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INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND SOCIETAL INFLUENCES ON MEDIA ROLE PERCEPTIONS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JOURNALISTS IN CHINA, TAIWAN, AND THE UNITED STATES

By Jian-Hua Zhu, David Weaver, Ven-hwei Lo, Chongshan Chen, and Wei Wu



This article reports a secondary analysis comparing media role perceptions among journalists in China, Taiwan, and the United States, based on three recent nationwide surveys in these societies. By comparing the goodness-of-fit of a series of loglinear models, we have found that the societal factor has the strongest impact on journalists' views about media roles, the organizational factor has a significant but weak impact, and the individual factor has virtually no impact. Within the societal factor, we have further contrasted two competing models: political determinism versus cultural determinism. The study provides clear-cut evidence in favor of the former.

The importance of comparative research in communication has long been recognized.¹ Among other merits, the most important strength of comparative communication research is its ability to test the impact of society on individual or organizational behaviors. This is especially true in the study of journalistic professionalism. As pointed out by Shoemaker, societal factors (e.g., the dominant ideology in a society) are often more influential than individual characteristics (e.g., formal education) or organizational characteristics (e.g., media ownership) on media professionalism.² While this proposition is shared by many other media scholars, it is more difficult to study societal-level influences than any lower-level influences.³ One obvious reason is that societal influences are a *constant* in a single-society study (i.e., taking the same value for everyone in the society), and thus cannot be observed within a single society. "Yet one can only understand a given system by comparing it with others," as McLeod and Blumler note.⁴

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Nevertheless, even when cross-national data are available, there is still no guarantee of finding any generalizable insights beyond the nations under comparison. The most popular type of comparative communication studies is a two-nation comparison, such as the experiences with an information society between the United States and Japan,⁵ the roles of communication in the decision making process between the United States and Yugoslavia,⁶ the professional views of journalists between the United States and Russia,⁷ and the news coverage of international trading between China and Taiwan.⁸ This approach works fine if two nations under comparison are found to be largely similar, suggesting the absence of societal influences. However, when significant differences are observed between the two nations, it becomes problematic to determine whether the differences are attributable to language, political system, cultural tradition, economic development, or some combination of these. In other words, nations differ on many dimensions. With only two nations under comparison, these multidimensional influences at the societal-level are confounded with each other and unidentifiable. Thus, one often has to make ad hoc speculations about the observed differences. Przeworski and Teune offer a theory-driven approach to the problem: the researcher should develop a quantifiable measure of certain "national-level variables" and explicitly build these variables into the comparison.⁹ In other words, the focus should be on the differences *along* societal-level variables rather than *among* societies per se. Operationally, this approach requires data from at least three societies to separate societal-level variables from societies.

The current study attempts to apply the Przeworski and Teune approach to a long-standing research paradigm on media professionalism. How journalists think of various roles for the news media to play in a society has been considered more influential on professional conduct than any individual factors.¹⁰ In a nationwide survey of American journalists in 1971, Johnstone, Slawski and Bowman asked the respondents to rate the importance of eight types of media activities, and through a factor analytical procedure identified two dimensions underlying these activities: an *observer* role and a *participant* role.¹¹ The former focuses on neutral reporting of daily events while the latter posits a more active interaction with public affairs. Weaver and Wilhoit have since conducted two follow-up surveys of U.S. journalists in 1982 and 1992, respectively.¹² In both replications, they added questions about the adversarial relationship between media and government/businesses, and obtained a perceptual system of media roles with three distinct dimensions: a *disseminator* role (equivalent to Johnstone's observer), an *interpretative* role (corresponding to participant), and an *adversary* role (a new dimension).

One finding emerged from all three studies over the twenty-year span -- the perceptions of these media roles can hardly be explained by a long list of individual characteristics (e.g., gender, age, education and political orientations) and organizational factors (e.g., supervisory position in the organization or the size of the organization). The evidence is so consistent over time that one has to look for explanatory variables elsewhere. Societal-level factors might be a good candidate, because journalists under different political, economic, and cultural systems could have much more diverse views on their missions and roles in the society. Thus, the first objective of the current study is to contrast societal-level factors with individual- and organizational-level factors in terms of their relative impact on the perceptions of media roles.

