policies in all countries have a widespread effect on the structure, conduct, and performance of the media. Government policies area amongst the basic conditions of the industry, and apparently small changes in government policies can have significant, widespread effects on the media in general.³⁸

Dunnett utilized the industrial organization model which make it possible to examine the effects of government policy. However, this analysis was also weak and failed to grasp Japan's policy process.

Early in 1998, Michael Dupagne and Peter B. Seel published a book on *HDTV* which analyzed high-definition television (HDTV) from a global perspective.³⁹ This work, which focused on the U.S, Europe, and Japan, points to topics for further study.

The Japanese case was presented as a historical description. To make their study clearer and accurate, in-depth interviews would have been highly effective. To study these global matters in-depth, however, requires international scholarly cooperation.

In sum, comparative broadcasting systems approaches cannot cover the political processes of country-by-country cases in-depth; however, depending on the approach, such studies can give us insight into political

decision-making.

Country-by-Country Approaches

Some international media scholars have analyzed broadcast journalism in Japan, but few have approached political decision-making. Researchers would rarely find a Japanese-only study even on general media topics. Jung Bock Lee tried to figure out how the Japanese press system works as a force of political pressure.⁴⁰ Lee analyzed the origins, the structure, and the attitudinal inclinations of the Japanese press. Although his research is not about broadcasting policy-analysis, it is about the relationship between media and politics.

In 1993, Ofer Feldman concentrated on newspapers to figure out *Nagatacho*, place name of the political melting pot which is in Tokyo, and *Kasumigaseki*, place name which has become a symbol of bureaucracy in Tokyo, by observing the interaction between elite politicians and press correspondents.⁴¹ Although Feldman's work interests readers, the critical problem of his work from an academic point of view is that he failed to lay the theoretical groundwork of mass communication and political communication.

In 1996, Susan J. Pharr and Ellis S. Krauss published *Media and Politics in Japan*.⁴² Both authors came from political science field; neither were communication or journalism specialists. Therefore, it is natural that communication concepts by key communication authors were lacking in the work. Furthermore, the title tells readers that this book is about Japanese media, but it is a comparative study between United States and Japan.

In 1997, a comprehensive mass communication study was published by Anne Cooper-Chen, whose title is *Mass Communication in Japan*.⁴³ This is an introduction to Japanese mass communication written in English from a scholarly point of view. Even though it includes broadcast technology and policy and regulation of broadcasting, the analysis does not go further than general guidance in these areas.

In sum, Japan-only studies tend to be general guidance or insightful reports without theoretical underpinning using communication theories. Because of the comparative broadcasting and country-by-country approaches, study of policy and politics relating to Japanese broadcasting has increased, but not dramatically.

Domestic Arena

Compared with the international arena of broadcasting policy research, the studies accumulated have been descriptive in nature and more theoretical underpinning in research would be needed.

The weakest link in the field of broadcast research in Japan is in broadcasting policy. Among the many research reports by NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, only limited number of articles on policy can be sorted out from the literature. Yujiro Chiba published the first policy related article reporting on a 1962 lecture whose title is *What Makes for Good Broadcasting?*⁴⁴ This was a subjective piece with no theoretical support, revealing only what the author thought about the form Japan's future broadcasting structure should take.

The next article addressing broadcasting policy was published eighteen years later in 1980. This is also a report of the thoughts of representative scholars mainly from NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute. Yoshimi Uchikawa, Etsuo Ishizaka, Junichi Hamada, Kenshiro Otani, Akira Ishikawa and Kazuhiko Goto discussed the ideal broadcasting system for Japan and its policy implications.⁴⁵ They as a group of authoritative academic scholars and highly respected NHK Broadcast Research Institute senior researchers, revealed only their professional and expertise opinion based on their accumulated knowledge. A year later

three participants of the 1980 discussion plus one new member, Etsuo Ishizaka, Junichi Hamada, Akira Ishikawa and Shin Takashina summarized their own thoughts and published a similar article in 1981.⁴⁶ All the researchers are highly respected in Japan because of their contribution to the study of broadcasting; however, from the Western scholar's point of view, which emphasized a theoretical rationale in conducting research, their arguments fell short of meeting the criteria for scientific research.

In 1986, Nobuhiro Minoha did a piece of research about commercial broadcasting from the political point of view examining how the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) influenced multi-station license policy in the local commercial broadcasting market area.⁴⁷ This study was an ice-breaking attempt by NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute because it tended to research more public and broadcasting trends while neglecting commercial movements. The zeitgeist of the middle 1980s was that commercial broadcasters suddenly started attacking NHK because of NHK's cooperation with the government to introduce satellite broadcasting. Eventually, NHK was forced to analyze the whole broadcasting environment of Japan, including commercial broadcasting. Therefore, it is not surprising that NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute looked at MPT policies on channel allocations.

In the same year of 1986, Toru Hanawa of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute published a paper on the restructuring of NHK.⁴⁸ This article examined NHK's role as a public broadcasting station and questioned whether NHK should become more of a commercial entity. Currently, NHK is good financial health, but during the 1980s NHK was in hot water due to consecutive years of red ink, and the Japanese Diet was reluctant to increase viewer fees to cover increased operational costs.

