Role of Media
in Development
Strategies, Issues
&Challenges

PROFESSOR DR. MD. SALLEH HJ. HASSAN

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PROFESSOR DR. MD. SALLEH HJ. HASSAN

B. Agric. Sc. (UM), M.S.(Philippines)
Ph.D (Ohio, USA)

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Pusat Pendidikan Luar
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

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INTRODUCTION

The role of mass media for development in developing countries has attracted a lot of attention from scholars, politicians, international and national agencies and communication practitioners. The works of Lerner (1958), Schramm (1964), McClelland (1961), Pye (1963) and Rogers (1969) have molded the early theory and practice of utilizing mass media for national development. These scholars, with their dictum of modernization, believed that mass media are powerful agents of change. As Schramm (1964) states:

> *Mass media can widen horizons and thus can help build empathy. They can focus attention on the problems and goals of development, increase aspirations and all these they can do largely themselves and directly. This creates an informational climate in which development is stimulated. (p.114).*

Lerner (1958), in his classic work *The Passing of Traditional Society,* states that the road to development will be in stages from urbanization, literacy, media exposure and political participation. He observed that "everywhere, for example, increasing urbanization tended to raise literacy; rising literacy tended to increase media exposure; increasing media exposure has 'gone with' wider economic participation (per capita income) and political participation (voting)" (p. 46). Urbanization will create and also needs a literate polity. The literate have the ability and facility to use and be exposed to mass media which carry modernizing messages. There is a close reciprocal relationship between these two factors, for the literate develop the media, which in turn spreads literacy. The mass media, which carry modernization messages, will create empathy or the condition of psychic mobility, among their users. Empathy is the capacity to see oneself in the other person's situation, whether that be a prime minister, a doctor, a lawyer or something else. The widespread use of mass media will then create a new generation of people who are conscious of their role as citizens

of a new nation. Their loyalty will be towards the new nation rather than their tribal traditional symbols. With the new consciousness, political and economic participation in the new state will be facilitated (Lerner, 1958).

The works of Lerner and Schramm are supported by other scholars such as Rogers, Inkeles and Smith, Pye, and Rao. Rogers (1969) had carried out extensive cross-cultural research on the diffusion of agricultural innovations among farmers. He found that farmers who were more successful had certain characteristics such as more education and a cosmopolitan outlook. They were also literate, empathic, innovative and had high achievement motivation. Exposure to mass media was found to be highly correlated with most of those characteristics. Inkeles and Smith (1974) also found that mass media exposure correlated with almost any conceivable definition of modernization.

The decade of the 1960s saw a mushrooming of projects and experiments which placed great hope and trust in the mass media as the agent of social change to bring about progress and development among Third World countries.

The modernization approach to development is predicated on the assumptions that,

1. Economic growth through industrialization is the key to development.

2. Third World countries need capital and technology from developed countries.

3. Government central planning is necessary to execute the plan for growth (Rogers, 1976b, p.224).

Development during the 1960s was defined as "a type of social change in which new ideas are introduced into a social system in order to produce higher per capita income and levels through more modern production methods and improved social organization" (Rogers, 1969, p. 8-9). The aim of development then was economic growth, irrespective of social and economic conditions or consequences.

For economic growth to occur, societies in Third World countries should be responsive to new demands and challenges. The situations in these countries were found wanting. Schramm (1964) describes societies in developing countries as traditional, passive, inefficient in use of resources, having attitudes not conducive to development, lacking in education and having poor infrastructure. In order to modernize, he suggested that these societies should change their attitudes, beliefs, habits and customs to accommodate modernizing forces. The chief modernizing agents, as conceived in this approach to development was the mass media.

The roles of mass media in national development have been well described by Schramm (1964). These roles are:

1. The Media as Watchmen
    a. Mass media can widen horizons
    b. Mass media can focus attention
    c. Mass media can raise aspirations

2. The Media in the Decision Process
    a. The mass media can help only indirectly to change strongly held attitudes or valued practices.
    b. Mass media can feed interpersonal channels.
    c. Mass media can broaden policy dialogue
    d. Mass media can confer status
    e. Mass media can enforce social norms
    f. Mass media can help form taste

3. The Mass Media as Teachers
    Mass media can help substantially in all types of education and training.

Hornik (1984) describes the following roles of media in development: 1) low cost loud speaker 2) legitimator/motivator 3) feedfoward 4) institutional catalyst 5) organizer and maintainer 6) equalizer and 7) improvement in quality.