The second objective, and probably a more challenging task, of this study is to contrast various aspects of the societal factor in order to gain a more precise understanding of the exact nature of societal influences that have often been grossly and ambiguously treated in the literature. We have postulated that two specific aspects of the societal factor -- *political system* and *cultural tradition* - are most central to news professionalism. In operationalizing these two variables, we take the United States as the starting point where the research on media professionalism was originally launched, and look for two other societies as the reference of comparison. One of the comparative societies should share a similar political system with, but a different culture from, the United States. On the other hand, this comparative society should share the same culture with the second comparative society. Two Chinese societies, China and Taiwan, appear to meet these criteria. China and Taiwan share the same cultural traditions that have conventionally been characterized as Confucian, but they differ in political systems, especially after Taiwan began to transform from an authoritarian polity into an American-style democracy in the late 1980s, whereas China has preserved a Communist system despite its drastic reforms in the economic arena since the 1980s.¹³ This conceptualization offers two competing models that can be tested empirically in the spirit of John Platt's call for the method of multiple hypotheses to avoid becoming attached to a single explanation.¹⁴

Political Determinism. Under this model, the journalists in the United States and Taiwan share similar professional values *and* both differ from their counterparts in China. Since the three groups are distinguished by two types of political system with the United States and Taiwan being under one system (democracy) and China under another (Communism), we can reasonably attribute the difference to political systems.

Cultural Determinism. Here the journalists in China and Taiwan (sharing the Chinese cultural traditions) show similar perceptions of media roles *and* both are different from the U.S. journalists who subscribe to Western cultural values. Following a similar logic as in Model 1, we can interpret this pattern as support for cultural influences over political influences.

There are three other possible scenarios worth mentioning, although none is theoretically interesting (see Table 1 for a summary of all models).

Theoretically Invalid. This is a scenario empirically possible but conceptually implausible, in which a high degree of consensus is found between the journalists in China and the United States, and both are distinct from the Taiwan journalists. Should that happen, we should raise concerns about the validity of the data, rather than attempting to search for ad hoc explanations.

Real Cause(s) Mis-specified. Also possible is a scenario in which all three groups under comparison share nothing in common between any of the pairs. The three groups act uniquely on their own. This means that we have missed some

TABLE 1

A Conceptual Scheme for Comparing Journalists in the United States, China and Taiwan

Model Prediction	USA	Taiwan	China
Politically Deterministic	Same	Same	Different
Culturally Deterministic	Different	Same	Same
Conceptually Implausible	Same	Different	Same
Predictors Misspecified	Different	Different	Different
No Societal Effects	Same	Same	Same

other important variable(s) at the societal level that are responsible for the idiosyncratic *behavior* of each group.

No Societal Effects. Finally, if the comparison fails to find any significant difference between any pair of the three groups, then we have to conclude that the two societal variables under study, political system and cultural tradition, have no impact on news professionalism, subject to validation by data from other nations. Alternatively, the null-effects finding can be caused by poorly designed measurement that is insensitive to societal differences.¹⁵ This would be the case when individual journalists in all societies under comparison either unanimously endorse (i.e., a ceiling effect) or unanimously oppose (a floor effect) a particular question.

Data Collection. This comparative study is based on a secondary analysis of three nationwide surveys conducted in the United States, China, and Taiwan, respectively. The U.S. survey was carried out by Weaver and Wilhoit in 1992, as a replication of their survey of American journalists in 1982.¹⁶ The survey adopted a multistage sampling procedure: First, 574 print and broadcasting organizations were randomly selected from media industry directories. The chosen media were then contacted for a roster of news-editorial staff. In the final stage, individual journalists were drawn based on a systematic interval from the compiled list and then interviewed by telephone. More detailed information about the survey methodology can be found in Weaver and Wilhoit.¹⁷

Methods

Both the China and Taiwan surveys followed the same multistage sampling method used in the U.S. survey, each with certain modifications to accommodate local situations.¹⁸ In the Taiwan survey, which was conducted in 1994, 50 news organizations were first selected from a total pool of 79, from which individual respondents were randomly drawn and interviewed in person. The China survey, conducted in 1995, first selected 461 media organizations and then drew individual journalists from these chosen organizations to complete a self-administered questionnaire.

