

A Systematic Literature Review of Localization Strategies of the Global Format Reality TV in China in the Past Decade (2012-2022)

Xiaomeng Zhang¹, Nurul Ain Mohd Hasan¹, Hani Salwah Yaakup¹, Ng Chwee Fang²

¹Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

²Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia

Correspondence: Nurul Ain Mohd Hasan, Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, University Putra Malaysia, Malaysia.

Received: July 6, 2023

Accepted: August 25, 2023

Online Published: August 29, 2023

doi:10.11114/smc.v11i7.6219

URL: <https://doi.org/10.11114/smc.v11i7.6219>

Abstract

The past few decades have witnessed the popularity of global format reality TV programs in China, paralleled by a growing academic interest in comprehending the process of localizing these format programs. However, the existing literature on the subject comprises diverse and fragmented selected cases, revealing a research gap in terms of a systematic exploration and comprehensive review of the adaptation process of format television programs in China. This study employs a systematic literature review to examine the localization of format reality shows in China over the past decades. It aims to provide practical strategies for format programs to enter the Chinese media market and identify the gaps in this area. The general research question is what strategies have been used to adapt format reality shows in China. A total of 40 articles from CNKI, Google Scholar, and Scopus are selected for qualitative synthesis. The findings indicate that the localization of format reality TV need to incorporate more local elements to enter the Chinese media market due to the cultural differences and the strict regulation from the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television of the People's Republic of China (SARFT). Further research should investigate the impact of SARFT's regulations on format programs and the subsequent shift towards local production in China.

Keywords: localization strategy, format television, reality TV, systematic literature review, China

1. Introduction

Nabi, Biely, Morgan, and Stitt (2003) suggest that reality programs are characterized by a set of specific attributes, such as being filmed without a script, having a narrative, being intended to function as entertainment, featuring people as themselves rather than actors performing a role, and being filmed in real living or working environments rather than a set. Cheung (2017) highlights Reality TV as a televisual product, representing a distinct form of regional television programming characterized by its excessive style, incorporation of the audience's cultural memory, and emphasis on dramatic elements. The media's visualization implies the self-awareness of television in visually portraying the immediacy and authenticity of its broadcasting content (Caldwell, 1995). Friedman (2002) reveals that reality TV is a refined format of program, as it blurs the boundary between the actual and the dramatic, persuading the audience to perceive what they see on the screen as lived reality. The production cost of reality TV is very low because it involves a smaller production crew for non-scripted programming and few scriptwriters or professional actors; reality programs are, therefore, economically attractive to local stations (Hill, 2005). With the rapid development of China's commodity economy, the demand from Chinese audiences for diversified television programs has also increased (Chang, 2014). In the past, the productivity of China's media products was limited, prompting Chinese TV producers to introduce format television programs from various counties to cater to the growing demands of the local audience. While these format TV programs offer production standards (Moran & Malbon, 2006) that guide local TV producers in several aspects, the localization process remains a negotiation (Zeng & Sparks, 2017) that must be undertaken to better align with the preferences of Chinese audiences. Waisbord (2004) asserts that audiences are more inclined to consume domestic content than translated or dubbed productions. The audience is characterized as consumers, readers, and content co-creators (Gilardi et al., 2018), actively selecting TV programs based on individual preferences. Therefore, localization becomes

imperative for transnational TV programs to engage and attract local audiences.

According to Albert Moran and Justin Malbon (2006), a format can be likened to a recipe with “the idea of a structuring center,” or a “piecrust” that serves as a framework, allowing for potential modifications to the content. Format plays an essential role in the global commercial TV industry worldwide as it provides standardization and formalization for local producers. Format television typically includes a bible (Moran & Malbon, 2006), which serves as a comprehensive, tradeable media product that encompasses the entire program process and provides detailed information and guidelines for potential buyers, offering standardization and formalization for local producers in the commercial TV industry. Zhang (2018) outlines that format sellers export ideas, concepts, technical and financial guidelines, production advice, and personnel placement. The commercial value of format television to television companies lies in its ability to generate audience ratings and the potential for copyright sales on a global scale. The format trade industry has grown significantly, attracting international format developers and fostering partnerships with local media producers (Fung, 2004; Khalil, 2017; Oren & Shahaf, 2012). Since its modest beginnings in the 1950s, the TV format industry has evolved into a global trade with an annual value of billions of euros (Chalaby, 2011). The 21st century witnessed a rapid expansion of format trade, evident in the substantial increase in formats. For instance, between 2002 and 2004, there were 259 formats, which grew to 445 between 2006 and 2009. These 445 formats were localized in more than 45 territories, resulting in 1,262 adaptations (FRAPA, 2009). Findings from Glance's 2019 Entertainment TV Report, which examined 91 channels across 11 countries, revealed that formats constituted an average of four out of ten prime-time programs (Choi, 2022). The transnational nature of format trade presents emerging markets with significant opportunities (Chalaby & Esser, 2017).

As format television experiences rapid growth on a global scale, China, with its vast potential as a media consumer market, has begun to embrace the introduction of successful overseas TV programs. The interest of Chinese media companies in purchasing Western television formats dates back to the 1990s (Cho & Zhu, 2017) when renowned American and British format television shows began to achieve global popularity (Fung, 2004; Keane, 2004). In 1998, China Central Television (CCTV) acquired the copyright of the British gambling and entertainment program *GoBinGo* and adapted it as *Lucky 52* for the Chinese audience. Subsequently, in 2002, the popular quiz show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* was introduced and localized by CCTV with a family-oriented theme, captivating Chinese audiences. During this period, Chinese producers primarily focused on reproducing and imitating the content of well-known foreign shows. A notable example is Hunan Satellite TV's creation of the singing talent show *Super Girl*, a parody of *American Idol*, which became one of the most successful programs in the history of Chinese television (Jian & Liu, 2009). Global format television programs have emerged as a crucial resource for the Chinese media industry, providing Chinese provincial satellite TV networks with a competitive edge. In 2006, Hunan Satellite TV introduced the format program *Just the Two of Us* from the BBC and produced a Chinese version. The following year, they acquired the copyright of the BBC's format program *Strictly Come Dancing*, intending to surpass the audience ratings of a dance show produced by a Chinese provincial satellite TV network called Oriental Satellite TV. Since then, local producers have gradually embraced the practice of introducing format programs to cater to the demands of the local market. A significant development in the Chinese media landscape occurred in 2011 with the introduction of *The Voice of China*, a singing reality show. Notably, this program adopted a unique business model in China, as the production team and broadcast platform were owned by separate institutions (Cai, 2018). The Canxing Company was responsible for the production and covering all program costs, while Zhejiang Satellite TV served as the broadcasting platform for *The Voice of China*. The advertising revenue generated was shared between the two entities, with Canxing receiving a higher share based on the program's ratings as per their agreement. However, in the event of the show's failure in the Chinese media market, the Canxing company would bear the financial burden. Fortunately, the partnership proved successful, as *The Voice of China* garnered significantly high ratings following its initial broadcast.