Five of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute articles are, therefore, broadcasting system and policy related and remaining eight articles are about the building of a new broadcasting framework following World War II, which means that the majority of the policy research articles are about historical policy analysis. None of the articles related to policy making have a firm theoretical argument.

Ikuo Takeuchi, an early researcher with NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, pointed out that the Institute had a practice of giving broadcasters feedback data to help them produce better programs rather than pursuing objective research.⁴⁹ In other words, NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute's research purpose was mainly a practical one to improve program quality or newly established project, such as how would the newly established terrestrial digital television would be well received by the general public. In this regard the broadcasting policy research approach had been self-controlled and had not gone beyond borders set by the bureaucracy centered and elitist model approach. This tendency also would be applied to the studies done by the National Association of Broadcasting in Japan (NABJ) institute generated studies.

Conclusion

In sum, it is clear that Japan's broadcasting policy research has been shallow. There is neither much of a theoretical underpinning or empirical research in broadcast policy-making. This is the setting within which the current research is being conducted. The researcher concludes that looking at the role of government and policy process is studying Japan's broadcast policy-making is right on track for so little research has been done. And yet without critically researching on the broadcast policy-making and future planning of broadcasting under the dramatically changing media environment no future looking argument in broadcasting and its related media perspectives significantly would happen.

This policy-research overview covers Japan's trend in the period between 1950s and 2000s. Generally

during this period broadcasting policy and its policy-making of Japan had been stable by the bureaucracy centered model and elitist model approach and theoretical research on broadcasting policy rarely was conducted. This is a period that the Japanese conventional broadcasting system had been influenced heavily by the U.K.-related BBC typed public broadcasting system and the U.S. commercial broadcast network system. After 2000s due to the dramatically changing media landscapes in the globalized world based on the fast pace of diffusion of the Internet this study needs to be updated under the more deregulated and internet friendly broadcast policy-making trend.

In the age of commonly developed and executed broadcast policy-making influenced by the convergence between conventional broadcasting and rapidly expanding Internet media almost all industrialized nations such as including the U.S., the U.K., and Japan would be faced with over-the-top (OVT) media operation. This new media environment after 2010s should be separately studied. So that a new aspect of broadcast policy research is to be found by the further research both from the international and domestic broadcast policy arena, while more theoretically oriented and public policy focused broadcasting policy research studies are desired.

ENDNOTES

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Committee member for the Diet (1960), Masaki Ikuta from Keio University (1961), Yoshimi Uchikawa from Tokyo University (1962), Otoyori Tahara from Tohoku University (1962), Michitaro Tada from Kyoto University (1962), Takeo Furu from International Christian University (1963), Koichi Motono, former Bureau Chief of Studies of Broadcasting of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (1965), and Akinori Katagiri, former president of NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute (1969).

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日本の放送政策研究 —1950年代から2000年代までを概観する—

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本論文は、主に日本のテレビ放送に関連する放送政策に焦点をあてており、その際、戦後から始まったアナログ放送時代から地上放送のデジタル化に至る直近の期間までを取り上げている。全体を大きく二つに分けているが、前半部分は日本の放送状況変化と政策研究にかかわる時代背景とをオーバーラップさせながら展開した概説であり、①戦後のテレビ放送ネットワークが開始された時期、②1960年を起点として白黒からカラーテレビへと転換された時期、③1984年からの視聴契約に基づく衛星テレビ視聴の到来期、④2000年に始まった衛星テレビ放送のデジタル化時代、そして⑤2003年から本格的な移行に向けて動き始めた地上デジタルテレビ放送への移行期に区分している。これに続いて、日本の放送政策について国際的および国内的研究の視座から、放送政策関連研究の取り組み状況を包括的にまとめた。結果として、日本の放送政策研究は政策または政策過程にかかわる状況・傾向を解説しながら将来展望を示す範囲のものが中心になっているとの特徴がみられた。これに関連して放送政策研究が取り組むべき課題として、理論的または実証的な研究の不足が指摘されている。日本における放送の政策立案と政府の役割および政策過程を射程に入れた研究の積み重ねが重要である点も強調されている。劇的な変化がみられるメディア環境下で、放送政策過程および放送の将来展望を批判的に研究・調査することの積み重ねがあつて初めて、放送と関連のメディア分野にかかわる政策研究の議論が意義を持つことになるとの指摘である。

論文では1950年代から2000年代にかけ、日本の放送政策研究を歴史的な流れにそってレビューする中で、日本の放送は、英国放送協会が実践してきた公共放送の仕組み、さらに米国の商業主義的な放送ネットワークのあり方に大きく影響を受けてきたことも浮き彫りにされた。21世紀に入りグローバル化する世界の中でメディア環境は急速な変貌を遂げているが、これにはインターネットの急速な社会的浸透が影響している。その中で求められているのは、規制緩和とインターネット環境への親和性を射程に入れた最先端の放送政策研究傾向の研究にかかわる取り組みであり、加えて理論的な公共政策の視点に立った研究視座との接合が望まれる。

キーワード：放送、テレビ、政策研究、政策立案、メディア、NHK、公共放送、商業放送

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