In addition to the interviewing methods, the China and Taiwan surveys also differ from the U.S. model in some other ways. For example,

TABLE 2
Sample Characteristics

	USA	Taiwan	China
Sampling			
Time of Survey	1992	1994	1995
Interview Method	telephone	face-to-face	self-administered questionnaire
Number of Media Organizations Involved	574	50	461
Sample Size	1,156	1,015	2,723*
Completion Rate	81%	78%	71%
Sample Composition			
Female	34%	38%	33%
Median Age	36 yrs.	34 yrs.	35 yrs.
Number of Years in Journalism	12.0 yrs.	14.7 yrs.	9.9 yrs.
College Educated	82%	90%	86%
Major in Journalism/ Communication	40%	54%	27%

* The original size of the China sample was 5,867 in which women were purposively oversampled. The reported size is based on a weighted adjustment.

weekly newspapers were excluded from the Taiwan sample whereas these publications were included in both the U.S. and China samples. In the Chinese survey, individual respondents were selected from each organization in the sampling frame based on a quota involving sex and job rank, which differs from the systematic random sampling method used in both the U.S. and Taiwan surveys. Although we are not sure exactly how these variations in survey methods will affect our comparison across the three societies, it is necessary to keep the differences in mind when interpreting the results.

Table 2 shows key characteristics of the three samples. Two general patterns can be observed. On the one hand, the journalists in the three societies are quite similar in terms of demographic characteristics, as measured by the proportion of women and the median age. On the other hand, there are noticeable differences among the three groups with respect to their professional socialization, such as the proportion of those with formal training in journalism or communication and the number of years in journalism. Therefore, when we combine the three samples into a unified data set for statistical analysis, we will control for professional socialization (i.e., journalism education) without a need to control for demographic background (sex or age). Because the three samples differ in size, we have scaled down the China sample by a factor of .373 and the U.S. sample by .878 to ensure each sample contributes equally to the combined data. The final sample size used in the analysis is 3,566.

Measurement of Media Roles. Although both the China and Taiwan surveys were modeled on the U.S. survey, the measurement is still not exactly equivalent across the three questionnaires, a problem that has been long recognized in comparative research¹⁹. Perceptions of media roles were measured in the U.S. survey by a battery of 10 questions,²⁰ such as how important it is for the media to “get information to the public quickly?” “to provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems?” “to investigate claims and statements made by the government?” and “to be an adversary of public officials/businesses by being constantly skeptical of their actions?” The Taiwan survey followed quite closely the U.S. protocol. However, the China survey asked several questions that are semantically or functionally different from either the original English version used in the U.S. survey or the Chinese translation used in the Taiwan survey. For example, the wording of a question about media’s watchdog role (“investigate claims and statements made by the government”) was revised to be compatible with the official line (“perform an opinion supervision role over governmental bodies and public servants”) when translated into the mainland Chinese questionnaire. Furthermore, the two questions about media’s adversarial relationship with government/businesses were dropped for political considerations.