The use of media channels can help to share the scarce expertise of a community or nation through television or radio broadcasts (e.g educational radio or TV). Materials that are broadcasted on radio or TV must be important and therefore are legitimate concerns. The programs also act to motivate the general public to partake in government development programs. The communication channels also act as conduits for feedback and **feedfoward from the public to the** authorities and vice versa. Changes that are introduced through the educational media such as systematic presentations of curriculum materials (e.g. Open University in UK) have impacted changes in higher education and have become institutional catalysts for further improvement in education. In addition the resultant changes make communication media the organizer and maintainer of change in society. In a society in which physical and human resources are not equally shared the communication initiatives become the equalizer whereby resources are distributed through the services of extension agents, teachers, local leaders etc. Communication initiatives in terms of media campaigns, systematic school on the air curricula and social and economic programs have initiated a movement towards quality improvements.

Mass media infrastructure and hardware, particularly broadcasting, were installed, and technical and production personnel were recruited and trained. With the zeal to modernize, the emphasis in this process of communication has been to transmit modern ideas and attitudes to the population. Audiences were supposed to accept and follow whatever was being transmitted because it was for their betterment. Target audiences were thought to be generally passive receivers and communications effectiveness was measured by the degree of acceptance of that message (White, 1983).

THE CHANGING PARADIGM OF THE ROLE OF MEDIA

This preceding mode of communication has been termed the transmission or transportation model by Carey (1975). According to Carey the transmission

model views communication as a process of transmitting messages at a distance for the purpose of control. The archetypal characteristics of the communication model were persuasion, attitude change, behavior modification and socialization through the transmission of information, influence and conditioning (p.412). Other scholars have characterized this mode of communications as a 'linear' model in which information is transferred through a certain channel from left to right, originating at the source of the information and terminating at the receiver (Dissayanake, 1983).

However, by the mid 1970s the modernization approach to development had come under severe criticism. It was clear by the 1970s that the strategy had not worked. Although the Gross National Product of developing countries had increased,and exports were up, new problems had been created: increases in unemployment and underemployment, urban congestion, pollution, etc. The 'trickel-down' effect of development did not materialize and instead the gap between the rich and the poor in less developed countries widened (Dissanayake, 1983). As Adelmen (1975) shrewdly pointed out, "Not only is there no automatic trickle-down of the benefits of development, on the contrary, the development process leads typically to a trickle-up in favor of the middle classes and the rich' (p.302)..

Dissanayake (1983) presents the major criticisms of the modernization approach to development. The main arguments against this approach are:

1. It was ethnocentric: It held up the Western experience as a model to be emulated by the less developed countries ignoring the unique historical background and cultural matrix of developing countries.

2. It posited a unilinear view of history: Closely related to the first argument, critics maintained that there was not one, but many paths to development, and the paths traversed by the industrially advanced countries were not the only ones.

3. It placed too much emphasis on the individual and laid the blame at his/her door without taking into sufficient consideration the social structure,.

4. It concentrated only on endogenous factors of development.

Other Western critics also believed that the model's failure was attributable to a fundamental conflict between democratic ideals and the frequently exploitative, repressive applications of the model employed by democratic societies in their attempts to achieve economic and political growth both at home and abroad (Hein, 1985). Elihu Katz and George Wedell (1977) summarized the traditional uses of the media for development as motivated by imperialism, profit, nationalism and proselytism.

McAnany (1980) questioned the transmission of information to the rural audience. He contended that,

> *Although information can help individuals to changing situation, it can do little to change situation. The small subsistence farmers may not lack information but often cannot use it in any productive way because of structural constraints such as land size or lack of credit' (p.16).*

Numerous agricultural development projects were carried out, but the results were far from satisfactory. Structural analysis of such projects revealed that unless there was a redistribution of social power with profound changes in the structure of opportunity, more technical information was not only irrelevant but would flow to those better able to use the information and would increase dependency and exploitation of the disadvantaged group (McAnany, 1980, p.17).