Localization plays a crucial role in minimizing cultural resistance and facilitating the process of cultural penetration, thereby creating room for further development (Lu, 2019). It has emerged as a response to globalization, enabling foreign products to enter local markets by incorporating local elements (Li, 2013). Format reality TV has been found to establish a strong connection with the audience's perception of social reality (Cheung, 2017). Audiences actively engage with the program's content, drawing upon their personal experiences and emotions to form an affective bond (Skeggs & Wood, 2012). This emotional investment often manifests through identification with characters, emotional responses, and relating to the program's portrayal of everyday life. By adapting to local cultural norms and preferences, localization renders the content of global format TV programs more accessible and appealing to local audiences, enhancing their acceptance and reception. Collaboration between format TV teams and local production teams is common practice as it enables a better understanding of the preferences and expectations of local audiences (Adriaens & Biltereyst, 2011). Format TV typically allow flexibility for local production teams to adapt the program's content to suit the local context. Localization has become an integral part of the global media market, driven by the transformative impact of globalization on media communication in the 21st century. Media product localization involves the linguistic and cultural adaptation

of a product to make it suitable and appealing to the target locale where it will be used and marketed (Christophe, 2011). According to Albert Moran (2005), the cultural translation of global format television encompasses various elements, including historical, ethnic, geographical, and cultural aspects. Hoskins and Mirus (1988) explored the localization of language in media products and highlighted the significance of adopting the native language or dialect of the target audience, as it reflects their cultural values. This linguistic localization enables localized television shows to establish a cultural resonance with the local audience. Thus, format localization can be seen as a space for cultural negotiation (Keinonen, 2016).

The rising popularity of global format reality shows on a global scale has positioned China as a prominent importer of format programs. Introducing these format programs from other countries allows local production teams to swiftly establish their presence in the local market, enabling them to acquire advanced production techniques and elevate Chinese media production standards. Consequently, the expanding influence of format TV trade has prompted increased attention to researching the localization of media programs. It underscores the necessity of comprehensively examining the evolution of format TV in China for a more nuanced understanding of its development. However, existing literature on the localization of format reality TV in China is fragmented, lacking a systematic examination and comprehensive review of the dynamic developmental process. Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by conducting a systematic literature review to explore the localization strategies employed in the Chinese media market for format reality shows. By reviewing previous studies, this research intends to identify the trends observed in format TV over the past decades and provide valuable insights for future investigations. Moreover, practical recommendations will be offered to Chinese media producers regarding introducing foreign television shows to the local market. Specifically, this study will systematically analyze the development of format television shows in China from 2012 to 2022, aiming to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the localization strategies employed by local production teams when introducing global format reality TV shows to the Chinese market?

RQ2: What are the key factors that need to be taken into consideration during the localization process of foreign reality shows in the Chinese media market?

RQ3: How has the trend of introducing format TV shows evolved in China over time?

By conducting a systematic literature review and analysis, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the localization strategies employed in the Chinese media market, shed light on the factors influencing the localization process of foreign reality shows, and examine the changing trends in the introduction of format TV shows in China. The findings of this research will contribute to the existing knowledge on format TV localization and provide practical insights for Chinese media producers and industry practitioners.

2. Method

A systematic review is preferred over single empirical research because it enables the collation and evaluation of findings from multiple sources (Greenhalgh, 1997). Unlike traditional literature reviews, a systematic review reduces subjectivity by following a rigorous methodology. It allows for the comprehensive and objective collection of relevant articles based on pre-defined inclusion criteria. By synthesizing and analyzing the findings of multiple studies, a systematic review provides a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the research topic, enhancing the validity and generalizability of the conclusions drawn. This study employed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) methodology to systematically review the development of global format reality TV in China. Initially developed for healthcare interventions (Eden, 2011), PRISMA has gained popularity in various fields, including social work, business management, and medical or biological studies (Sahni & Sinha, 2016). PRISMA is recognized for its three key advantages: clarifying research questions, establishing precise screening metrics through inclusion and exclusion criteria, and conducting time-limited searches in appropriate databases (Sierra-Correa & Cantera Kintz, 2015). By adhering to PRISMA guidelines, this study ensures a rigorous scientific approach to objectively collect articles about the localization of global format reality TV in China. This study utilized literature from various sources, including the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), Google Scholar, and Scopus, to examine the localization strategies of format reality TV in China. CNKI is a comprehensive Chinese academic literature database known for its extensive coverage of Chinese research and continuous updates (Zhang et al., 2020). Google Scholar, a freely accessible search engine, indexes a wide range of publishing formats and subject areas, allowing for direct access to full-text articles or metadata (Tang et al., 2021). Scopus is a prominent abstract and indexing database containing over 14,000 STM and social science titles from 4,000 publishers (Burnham, 2006). In this research, CNKI served as the primary database, while Google Scholar and Scopus were used as supplementary sources to ensure a comprehensive literature review.

The identification stage of this study commenced on March 12, 2022, and the study's timeline encompasses the period from March 12, 2012, to March 12, 2022. Relevant articles published in the three databases were collected. Previous

studies and synonyms provided practical keywords for this study. The keywords of this research are “reality TV,” OR “reality television,” OR “reality show,” AND “localization,” AND “China”. During this stage, 925 articles were collected from the three databases, with 221 articles from CNKI, 702 from Google Scholar, and 2 from Scopus. 574 articles were removed due to irrelevance, while 4 were deleted as they were considered duplicates and 47 articles were remained (see Figure 1).