In the end, we have come up with three items that are comparable across the three surveys: “get information to the public quickly,” “provide analysis and interpretation of complex problems,” and “provide entertainment and relaxation.” Interestingly, the first two items (“Information” and “Analysis and Interpretation”) are the core of the two factors (i.e., “Disseminator” and “Interpretive” respectively) extracted by the factor analysis of the U.S. data. Thus, the two items will be used as two single-indicator factors in the current study. What is compromised here is not the *dimensionality* of the two theoretical constructs (which remain as two) but the *reliability* of the constructs, as is always the case when a single-item is used to represent a construct. On the other hand, the third factor (“Adversary”) in the original three-factor structure is completely absent from the current comparison because there is simply no any item measuring the construct in the China survey. The third question (“Entertainment”) was a peripheral item within the single-nation (i.e., U.S.) context, but it becomes more valuable for the cross-national comparison because it provides a necessary contrast to the two more popular roles (Information and Interpretation) and thus increases the range of variation for the analysis.

As discussed earlier, we have hypothesized that journalists’ perceptions of media roles are likely to be influenced by factors at three levels: individual, organizational, and societal. For parsimony, we have chosen one factor for each level in this study: Professional Training (a dichotomy between whether the journalist had a major or minor in journalism or communication or not) at the individual level, Media Industry (also a dichotomy between a print or broadcasting organization for which the respondent works) at the organizational level, and Society (with three categories including USA, China, or Taiwan) at the societal level. Thus, the data for each dependent item become a multidimensional table with 36 cells²¹ (3 categories of media role perceptions x 3 societies x 2 categories of professional training x 2 media industries).²²

Loglinear Analysis. Loglinear modeling seems to be the most suitable tool to analyze the multidimensional table. For example, the data are highly skewed (mostly toward the “very important” end). Thus, the conventional general linear models (e.g., multiple regression or analysis of variance) that

TABLE 3
Explained Variance in the Perceptions of Media Roles

Explanatory Variable	d.f.	Information		Interpretation		Entertainment	
		LL ²	%	LL ²	%	LL ²	%
Training	2	1.824	1.1	2.306	0.6	1.266	0.3
Industry	2	6.748*	3.9	11.380**	2.8	15.058***	3.1
Society	4	85.623***	49.7	301.87***	74.3	330.595***	69.0
Training x Industry	2	0.869	0.5	2.206	0.5	0.403	0.1
Training x Society	4	4.388	2.5	3.976	1.0	2.351	0.5
Industry x Society	4	1.866	1.1	14.732**	3.6	33.590***	7.0
Training x Industry x Society	4	1.936	1.1	0.782	0.2	0.306	0.1
Total Variance	22	172.317	100.0	406.384	100.0	478.994	100.0

* $P < .05$; ** $P < .01$; *** $P < .001$.

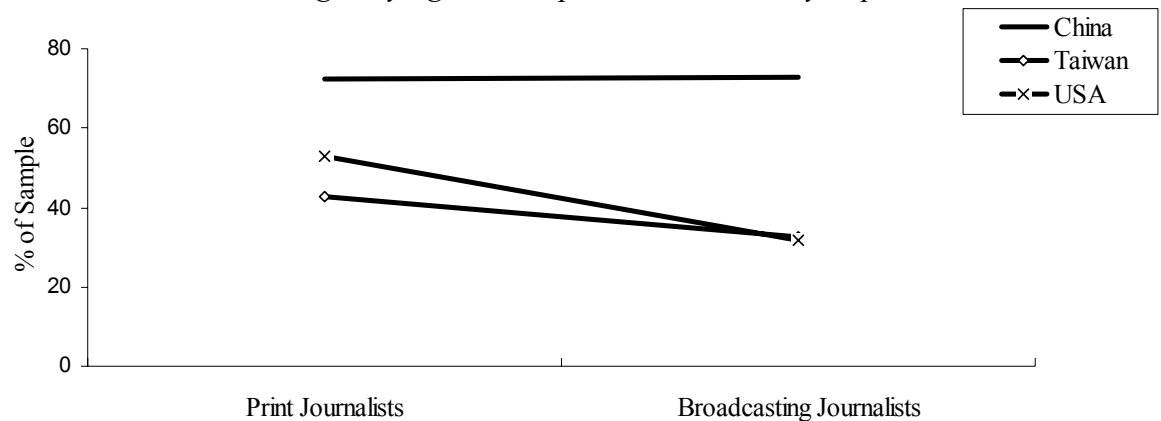
require a normal distribution seem to be inappropriate. Loglinear modeling is known for its technical complexity, but it provides us a flexible way to contrast: (a) the relative impact of professional training, industry and society across the three levels of analysis; and (b) the relative impact between political and cultural influences within the societal factor.