Everett Rogers, a proponent of modernization in the 1960s, joined the ranks of scholars who criticized this approach. In 1976, after more than a decade of intensive development programs, Rogers (1976a) wrote:

> *Now in 1976, we look backwards. The mass media have indeed penetrated*

much further than in 1965. New communication technology, such as broadcasting satellites, has come on the scene. Government officials in most developing countries have indeed heeded our advice and sought to utilize mass communication for development purposes.

But little real development has occurred by just about any standard. The disappointing performance of the dominant paradigm over the past decade or so led to consideration of various alternative conceptions of communication in development. (pp. 99-100)

Media Participation: The 'Ritual Model' of Communication

Scholars, politicians, administrators and communication practitioners alike are disappointed with the performance of the modernization programs in less developed countries. The old paradigm with heavy emphasis on centralized planning, capital-intensive technology and heavy reliance on the mass media have alienated people from the development process. Alternative approaches to development have been sought and a new paradigm of development has emerged. Rogers (1976b) described the new paradigm as "a widely participatory process of social change, intended to bring about social and material advancement (greater equality and freedom) for the majority of the people through greater control over their environment" (p 225). The elements of the new paradigm as enunciated by Rogers are:

1. The equal distribution of information, socio-economic benefits and so forth.

2. Popular participation in self-development planning and execution, usually accompanied by the decentralization of certain of these activities to the village level.

3. Self-reliance and independence in development, with emphasis on the potential of local resources.

4. Integration of traditional with modern systems, so that modernization is a synchronization of old and new ideas, with the exact mixture somewhat different in each locale. (p. 222-223).

"Participation" and "receivers' rights" have become key concerns among communication theorists seeking alternatives to the old paradigm, especially those who focus on the developing world. UNESCO sponsored several conferences in the late 1970s on the issue of public participation in the media. Various strategies and methods were discussed and it was debated on whether to apply the principles or 'participation' and 'dialogue' in the media systems of the world, particularly of the Third World.

Most development communication theorists are now abandoning the 'transmission' model of communication and are seeking a model that is based on the culture of the people, to realize the potential of the communication process as a shared experience between the actors, and not as a one-way monologue process (Carey, 1975). Communication theorists in developed countries are equally concerned about the alienating and dominating effects of mass communication. To offset such tendencies, a cultural approach to the process of communication has been articulated. As an alternative to the 'transmission' model, James Carey (1975) proposed a 'ritual' view of communications that extends beyond political and economic concerns to include "the sharing of aesthetic experience, religious ideas, personal values and sentiments and intellectual notions" (p.21).

In the ritual model, communication is viewed as a process through which shared culture is created, modified and transformed. It centers on the 'sacred' ceremony which draws people together in fellowship and communality. Even though the ritual model is derived from religious traditions, its manifestation is in the cultural reality of the people. As contrasted to the transmission model, the 'ritual' view is not directed toward the extension of messages in space, but in the maintenance of society in time, not the act of imparting information or

influence, but in the creation, representation and celebration of shared beliefs. The ritual model of communication, however, does not necessarily deny the functions of communication as prescribed in the 'transmission' model. A ritual view does not exclude the process of information transmission or attitude change. It merely contends that one cannot understand these processes except insofar as they are cast within an essentially ritualistic view of communication and social order (Carey, 1975).

McQuail (1987) describes what he saw as an emerging media theory in the developed as well as developing countries. This emerging theory is labeled as the democratic participant media theory. The primary stimulus for this theory has been the reaction against commercialization and monopolization of privately owned media and against the centralism and bureaucratization of public broadcasting institutions. The central point of a democratic-participant theory, in the words of McQuail (1987):

> *lies with needs, interests and aspirations of the 'receiver' in a political society. It has to do with the right to relevant information, the right to answer back, the right to the means of communication for interaction in small scale settings of community, interest group subculture. (p.122).*

This theory favors multiplicity, smallness of scale, locality, deinstitutionalization, interchange of sender-receiver roles and horizontality of communication links at all levels of society and interaction. It is apparent from the description above that the democratic-participant media theory is an expression or application of the 'ritual' model of communication.