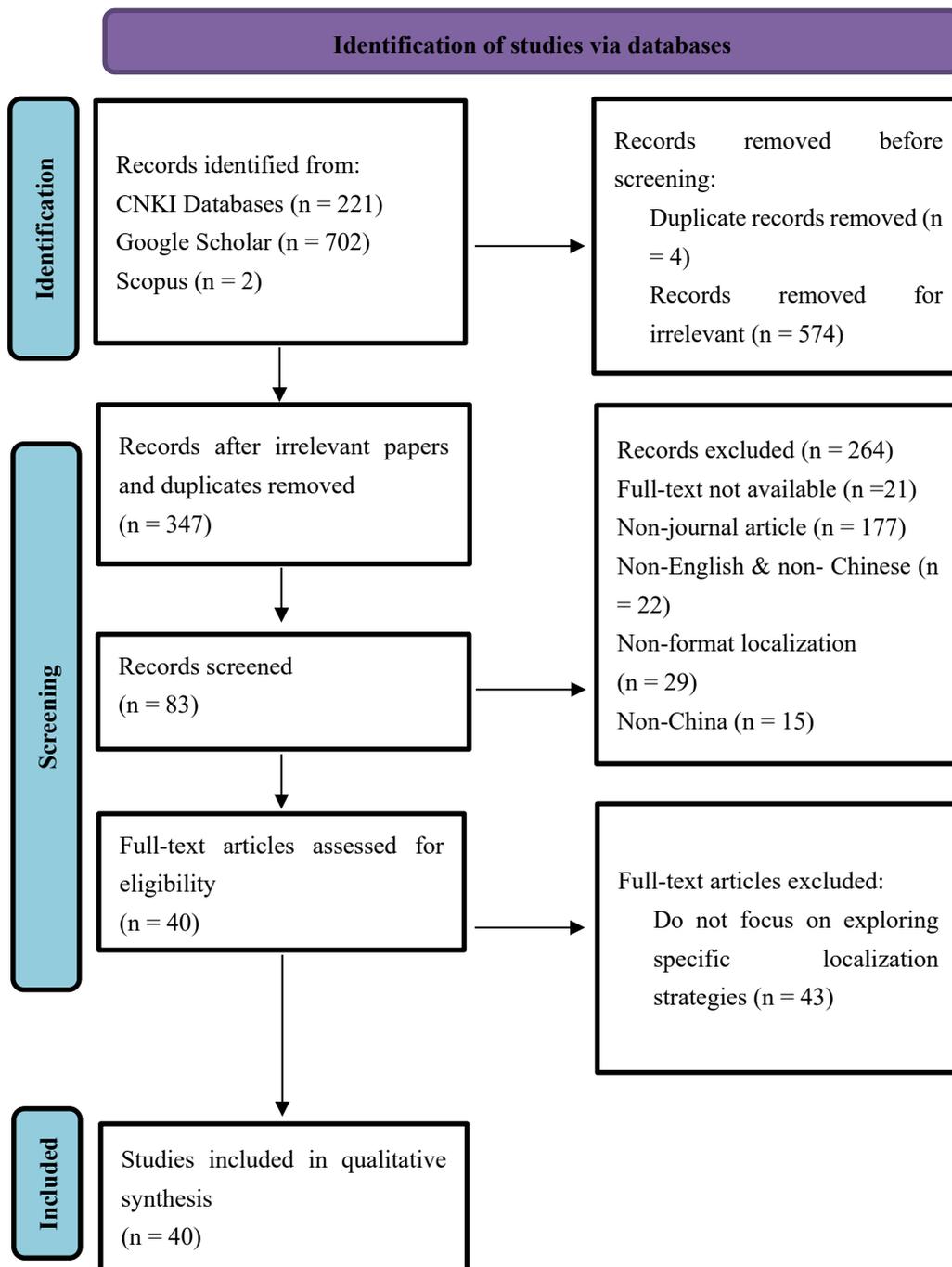


Figure 1. Flow diagram of this review study. Source. Adapted from Moher et al. (2009)

The screening of this study is based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria (see Table 1). Firstly, articles that can provide full-text access in the three databases will be selected. Secondly, only journal articles will be selected; books, review articles, book chapters, conference papers, and theses will be excluded. Thirdly, the language criterion will consider articles written in English or Chinese due to the language limitations of the researchers. Fourthly, research not focusing on the localization of format reality shows will be excluded. The final criterion is that the television programs mentioned in the article must be broadcast in China. Articles concerning the localization of reality shows in other countries will not be included.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Included	Excluded
Full-text	Available	Not available
Literature Type	Journal Articles	Books, Book Chapters, Review Articles, Conference Papers and Theses
Language	English and Chinese	Non-English, Non-Chinese
Research Object	Localization of Format Reality TV	Non-Localization of Format Reality TV
Country	China	Non-China

The eligibility screening step of a systematic review or systematic map (sometimes referred to as study selection, evidence selection, or inclusion screening) determines the scope of the evidence that may answer the review or map question (Frampton et al., 2017). This manual deletion process allows the remaining articles to match the research objectives. Based on the article's abstract, methods, results, or findings, only the articles mentioned specific localization strategies of format reality TV that can be included. A total of 43 articles were excluded as they only focus on the phenomenon of format TV in China without analyzing why these programs can be successfully localized in the Chinese media market. These articles were deemed not to provide valuable data for this systematic literature review. Finally, 40 articles were included in the qualitative synthesis for further examination.

3. Results

Of these 40 articles, 31 were selected from CNKI, while the remaining 9 were selected from Google Scholar. After reviewing the articles on the localization of format reality TV in China from 2012 to 2022, it was found that the researchers in this field were mainly Chinese scholars. Figure 2 illustrates the publication trend of research articles on the localization of format reality TV in China. The research on the localization of format programs in China showed an upward trend since 2012, a peak in 2015, and a downward trend in the following years. This trend is associated with the development of format TV in the Chinese media market, reflecting the researchers' interest in understanding and analyzing the localization strategies employed during different periods. Initially, the success of introducing foreign reality TV prompted Chinese TV producers to adopt this approach in creating new television programs. However, the development of format TV faced limitations in 2016 due to the stringent policies implemented by the SARFT. SARFT imposed restrictions stating that each satellite channel could only broadcast one foreign format program per year, and these shows were prohibited from airing between 19:30 and 22:30, which is considered prime time (Ling, 2014). As a result, the broadcast of format television in China became constrained, leading to a decline in research on the localization of these programs.

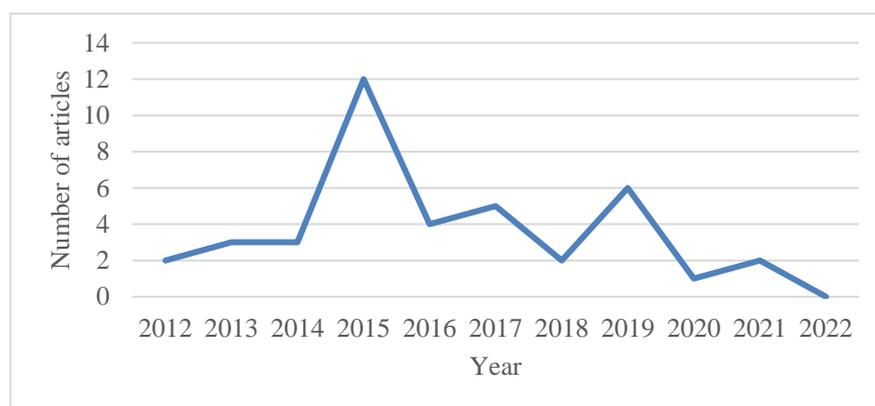


Figure 2. Yearly distribution of articles of localization of format reality TV in China

Of the 40 selected articles, 19 format reality TV shows were analyzed for how they implemented localization strategies in China (as shown in Table 2). Keeping Running, The Voice of China, and Where are We Going, Dad? garnered significant attention from Chinese scholar due to their high audience ratings. Specifically, 15 articles analyzed the adaptation of Keeping Running in China, and The Voice of China and Where are We Going, Dad? were each investigated in 11 articles. The outdoor reality show Keep Running was imported from Seoul Broadcasting System (SBS) in South Korea and subsequently localized by Zhejiang satellite TV in China. Initially, it was collaborative production by Chinese

and Korean media teams. However, starting from the fifth season, it transitioned into an independent production solely managed by the local producers.

The Voice of China was also broadcast on Zhejiang satellite TV. The production of The Voice of China was completed by Canxing company, a prominent Chinese media company. The show was adapted from The Voice of Holland, a renowned singing talent show originating from the Netherlands. In 2013, Hunan Satellite TV, a provincial television station in China, introduced a parent-child outdoor reality show *Where are We Going, Dad?* from Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) in South Korea. The program featured famous Chinese actors, singers, and their children, and it garnered tremendous success upon its initial broadcast. Among the 19 reality shows in China, the top three were produced and broadcast on Chinese provincial television channels. The Rap of China, *You are so Beautiful*, and *Go Fridge* are three popular shows that are broadcast on online platforms. China's provincial satellite TV stations are actively involved in the trade of introducing global format reality TV shows. It is worth mentioning that a significant number of format reality shows in China were introduced from South Korea, which has emerged as a leading country in providing format programs to the Chinese media market.

Table 2. The mentioned format reality shows in selected articles.