Operationally, we first fit a series of loglinear models for each of the three role items, including a “null” model (containing no independent variable) to obtain the total variance in the role item, and seven “one-less” models (containing all but one of the main effects or interactions of the three independent variables) to assess the net contribution of the excluded variable. Finally, the parameter coefficients from the saturated model provide the basis for comparing the political and cultural influences at the societal level.

Findings

Cross-Level Contrast. Table 3 reports the amount and proportion of the variance in the role perception items explained by individual-, organizational-, and societal-level factors. The explained variance by a predictor is calculated by subtracting the goodness-of-fit (as measured by the log-likelihood function, or LL²) of the saturated model, which includes all predictors and their interactions and thus leaves no variance unexplained, from the LL² of a “one-less” model, which includes all predictors but the one under examination. The resulting difference in LL², which follows a Chi-square distribution and thus can be statistically tested against the given degrees of freedom, indicates the unique contribution made by that predictor to the model after all other variables, including the interaction terms, are held

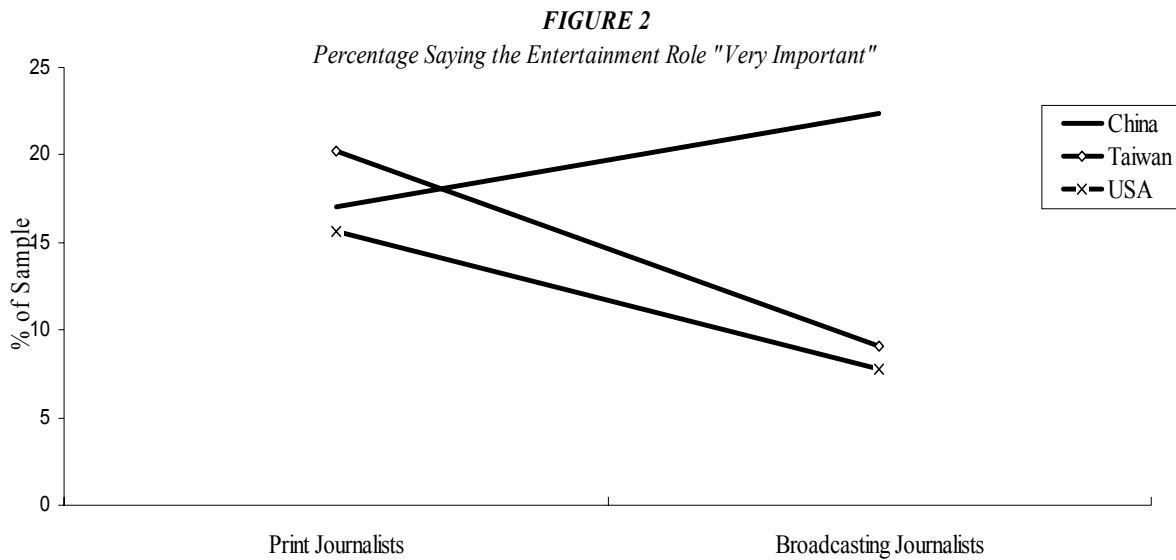
FIGURE 1
Percentage Saying the Interpretation Role "Very Important"



constant. To help the interpretation, we have also converted the LL^2 into a more familiar format (i.e., the proportion of variance explained) by dividing the explained variance by the total variance of the model.²³

Equipped with these technical notes, let us inspect the relative impact of independent variables across three levels. The individual-level factor (formal training in journalism or communication) explains only 1% or less of the variance in all three media role perceptions, respectively. None of these reaches statistical significance at the .05 level. The organizational-level factor (media industry) explains more variance in the professional values (4% in Information and 3% each in Interpretation and Entertainment). Though relatively small in magnitude, the explained variance by the organizational factor is statistically significant at the .05 level or beyond for all three items. The most impressive contribution, however, is made by Society (USA, China, or Taiwan), which explains 50% of the variance in Information, 69% in Entertainment and 74% in Interpretation. They are all highly significant beyond the .001 level.

In addition to the main effects, Society and Industry also have a significant interaction effect on two of the three items (4% in Interpretation and 7% Entertainment). Substantively, the observed interaction effects indicate that the impact of Industry on media role perceptions is not uniform across all societies. Specifically, the relationship takes one form in China and another in the United States and Taiwan. As shown in Figure 1, while equal numbers of print and broadcasting journalists in China rate Interpretation as "very important," the print journalists in both the United States and Taiwan are more likely to subscribe to this role than the broadcasting journalists in their respective societies. A sharper contrast can be found in Figure 2. Here the percentage saying the Entertainment Role is "very important" is quite similar (ranging from 16% to 20%) among the print journalists across all three societies, but there is a much wider gap between



broadcasting journalists in China (22% of whom rate Entertainment highly) and in the United States (8%) and Taiwan (9%).

Contrast Within Societal Level. So far we have treated Society as a catch-all basket for any difference across the three societies without considering the fact that this variable actually is confounded by two distinct contrasts: democracy vs. communism on the political dimension and Western vs. Chinese values on the cultural dimension. To formally test the relative strength of political vs. cultural influences, we can examine the coefficients of Society estimated by the saturated loglinear models. Note that each saturated model produces 120 coefficients, for all possible combinations of the dependent and independent variables (including their interaction terms). For our purpose, we have reported in Table 4 only three coefficients for each model, each coefficient representing the likelihood of the journalists in a particular society (as compared to the other two societies) to say “very important” on each media role question.

The coefficients show a clear and consistent pattern for the inter-societal comparison. On each of the three media role items, the journalists in China are significantly different from their counterparts in either the United States or Taiwan. On the other hand, there is virtually no difference between the U.S. and Taiwan journalists across all three items. Specifically, the journalists in China are more likely to consider each of the three media roles to be “very important” than the journalists in the other two societies. The largest contrast is observed on Interpretation, with a significant difference at the .0001 level. Even the smallest difference, on Entertainment, is still significant at the .05 level. These findings are consistent with the interaction analysis reported in Figures 1 and 2, in which the relationship between the

TABLE 4
Loglinear Coefficients of Societal Effects (Standard Errors in Parentheses)¹

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable: Society		
	USA	Taiwan	China
Information	-.184 ^a (.075)	-.292 ^b (.104)	.475 ^{ab} (.074)
Interpretation	-.460 ^a (.059)	-.427 ^b (.079)	.887 ^{ab} (.062)
Entertainment	-.187 ^a (.086)	-.135 ^b (.109)	.322 ^{ab} (.067)

¹ the coefficients are the net effects of being in a society on the likelihood of saying “very important” to each of the dependent variables, after controlling for Professional Training and Media Industry.

^a denotes a significant difference between the pair at .05 level or beyond.

^b denotes a significant difference between the pair at .05 level or beyond.

industrial background and the views of media roles takes a quite different shape in China than in the U.S. and Taiwan.

This study compares the perceived importance of information, interpretation and entertainment roles performed by the mass media among journalists in the United States, China and Taiwan. Based on three large scale, nationwide surveys conducted between 1992 and 1995, we have found that media’s role as an information provider is the most popular (as measured by the largest percentage considering it “very important”) and the least controversial (as measured by the smallest total variance in the item) across all three societies. On the other hand, entertainment is the least popular (accompanied by the smallest percentage) with the most diverse opinions (the largest total variance). The views on whether the media should play a role of interpretation are also very popular among the mainland Chinese journalists, but are much less so among the U.S. and Taiwan Chinese journalists.