Program Name	Original Country	Broadcast Channel in China	Mentioned Times
Keep Running	South Korea	Zhejiang Satellite TV	15 Times
The Voice of China	The Netherlands	Zhejiang Satellite TV	11 Times
Where are We Going, Dad?	South Korea	Hunan Satellite TV	11 Times
Chinas Got Talent	Britain	Dragon TV	3 Times
I am a Singer	South Korea	Hunan Satellite TV	2 Times
Win in China	America	Central Television	2 Times
Quiz Show	America	Central Television	2 Times
Super Girl	America	Hunan Satellite TV	2 Times
The Amazing Race	America	Shenzhen Satellite TV	2 Times
Go Fighting	South Korea	Dragon TV	2 Times
The Rap of China	South Korea	iQiYI	1 Time
X Factor	Britain	Liaoning Satellite TV	1 Time
You are so Beautiful	America	Mango TV	1 Time
China's Next Top Model	America	Travel Channel	1 Time
Celebrity Splash	The Netherlands	Zhejiang Satellite TV	1 Time
Go Fridge	South Korea	Tencent Video	1 Time
Clash of the Choirs	The Netherlands	Central Television	1 Time
Chinese Idol	America	Dragon TV	1 Time

4. Discussion

This systematic literature review examines journal articles focusing on the localization of format reality TV in China. It begins by analyzing the practical strategies employed for localizing format reality shows in the Chinese context. Furthermore, it identifies and summarizes the influential factors that require consideration during the adaptation process in China. Lastly, the study explores the development trend of format reality TV in China, drawing insights from the reviewed literature. By collecting and analyzing articles from three databases, this paper aims to understand how these cultural products align with the Chinese context and attain high ratings in the local market.

4.1 Localization Strategies of Format Reality TV in China

Confucianism, with its longstanding presence in China, has profoundly influenced the moral standards, aesthetic preferences, and content of local TV programs (Li & Saskia, 2012). Furthermore, differences in media systems exist between countries, where Chinese TV channels are government-owned while most foreign media channels are profit-driven private entities. Consequently, television producers in China face the significant challenge of navigating ideological control (Zeng & Sparks, 2017). Therefore, the primary objective of localizing format TV in China is to address

the issue of disparate values presented in television shows (Lu, 2019).

Originating from the West, reality TV initially emerged to generate economic benefits. However, these programs often incorporate elements of sex and violence to garner high ratings, which conflicts with the norms and values upheld by mainstream Chinese society. Chinese television programs, in contrast, aim to educate audiences about the merits of achieving dreams through hard work rather than seeking overnight wealth. Consequently, local producers frequently modify substantial prize incentives into family dream funds or public welfare projects to provide positive guidance to the audience. For instance, Quiz Show, aired by China Central Television, is an adaptation of the American reality show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. Rong and Zhang (2013) highlight the disparity in prizes, with American programs offering nearly one million dollars while Chinese programs present gifts to the contestants' family members. This adaptation, known as family dreams in Chinese television programs, intentionally removes the large monetary prizes, emphasizing emotional connections as a compelling narrative to engage the target audience. In another example, Yan (2021) examines the outdoor reality show *Keep Running* and notes that in Korean programs, the awards are allocated to the contestants. However, Chinese producers incorporate public welfare activities at the end of each episode, wherein the participating celebrities sell their possessions and donate the proceeds to underprivileged children living in impoverished areas. These two illustrations demonstrate the adeptness of Chinese TV producers in localizing substantial prizes found in foreign format reality shows, transforming them into family dreams and public welfare initiatives.

The localization of format reality shows in China necessitates transmitting positive energy to the local audience, a crucial component of the process. The SARFT and Chinese television producers regulate the content, ensuring its non-violent and non-vulgar nature while discouraging the propagation of opposing worldviews (Zeng & Spark, 2017). The slogan of China's *Got Talent Show* epitomizes the program's premise that ordinary individuals can realize their dreams. The production team aspires to provide a platform for ordinary people to express themselves, conveying the underlying themes of self-confidence, self-improvement, and pursuing dreams (Ling, 2014). Contestants, who are deliberately chosen based on their unique abilities, embody the aspirations of ordinary individuals. Irrespective of their performance, the judges consciously refrain from making hostile or harsh comments, fully aware that derogatory remarks may captivate the audience's attention. The program aims to demonstrate the judges' deep respect for the contestants' dreams, encouraging them to pursue a better life. Non-compliance with these regulations can lead to the program being banned by SARFT. An example occurred in 2010 when Shenzhen Satellite TV introduced *The Moment of Truth* from the United States, subsequently producing *Don't Lie to Me* in China. In this program, the host was granted the freedom to pose personal and privacy-related questions to contestants, which proved challenging for both the contestants and the studio audience to accept (Zhang, 2016). Although the exposure of contestants' privacy garnered high ratings in the Chinese market, the program's content failed to positively impact Chinese audiences, ultimately leading to its swift prohibition by SARFT.

Within Chinese reality TV shows, local producers purposefully diminish the competitive nature of the competitions and instead emphasize the camaraderie between contestants, a reflection of the values embedded in traditional Chinese culture that strongly emphasize interpersonal harmony (Wei, 2014). In television shows, cultural specificity in the emotional display has been identified as a critical factor contributing to the distinctiveness of local programming (Grimm, 2010; King, 2009; Campaiola-Veen, 2012). In 2013, China's *Next Top Model*, the Chinese adaptation of America's *Next Top Model*, was introduced to China by Tourism Satellite TV, featuring diverse youth contestants representing various social groups. The program showcased the competitive aspect and placed significant emphasis on the profound friendships forged among the contestants. It depicted their shared living experiences and mutual support throughout the program, indicating that the competition and elimination among participants did not constitute the primary focus of the Chinese adaptation. Lu's (2019) analysis of the Korean format reality show *Running Man* revealed the presence of a recurring element wherein certain contestants assumed the role of betrayers, a plotline that resonated strongly with Korean audiences. However, this particular role was omitted in the Chinese adaptation show *Keep Running*. Chinese media outlets are disinclined to promote the notion of employing immoral behaviors to secure victory in games, and they adhere to regulations that prohibit garnering high ratings by showcasing the darker aspects of human behavior.

The strategic utilization of contestants' personal stories has been acknowledged as a practical approach to engaging audiences and boosting television ratings. An exemplification of this can be seen in China's *Got Talent Show*, where a dedicated team is assigned to collect contestants' background information and construct compelling narratives (Ling, 2014). In contrast, some Chinese programs even make up contestants' stories to attract the audience's attention. As a singing talent competition program, *The Voice of Holland* mainly focuses on the singing performances of the participants, while *The Voice of China* integrates the contestants' stories to foster an emotional connection with the audience (Rong & Zhang, 2013). However, it is important to consider the potential consequences of fabricating stories. The case of Xu Haixing, a of the contestants on *The Voice of China*, exemplifies the negative impact of deceptive narratives. Xu Haixing claimed to participate in the competition to fulfill her deceased father's final wish, a story that resonated with the judges and audience alike (Ding, 2019). However, the subsequent revelation that Xu Haixing's father was alive and residing

abroad shattered her credibility, leading to her elimination from the competition and a significant deterioration of her reputation. This incident serves as a poignant illustration of the ethical concerns intertwined with the fabrication of contestants' stories and the potential harm inflicted upon the individuals involved. Paradoxically, despite the fallout, the program emerged as the ultimate beneficiary, attaining remarkable success and garnering high ratings.

When localizing format TV in China, producers need to consider the acceptance of local audiences from the perspective of local culture; additionally, integrating local content into the program is a valuable way to attract local audiences. People will gravitate toward media from their culture (Ksiazek & Webster, 2008), meaning local audiences are more likely to identify with local culture. Domestic TV producers select famous Chinese landmarks for shooting or incorporate local culture into the content to establish an intimate relationship between the program and the local audience. Landscape in television programs is highly connected to the reproduction of national identity (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2010). The locations can fully reflect Chinese unique cultural customs and give audiences a familiar viewing experience. In China's Next Top Model, the production team asked the contestants to find foreign tourists in Beijing's Hutong, and the contestants were also required to wear traditional Chinese opera costumes to take photos. The shooting location and costumes have become an ingenious way to showcase regional culture in media productions. Also, *Where Are We Going, Dad?* was an outdoor reality show that chose different places in China as the shooting locations to highlight the various geographical environments and diverse lifestyles of rural Chinese (Hou, 2015). The broadcast of *Where Are We Going, Dad?* has also promoted the tourism industry of these shooting locations. There are also other ways to integrate local cultures into the global format television shows. *Keep Running* gave contestants the task of finding the white snakes in the pilot episode (Jin & Liu, 2015); it is a well-known Chinese folk tale familiar to local audiences. The popular music Little Apple and public square dancing used in *Keep Running* were trendy local art styles familiar to the target audience. Song's research (2012) on Britain's Got Talent Show found that the contestants were dancers, chefs, children, and pocket people; the production team could directly look for online celebrities from circuses, magic associations, and other places. Britain's Got Talent show mainly focused on the contestants' comedic performances and professional skills. However, in China's Got Talent Show, Song (2012) found that the contestants had talent related to Chinese culture. For example, in the first season, two contestants performed a traditional Chinese dance, butterfly, and a dance group performed a special Chinese hip-hop dance routine. The adaptation program has become an essential media landscape to present traditional Chinese culture.

4.2 Influencing Factors on the Localization of Format Reality TV in China

The successful adaptation of global format reality TV in China necessitates thorough consideration of two significant factors: regulations from SARFT and cultural differences among different countries. As noted by Banerjee (2002), television in many Asian countries, including China, is intricately intertwined with state discourse, development policies, national identity, and cultural sovereignty. Consequently, the production of entertainment shows in China's television industry is subject to political pressure and censorship (Zeng & Sparks, 2018). The media policies of the Chinese government strongly influence the localization process of foreign format television, with a focus on protecting domestic media and catering to the preferences of the local market. In fulfilling their social responsibility, Chinese media aims to reflect and promote core social values and norms through their content. Furthermore, cultural differences play a pivotal role in shaping audience acceptance in different countries. Format distributors are typically mindful of these cultural sensitivities in the receiving country (Kretschmer & Singh, 2010). Consequently, local producers employ format adaptation strategies to eliminate prominent or potentially contentious foreign cultural elements and modify the original program to align with local culture (Keane et al., 2007). The adaptability of format TV enables the local production team to incorporate fresh ideas into the program. Kraidy (2005) argues that globally branded transnational television achieves greater international appeal by embracing a more localized approach. By adopting local elements, format reality shows gain increased opportunities for entering diverse markets.

The primary political objective in China is to fulfill the propaganda goals of the Communist Party of China (Guo, 2016; Hawes & Kong, 2013). SARFT, an institution directly under the State Council, plays a crucial role in guiding public opinion and influencing the creative direction of China's media productions. Consequently, the development of reality TV programs in China is significantly influenced by SARFT's policies. For instance, the singing competition show *Super Girl*, which emulated the format of *American Idol*, faced criticism from SARFT due to its perceived vulgarity (Guo, 2016). As a result, SARFT implemented restrictions on entertainment programs, leading to a significant curtailment of the entertainment industry's growth in China (Lu & Li, 2014). These policies dictated the duration and broadcast times of entertainment programs on Chinese satellite channels. Notably, reality shows such as *Where Are We Going, Dad?* and *Keep Running* emerged as popular outdoor reality programs that featured renowned Chinese celebrities. However, SARFT soon acknowledged this trend and mandated that reality TV programs reduce the prominence of celebrities and integrate core social values into their content. Later, SARFT introduced more stringent regulations, discouraging children's reality shows and imposing restrictions on the introduction of Korean reality shows. Guo (2016) conducted a

case study on *If You Are the One* to examine the influence of government policies on TV programs. Originally introduced by Jiangsu Satellite TV from Australia, the dating reality show gained popularity in China due to its controversial participants and topics. These participants intentionally made provocative remarks about the worship of money to captivate the audience's attention. However, such content was deemed unacceptable by mainstream Chinese society. In response to these issues, SARFT released new policies that mandated thorough background checks on participants and restricted the flaunting of wealth in dating programs. State media outlets, including *People's Daily* and Xinhua News Agency, criticized *If You Are the One* for conveying incorrect values. The production team promptly made adjustments to the content and implemented rigorous measures to verify participants' backgrounds (Guo, 2016). Notably, the program's production team invited Huang Han, a professor of social psychology at the Party School of Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee, as a commentator. Huang's comments on the contestants aligned with the propaganda goals of the Communist Party of China, further illustrating the program's intent to control the direction of comments. Another example is *The Rap of China*, an adaptation of the Korean rap program *Me the Money* that was broadcasted on the popular Chinese network platform iQiyi. The government criticized *The Rap of China* upon its initial broadcast, citing an excessive presence of subcultural elements that were deemed unsuitable for the healthy development of Chinese teenagers (Zhao, 2020). Subsequently, the government imposed a ban on tattoos, hip-hop, subculture, and what it considered as dispirited culture in television programs.

Cultural differences play a significant role in influencing the localization of reality shows, offering a creative space for format TV to penetrate local markets. To attract a larger number of local audiences, production teams effectively integrate local elements into their programs. Zeng and Colin (2017) interviewed a Korean producer who cited the example of a joint Chinese-South Korean program called *Ding Ge Long Dong Qiang*. In its first season, the show failed to achieve the anticipated audience rating due to the editing work carried out by Korean producers who were unfamiliar with Chinese audience preferences. Chinese viewers believed that the program's content could have been more engaging. Another study by Zeng and Colin (2017) examined the localization strategy of *Keep Running* in China, a reality show format imported from South Korea by Zhejiang Satellite TV. The researchers interviewed TV producers and discovered that Korean entertainment programs lacked a comprehensive program guide. Consequently, the Korean production team collaborated with local teams, resulting in the Chinese team becoming more acquainted with the production process of *Keep Running*. In the second season, the Chinese team worked more independently, explicitly focusing on enhancing game design, and notably, the Chinese directors took charge of decision-making regarding the nametag-ripping game, incorporating more Chinese logic. The Chinese producers exhibited a heightened comprehension of the preferences and requirements of Chinese audiences, as well as a profound understanding of the local culture. During the first season of *Keep Running*, a Korean director was responsible for recording all the humorous elements in the footage and creating engaging subtitles. However, the Korean subtitles, after being translated into Chinese by a team of 12 translators and reviewed by the Chinese production team, were deemed inappropriate for the local market. Consequently, the Chinese team rewrote the subtitles themselves, as the Korean director's rendition failed to resonate with the Chinese audience due to substantial disparities in humor between Korea and China. This highlights the indispensable role of humor in constructing a national identity within television programs, as audiences must possess familiarity with cultural codes to comprehend and appreciate jokes (Beeden & Bruin, 2010). Furthermore, there was a deliberate localization of the color scheme within the program. While the original Korean version adhered to a standardized color palette of blue and yellow, the Korean producers discerned that red would be more appropriate for the Chinese audience, as it embodies the concepts of joy and happiness within Chinese culture. Consequently, the Chinese iteration of the program underwent a modification of the standard colors from blue and yellow to red and yellow, effectively aligning with the nuances of the local culture. As a result, cultural differences not only pose challenges but also offer opportunities for local production teams to adapt and cater to the unique preferences of the target audience.