To gain a deeper understanding of the formation of journalistic views on media roles, we have examined three possible causal factors operating at individual, organizational, and societal levels. A comparison of the size of variance in the role perceptions explained by each of the factors, based on loglinear modeling techniques, reveals clear-cut evidence that societal factors have much stronger effects than organizational factors, which in turn have stronger effects than individual factors on views about media professionalism. For example, Society (a variable indexing whether a journalist is

**Conclusions
and
Discussion**

from the United States, China, or Taiwan) alone explains 50% to 74% of the total variance in the role perceptions, whereas Industry (reflecting whether the journalist is working for the print or broadcasting media) explains 3-4% of the variance. Professional Training (whether the journalist has received a formal education in journalism or communication before entering the profession) explains only 1% or less. While the importance of societal factors on journalistic values and conduct has been long recognized, the current study might be the first to empirically document such a strong case.

The current study goes beyond a simple description of the difference across societies by exploring the nature of the observed societal difference. For that purpose, we have postulated that the three societies under comparison are distinct along two dimensions: political systems and cultural traditions. By explicitly incorporating these two dimensions into the statistical analysis, we have been able to compare and contrast the relative importance between political and cultural influences, both of which are theoretically plausible effects on media professionalism. The resulting evidence is also unambiguous that the journalists in the data form two distinct clusters, with the U.S. and Taiwan journalists being one and the mainland Chinese journalists another. This pattern holds up for all three media roles. Since it is the political systems (rather than the cultural traditions) that separate the two clusters, the politically deterministic model proposed in Table 1 is supported.

The best illustration of this conclusion is the sharp contrast between the U.S./Taiwan journalists and the mainland Chinese journalists on the Interpretation Role (see Row 2 in Table 4). Why are the journalists under a Communist society such as China *much more* likely to support this role than their counterparts in a democratic society? One can easily find an answer by examining the missions and responsibilities assigned to Chinese journalists by the Communist Party and the State.²⁴ At the heart is the notion that ordinary citizens do not have an intrinsic ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, and the media have the noble responsibility to help the masses to make sense of daily events around the world. The role of providing analysis and interpretation of complex problems fits nicely into this system.

It should be noted that the current study has suffered from a number of shortcomings commonly experienced by comparative analyses. The most critical problem is the incomparability of some dependent variable measures across the three surveys, which has limited the final analysis to only three items, a quite narrow context for comparative research. As mentioned earlier, the incomparability was caused by several modifications of Weaver and Wilhoit's protocol in the China survey, which were necessary under the political atmosphere in the society. Otherwise, there might have been no such a survey at all. This presents one of those paradoxical situations for comparative research: a society is chosen because its repressive system provides an ideal point of comparison, but this "desirable" characteristic (from a comparative researcher's point of view) is exactly the very obstacle to data collection.

This study is limited not only by the small number of dependent measures, but also by the small number of cases. To be sure, the three surveys all are based on large-scale samples. However, the unit of analysis in a cross-national comparison is not the individuals but the societal systems.²⁵ In this sense, we have only three cases for the study. As pointed out earlier, three cases are minimally necessary to isolate the effects of political and cultural factors. However, a study with more societal units provides a more rigorous

test of the hypothesis than the current study can. This seems to be an important and fruitful step to take in the future.

We started this study with the idea that comparative research offers a promising future for understanding communication if it is theoretically motivated and guided. Without a comparative approach, many constraints on communication would have been either overlooked (e.g., the societal level influences) or overstated (e.g., individual-level characteristics). However, without a clearly articulated conceptual framework, a comparative study too easily can become descriptive, idiosyncratic, and ad hoc. This study attempts to be theoretically oriented and has benefited from this approach, despite various limitations.

NOTES

¹ For example, Jay G. Blumer, Jack M. McLeod, & Karl Erik Rosengren, "An Introduction to Comparative Communication Research," in *Comparatively Speaking: Communication and Culture across Space and Time*, ed. Jay G. Blumer, Jack M. McLeod, and Karl Erik Rosengren (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992), 3-18; Alex S. Edelstein, *Comparative Communication Research* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982); Jack M. McLeod and Jay G. Blumler, "The Macrosocial Level of Communication Science," In *Handbook of Communication Science*, ed. Charles. R. Berger and Steven. H. Chaffee (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1987).