The regulations from SARFT and cultural differences between different countries are two key factors that affect the adaptation process of format reality TV programs in the Chinese media market. In contrast to developed countries, China's television market lacks TV Parental Guidelines, meaning there are no age restrictions on viewership, encompassing both children and adults. Consequently, content featuring violence and vulgarity is deemed unsuitable for Chinese television programs. In recent years, the rapid growth of reality shows in China has prompted SARFT to express heightened concerns regarding production quality. Particularly for programs with high ratings, SARFT emphasizes the responsibility to disseminate positive energy and uphold social values among audiences. As a result, the SARFT enforces stricter content censorship policies, serving as boundaries that production teams must not surpass. Successful localization entails the integration of local elements into the program, the adaptation of foreign content conflicting with local cultural norms, and the opportunity for local production teams to enhance their production standards and showcase their unique cultural attributes, as exemplified by *The Voice of China*'s production team, which successfully conveys positive energy and Chinese cultural confidence through internationally recognized production standards (Cai, 2018).

4.3 The Development Trend of Global Format Reality TV in China

In the early 1990s, China's TV industry began to undergo a process of semi-marketization. It involved loosening control over satellite TV services and the importation of content (Cheung, 2017). Chinese TV producers eagerly embraced the introduction of global format reality TV into the Chinese media market due to its ability to effectively cater to local audiences' demands. During the 1990s, Chinese TV producers predominantly acquired format programs from the United States, Britain, and some European countries (Fung, 2004; Keane, 2004). The introduction of format reality shows from these countries into the Chinese media market encompassed nearly all highly successful productions. Consequently, driven by the growing demand for media products among Chinese audiences and the surge in popularity of South Korean transnational reality TV, Chinese TV producers commenced incorporating renowned format reality shows from South Korea.

The acceptance of South Korean format TV by Chinese audiences can largely be attributed to the geography and cultural proximity between South Korea and China. China and South Korea, both being East Asian countries, share significant cultural similarities (Bai, 2019). Hall (1979) proposed two cultural frameworks: high-context culture and low-context cultures. High-context culture mainly relies on context to transmit information, while low-context culture relies on direct communication through coded messages. The distinction in cultural contexts influences how individuals express themselves. High-context cultures prefer indirect and implicit communication, whereas low-context culture value direct expression of opinions. The entire East Asian cultural circle falls under Hall's high-context culture, emphasizing the significance of situational information dissemination. This cultural phenomenon elucidates the propensity of Chinese audiences to readily adopt and engage with Korean media products. Moreover, during the early stages, Korean TV dramas were disseminated through Chinese satellite channels, fostering Chinese audiences' familiarity with Korean media products. As a result, many Chinese viewers developed a strong affinity for Korean television shows, actively consuming Korean media content through diverse platforms, including the Internet and satellite channels.

Bai (2019) exemplified the longevity and popularity of South Korea's *Running Man* as a case study, highlighting its five-year broadcasting tenure in South Korea, where it garnered high ratings and captivated a substantial Chinese audience. Through acquiring the copyright by Zhejiang Satellite TV and incorporating Chinese elements during the localization process, the Chinese version of *Running Man* achieved commendable ratings in the local television market. The great success of these programs signifies the emergence of a new era in the Chinese media market for introducing South Korean format television shows. Since then, more than 20 Korean format shows have been adapted and broadcast in China's prime time (Cho & Zhu, 2017). Korean format TV shows involve Korean producers joining the production of Chinese programs to address the absence of program bibles commonly found in Korean formats while also demonstrating a commitment from Korean producers to collaborate with Chinese teams in maintaining the quality and brand value of their format programs. The acquisition and mastery of production skills from Korean producers yield substantial advantages for Chinese TV producers.

The growth of format TV in China was constrained by the regulatory requirements set by the SARFT, which dictated the allowable number of international format programs on Chinese satellite channels. This regulatory framework compelled Chinese TV producers to prioritize the development of original television content deeply rooted in Chinese culture. Consequently, global format television programs no longer dominate a significant portion of the Chinese media market. The decline in the number of articles about the localization of format TV in China, as depicted in Figure 2, can be attributed to the regulatory constraints imposed on the quantity of format TV productions in the country since 2015. The issuance of a notice by SARFT in 2013, which mandated provincial satellite TV stations to limit their introduction of format programs to one per year and imposed a broadcasting restriction from 19:30 to 22:30 during the first year (Wu, 2011), exerted significant constraints on Chinese TV producers, thereby impeding them to procure foreign TV programs for the domestic market. Since then, the process of format TV in China has encountered substantial limitations. In his article discussing this policy, Gaochangli, Director of the Publicity Department of SARFT (Gao, 2016), highlights the potential consequences of the excessive proliferation of format television programs on Chinese satellite channels. According to Gao, such an abundance of formats may lead to cultural modifications, resulting in the absence of essential elements such as the Chinese dream, core socialist values, patriotism, and the embodiment of the Chinese spirit, ultimately diminishing the educational function of television programs. The government's apprehension regarding the potential issues associated with broadcasting foreign format TV shows to Chinese audiences prompted the implementation of various policies by SARFT to foster the growth and promotion of domestically produced original TV programs. In July 2015, SARFT issued a notice to actively promote the production of original programs imbued with Chinese cultural elements. SARFT aspires to foster the discovery of ideas rooted in Chinese traditional culture by Chinese TV producers, facilitating the creation of original programs that authentically convey the Chinese voice to the audience, thereby aligning with the government's promotion of cultural confidence. Consequently, local cultural television programs have assumed a pivotal role in China, displacing global format reality TV as the predominant source.

5. Limitation and Recommendations

This systematic literature review has certain limitations, including the reliance on specific databases and language restrictions that may have excluded relevant articles. Furthermore, the temporal scope of the study, focusing on journal articles published between 2012 and 2022, restricts the exploration of earlier trends and developments in the localization of format TV in China. Future research should include more databases and expand the time range to encompass a more comprehensive understanding of the trajectory of format TV localization, considering earlier pioneering efforts and recent industry developments.

Another research direction worth investigating is the impact of SARFT's regulations and control over the localization of format TV in China. This research could delve into the specific mechanisms and implications of SARFT's restrictions on foreign format reality shows and the subsequent shift towards local production of original TV programs with Chinese elements. Exploring the effects of these regulations on the overall landscape of format TV in China, including the creative process, audience reception, and industry dynamics, would provide valuable insights. Additionally, understanding the challenges local TV producers face in meeting SARFT's requirements and the strategies employed to navigate these constraints would contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in the localization of format TV in China.

6. Conclusion

This article conducts a comprehensive review of journal articles published between 2012 and 2022, focusing on the localization strategies employed for global format reality shows in China. The study relies on the databases CNKI, Google Scholar, and Scopus for data collection, with strict inclusion criteria limited to articles explicitly addressing the localization of format reality show in China. Through rigorous selection, a total of 40 articles were deemed eligible for inclusion in this systematic literature review. The three most prominent format reality shows in China, namely *Keep Running*, *The Voice of China*, and *Where are We Going, Dad?* have garnered significant attention from scholar due to their high audience ratings and successful localization efforts. This highlights the significance of localization of format reality shows in China. It was observed that Chinese TV producers have actively embraced the introduction of foreign format programs as a means to quickly occupy the local market and enhance the standards of Chinese media production. The localization strategies employed by local production teams have played a crucial role in adapting global formats to Chinese audiences' preferences and cultural nuances.

The findings demonstrate that a fundamental strategy for localizing format TV in China is centered around presenting the core values of Chinese society and transmitting positive energy to the local audience. Additionally, incorporating Chinese culture into the program and showcasing contestants' stories have proven effective in engaging local audiences with these format programs. Two significant factors that necessitate consideration in the process of format TV localization in China are cultural disparities and the regulatory framework imposed by SARFT on media products. An in-depth analysis of the journal articles reveals a concentration of scholarly research on the localization of format reality shows in China during 2015, which emerged as a highly favorable year for format reality shows in the local market. Subsequently, the control exerted by SARFT over foreign format reality shows significantly impeded the development of format programs in China. The history of Chinese TV producers' adoption of format TV programs transformed, shifting from countries such as the United States and Britain to South Korea. The cultural proximity between South Korea and China, coupled with the favorable reception of Korean TV content by Chinese audiences, led to Korean format reality shows becoming the primary media resources in the Chinese media market at that time. These programs bridged the gap in Chinese outdoor reality shows and provided a more comprehensive array of choices for Chinese viewers. However, as SARFT tightened its control over the introduction of format TV, these media products no longer held a dominant position in China. Local TV producers began creating original programs infused with Chinese elements to comply with SARFT's requirements. As a result, global format reality TV development encountered increasingly complex obstacles and challenges in the Chinese context.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank every team member who took the time to participate in this study.

Authors contributions

Xiaomeng Zhang, Dr. Ain, Dr. Hani and Dr. Ng were responsible for study design and revising. Xiaomeng Zhang was responsible for data collection. Xiaomeng Zhang drafted the manuscript. Xiaomeng Zhang, Dr. Ain, Dr. Hani and Dr. Ng revised it. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the first author.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

- Adriaens, F., & Biltereyst, D. (2011). Glocalized telenovelas and national identities: A 'textual cum production' analysis of the 'telenovelle' Sara, the Flemish adaptation of Yo soy Betty, la fea. *Television & New Media*, 13(6), 551-567. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476411427926>
- Bai, L. (2019). An analysis of the current situation of the South Korean variety shows: Taking keep running as an example. *Media Forum*, 2(11), 147-147. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.2096-5079.2019.11.102>
- Banerjee, I. (2002). The locals strike back? Media globalization and localization in the new Asian television landscape. *Gazette (Leiden, Netherlands)*, 64(6), 517-535. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17480485020640060101>
- Beeden, A., & Bruin, J. D (2010). The office articulations of national identity in television format adaptation. *Television & New Media*, 11(1), 3-19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1527476409338197>
- Burnham, J. F. (2006). Scopus database: A review. *Biomedical Digital Libraries*, 3(1), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1742-5581-3-1>
- Cai, P. (2018). Strategies for upgrading and transformation the variety show industry from the perspective of the value chain of TV format adaptation: A case study of The Voice of China. *Communication Research and Practice*, 8(2), 109-150. [https://doi.org/10.6123/JCRP.2018.07_8\(2\).004](https://doi.org/10.6123/JCRP.2018.07_8(2).004)
- Caldwell, J. T. (1995). *Televisuality, Style, Crisis, and Authority in American Television*. New Jersey, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Campaiola-Veen, J. (2012). From affective to aesthetic economics: Globalization and the commodification of difference on French Idol. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 5(2), 89-105. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17513057.2012.662240>
- Chalaby, J. K. (2011). The making of an entertainment revolution: How the TV format trade became a global industry. *European Journal of Communication*, 26(4), 293-309. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323111423414>
- Chalaby, J., & Esser, A. (2017). The TV format trade and the world media system: Change and continuity. *International Journal of Digital Television*, 8(1), 3-7. https://doi.org/10.1386/jdtv.8.1.3_2
- Chang, Q. (2014). The development history of Chinese TV audience ratings and its thinking. *Advances in Journalism and Communication*, 2(2), 52-57. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ajc.2014.22006>

- Cheung, C. K. F. (2017). Trans-border televisual musicscape: Regionalizing reality TV I am a Singer in China and Hong Kong. *Global Media and China*, 2(1), 90-108. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436417695815>
- Cho, Y., & Zhu, H. (2017). Interpreting the television format phenomenon between South Korea and China through Inter-Asian frameworks. *International Journal of Communication*, 11(5), 2332-2349. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A498245184/AONE>
- Choi, J. (2022). The materialization of television formats. *Media Industries*, 9(2), 21-39. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mij.417>
- Christine, Q. (2015). Producing reality: Television formats and reality TV in the Canadian context. *Cultural Production in Canada*, 40(2), 185-201. <https://doi.org/10.22230/cjc.2015v40n2a2828>
- Cheistophe, D. (2011). Advertising and localization. In K. Malmkjær, & K. Windle (Ed.), *The oxford handbook of translation studies* (Vol.18, pp. 262-272). London, England: Oxford Academic.
- Ding, M. Y. (2019). Reflections on the process of format introduction and localization of foreign TV programs. *Journal of News Research*, 10(16), 96-97. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1674-8883.2019.16.054>
- Eden, J. (2011). *Finding what works in health care standards for systematic reviews*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- FRAPA. (2009). The FRAPA report 2009: TV formats of the world. FRAPA.
- Frampton, G. K., Livoreil, B., & Petrokofsky, G. (2017). Eligibility screening in evidence synthesis of environmental management topics. *Environ Evid*, 6(27), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13750-017-0102-2>
- Friedman, J. (2002). *Reality squared: Televisual discourse on the real*. New Jersey, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Fung, A. (2004). Coping, cloning and copying: Hong Kong in the global television format business. In A. Moran & M. Keane (Ed.), *Television across Asia: Television industries, program formats and globalization* (Vol.5, pp. 74-87). London, England: Routledge.
- Gao, C. L. (2016). Fully promote independent innovation of programs. *China Broadcast*, 24(04), 75-75. <https://doi.org/10.16694/j.cnki.zggb.2016.04.001>
- Gilardi, F., Lam, C., Tan, K. C., White, A., Cheng, S., & Zhao, Y. (2018). International TV series distribution on Chinese digital platforms: Marketing strategies and audience engagement. *Global Media and China*. 3(3), 213-230. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059436418806406>
- Greenhalgh, T. (1997). How to read a paper: Getting your bearings (deciding what the paper is about). *British medical Journal*, 315(7), 243-266. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.315.7102.243>
- Grimm, J. (2010). From reality TV to coaching TV: Elements of theory and empirical findings towards understanding the genre. In A. Hetsroni (Ed.) *Reality Television Merging the Global and the Local* (Vol. 13, pp. 44-57). New York, United States: Nova Science Publishers.
- Guo, S. H. (2016). When dating shows encounter state censors: A case study of If you are the one. *Media, Culture & Society*, 39(4), 487-503. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443716648492>
- Hawes, C., & Kong, S. (2013). Primetime dispute resolution: Reality TV mediation shows in China's Harmonious Society. *Low and Society Review*, 47(4), 739-770. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lasr.12046>
- Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond culture*. New York, NY: Doubleday
- Hill, A. (2005). *Reality TV: Factual entertainment and television audiences*. London, UK: Psychology Press.
- Hoskins, C., & Mirus, R. (1988). Reasons for the US dominance of the international trade in television programs. *Media, Culture & Society*, 10(4), 499-515. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01634488010004006>
- Hou, Y. J. (2015). Localization of reality TV programs. *Youth Journalist*, 75(29), 45-46. <https://doi.org/10.15997/j.cnki.qnjz.29.031>
- Jian, M. J., & Liu, C. (2009). Democratic entertainment commodity and unpaid labor of reality TV: A preliminary analysis of China's Super girl. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 10(4), 524-543. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649370903166382>
- Jin, Y. J., & Liu, J. (2015). Localization transformation and enlightenment of reality TV -- Taking Keep Running as an example. *Chi Zi*, 15(9), 70-70. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1671-6035.2015.09.067>
- Keane, M. (2004). A revolution in television and a great leap forward for innovation? China in the global television format business. In A. Moran & M. Keane (Ed.), *Television industries, program formats and globalization* (Vol.5, pp. 88-104). London, England: Routledge.