² Pamela J. Shoemaker, *Communication Concepts 3: Gatekeeping* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1991).

³ For example, Robert K. Manoff and Michael Schudson, eds., *Reading the News* (NY: Pantheon Books, 1986); Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content* (NY: Longman, 1991).

⁴ McLeod & Blumler, "The Macrosocial Level," 315-16.

⁵ Alex S. Edelstein, John E. Bowes, and Sheldon M. Harsel, eds., *Information Societies: Comparing the Japanese and American Experiences* (Seattle, WA: International Communication Center, School of Journalism, University of Washington, 1978).

⁶ Alex S. Edelstein, *The Use of Communication in Decision-Making: A Comparative Study of Yugoslavia and the United States* (NY: Praeger, 1974).

⁷ Wei Wu, David H. Weaver, and Owen V. Johnson, "Professional Roles of Russian and U.S. Journalists: A Comparative Study," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 73 (autumn 1996): 534-48.

⁸ Jian-Hua Zhu, "Between Prescriptive and Descriptive Roles: A Comparison of International Trade News between China and Taiwan," *Asian Journal of Communication* 2 (1991): 31-50.

⁹ Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*, rev. ed. (NY: Wiley & Sons, 1981).

¹⁰ Doris A. Graber, *Mass Media and American Politics*, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1993).

¹¹ John W.C. Johnston, Edward J. Slawski, and William W. Bowman, *The News People: A Sociological Portrait of American Journalists and Their Work* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1976).

¹² David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist: A Portrait of U.S. News People and Their Work* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986); David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The*

American Journalist in the 1990s: U.S. News People at the End of an Era (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1996).

¹³ See Zhu, “Between Prescriptive and Descriptive Roles,” for a detailed discussion of the similarities and differences between China and Taiwan at the societal level.

¹⁴ John R. Platt, “Strong Inference,” *Science*, 16 October 1964, 347-53.

¹⁵ We would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing out this possibility.

¹⁶ Weaver and Wilhoit, *The American Journalist*; Weaver and Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s*.

¹⁷ Weaver and Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s*, Appendix I.

¹⁸ Chongshan Chen, Jian-Hua Zhu, and Wei Wu, “The Chinese Journalist”; and Ven-hwei Lo, “The New Taiwan Journalist,” in *The Global Journalist: News People around the World*, ed. David H. Weaver (Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, in press).

¹⁹ Edelstein, *Comparative Communication Research*; Przeworski and Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*.

²⁰ To be precise, the 1992 survey of American journalists has two more questions about media roles. Both the China and Taiwan surveys were modeled on the ten questions asked in the 1982 U.S. survey.

²¹ A copy of the four-way table is available upon request.

²² The three media role items were originally measured by a four-point scale ranging from “very important,” through “quite important” to “somewhat important” and “not important.” There are very few cases in the last two categories for most of sub-sample cells. Therefore, they are collapsed into one category to ensure enough cases in each cell. The category of “Don’t Know / Refuse,” which accounts for 2% or under in all cases except one (4% by Taiwan journalists on entertainment) is excluded from the analysis.

²³ The total variance of a model is determined by fitting a “null model” which does not include any independent variables. We have reported the total variance for each of the three items at the bottom of Table 3. Interestingly, Information has the smallest variance while Entertainment the largest variance, which suggests that the journalists from the three societies are most likely to reach a consensus on media’s Information Role while least likely to agree on the Entertainment Role.

²⁴ For example, Chinese Communist Party Central Propaganda Department and State Bureau of News and Publication, eds., *Law, Policy and Regulations on News Media: A Reader* (Beijing: Learning Publishing House, 1994).

²⁵ McLeod and Blumler, “The Macrosocial Level.”