- Kean, M., Fung, A. Y. H., & Moran, A. (2007). *New television, globalization, and the East Asian cultural imagination*. Hong Kong, HK: Hong Kong University Press.
- Keinonen, H. (2016). Television format as cultural negotiation: Studying format appropriation through a synthesizing approach. *Journal of European Television History and Culture*, 5(9), 60-71. <https://doi.org/10.18146/22130969.2016.jethc103>
- Khalil, J. F. (2017). From Big brother to AI Maleka: the growing pains of TV format trade in the Arab region. *International Journal of Digital Television*, 8(1), 29-46. https://doi.org/qo.1386/jdtv.8.1.29_1
- King, B. (2009). Idol in a small country: New Zealand Idol as the commoditization of cosmopolitan intimacy. In A. Moran (Ed.) *TV Formats Worldwide: Localizing Global Programs* (Vol.16, pp. 271-289). Bristol, England: Intellect Ltd.
- Kraidy, M. M. (2005). *Hybridity or the Cultural Logic Globalization*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Kretschmer, M., & Singh, S. (2010). *Exploiting Idols - A case study of international TV formats trading in the absence of intellectual property protection*. North Carolina, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ksiazek, T. B., & Webster, J. G. (2008). Cultural proximity and audience behavior: The role of language in patterns of polarization and multicultural fluency. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 52(3), 485-503. <https://doi.org.10.80/08838150802205876>
- Li, L. (2013). Chinese television between the state and the market: An analysis of the business reality show Win in China. *Media, Culture & Society*, 35(7), 906-917. <https://doi.org/10.1177/016344371345509>
- Li, L. Z., & Saskia, W. (2012). Confucianism in the Chinese media: an analysis of the revolutionary history television drama In Those Passionate Days. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 5(2), 160-177. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17544750.2012.664439>
- Ling, Y. (2014). Reality talent show in China: Transnational format, affective engagement, and the Chinese dream. In L. Ouellette (Ed.), *A companion to reality television* (Vol. 28, pp.516-540). Boston, United State: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Lu, Y. (2019). Research on the localization creation strategy of reality TV programs. *Journal of News Research*, 10(1), 105-107. <https://doi:10.3969/j.issn.1647-8883.2019.01.060>
- Lu, D., & Li, X. (2014). Development report on the broadcasting and TV industry (2011-2012). In Y. Hardy and P. Walker (Ed), *China Cultural and Creative Industries report 2013* (Vol. 4, pp. 42-59). Berlin, Germany: Springer.
- Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, j., Altman, D. G., & The, P. G. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analysis: The PRISMA statement. *International Journal of Surgery*, 6(7), 336-341. <https://doi.org.10.1016/j.ijsu.2010.02.007>
- Moran, A. (2005). Global franchising, local customizing: The cultural economy of TV program formats. *Continuum Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 23(2), 115-125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304310802706932>
- Moran, A., & Malbon, J. (2006). *Understanding the Global TV Format*. Bristol, VT: Intellect Books.
- Nabi, R. I., Biely, E. N., Morgan, S. J., & Stitt, C.R. (2003). Reality-based television programming and the psychology of its appeal. *Media Psychology*, 5(4), 303-330. https://doi.org/10.1207/S1532785XMEP0504_01
- Oren, T., & Shahaf, S. (2012). *Global Television Formats: Understanding Television across Borders*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Rong, J. H., & Zhang, M. (2013). Reflections on the localization of reality TV. *Communication and copyright*, 1(7), 65-66. <https://doi.org.10.16852/j.cnki.45-1390/g2.2013.07.041>
- Sahni, S., & Sinha, C. (2016). Systematic literature review on narratives in organizations: Research issues and avenues for future research. *Vision*, 20(4), 368-379. <https://doi.org.10.1177/09722616678085>
- Sierra-Corra, P. C., & Kintz, J. R. C. (2015). Ecosystem-based adaptation for improving coastal planning for sea-level rise: A systematic review for mangrove coasts. *Marine Policy*, 51(13), 385-393. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2014.09.013>
- Skeggs, B., & Wood, H. (2012). *Reacting to reality television*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Song, Y. R. (2012). Analysis on the localization of China's talent show. *Journalism Lover*, 27(10), 71-72. <https://doi.org.10.16017/j.cnki.x.wahz.2012.12.041>
- Tang, L., Omar, S. Z., Bolong, J., & Zawawi, J. (2021). Social media use among young people in China: A systematic literature review. *SAGE Open*, 11(2), 64-73. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211016421>

- Volcic, Z., & Andrejevic, M. (2010). Slovene reality television: The commercial re-inscription of the national. In A. Hetsroni (Ed.), *Reality Television: Merging the Global and the Local* (Vol. 5, pp. 79-93). New York, United State: Nova Science Publishers.
- Waisbord, S. (2004). McTV: Understanding the global popularity of television formats. *Television & New Media*, 5(4), 359-383. <https://doi.org/10.1177/152747604268922>
- Wei, J. H. (2014). Mass media and the localization of emotional display: The case of China's Next Top Model. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 2(2), 197-220. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1057/ajcs.2014.6>
- Wu, J. (2011). Enlightenment or entertainment: the nurturance of an aesthetic public sphere through a popular talent show in China. *The Communication Review*, 14(1), 46-47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714421.2011.547410>
- Yan, X. Q. (2021). The localization of reality TV programs: Taking Keep Running as an example. *Home Drama*, 31(22), 154-155. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1007-0125.2021.08.068>
- Zeng, W. N., & Sparks, C. (2017). Localization as negotiation: Producing a Korean format in contemporary China. *International Journal of Digital Television*, 8(1), 81-98. https://doi.org/10.1386/jdtv.8.1.81_1
- Zeng, W. N., & Sparks, C. (2018). Production and politics in Chinese television. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(1), 54-69. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443718764785>
- Zhang, D., Xu, J., Zhang, Y., Wang, J., He, S., & Zhou, X. (2020). Study on sustainable urbanization literature based on Web of Science, Scopus, and China National Knowledge Infrastructure: A scientometric analysis in CiteSpace. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 264(1), 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.121537>
- Zhang, J. J. (2016). Research on localization and innovation of reality TV programs in China. *Journal of News Research*, 7(17), 144-144. <https://doi.org/10.3969/j.1674-8883.2018.05.053>
- Zhang, Y. (2018). How culture influences emotion display in transnational television formats: The case of the voice of China. *Media & Communication*. 6(3), 40-47. <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v6i3.1455>
- Zhao, J. J. (2020). Queerness within Chineseness: nationalism and sexual morality on and off the competition show The Rap of China. *Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 34(4), 484-499. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2020.1785077>