The ritual model of communication is also manifested in the works of Paulo Freire. In essence Freire (1973) proposed the abolition of the 'transmission mentality' in education and communication, and its replacement with a more liberating type of communication and education that would contain more dialogue and would be both more receiver-oriented and more conscious of social structure (Bordenave, 1976). Freire (1973) labeled the dominant

mode of teaching and communication as "banking", as opposed to what he proposed, which was the liberating and problematizing mode of education and communication. In the banking concept, information is deposited into a passive receiver, thus establishing a marked difference in status and roles between the receiver and the source. Freire proposed that the distinction between "giver" and "receiver" be abolished whereby they are both "learners".

The problematizing or problem-posing method of education does not dichotomize the activity of the teacher-student. The teacher does not regard cognizable objects as his/her private property, but as objects of reflection by both the teacher and students. The students are no longer merely passive listeners but are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher. Problem-posing strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality (Freire, 1970). Through problem posing, an individual is conscientized about his situation in society. Conscientization is the process in which an individual is conscious of his/her position in the world and society and critically reflects upon the situation. Through this process an individual will no longer be a passive actor but will become an active performer which will determine his/her worth and fate in society. Self-development is thus motivated.

MEDIA PATICIPATION

Participation in the communication process was a critical factor in the discussion on democratization of communication by the MacBride Commission under the auspices of UNESCO. Democratization of communication is problematic, as each society and/or political system in the world claims to be democratic. The MacBride Commission (1980) defined democratization of communication as the process whereby:

1. the individual becomes an active partner and not a mere object of communication;

2. the variety of message exchanges increases; and

3. the extent and quality of social representation or participation in communication are augmented.

The Commission (1980) identified the barriers to democratization of communication in the form of political systems, bureaucracy, professionalism of communicators, unavailability and inadequacy of media channels and the vertical structure of communication systems existing in almost all the countries in the world. Technologies of communication can either facilitate or impede democratization depending on the nature of the technology, as well its applications. The development of large scale information systems and data banks lead to amassment of huge amounts of data of essential importance in social, scientific, economic and political spheres. Access to these information sources can obviously be restricted by those in control or it can be broadened to a wide audience of potential users (MacBride Commission, 1980). Barriers to participation also exist among political leaders, planners and administrators who often see it as intervention and counter-productive, particularly because it takes time, money and effort to consult with the public. Among the people there is an apathy, in which they expect leaders to make decisions and that solutions will come from above (Menon, 1986).

Communication specialists at a UNESCO-sponsored conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1977 attempted to clarify what was meant by "participation" in the media. Three levels of "participation" were identified and defined: Access, participation and self-management.

> *Access* refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs, and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations.

> *Participation* implies a higher level of public involvement in communication systems. It includes involvement of the public in the production process,

and also in the management and planning of communication systems. Participation may infer no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. On the other hand, <u>Self-management</u> is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decision-making within communication enterprises and is also fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans (UNESCO, 1978, p.5).

Diaz Bordenave (1977) contends that these principles are reflective of the growing conviction:

That the people should have more access to the communication media, not as receivers only but also as sources and actors. The adoption of this new approach to communication is producing several significant innovations in rural development communication;

- Media are becoming more accessible to the participation of rural populations in programming.

- Messages are originated among rural populations, and government agents, technocrats and elites – who previously always acted as sources – are learning to become receivers.

- The content of the messages are more relevant to rural peoples' problems and needs.

- Rural people are learning to formulate and articulate their ideas and feelings about matters important to them.

- The government is learning to communicate less paternalistically and with less authoritarianism, making possible a dialogue with rural populations.

- New technologies such as audio and videotape recording are making it possible to register messages and feedback from all parties in the dialogues, facilitating mutual perception and understanding.

In summary, it was apparent from literature, that early communication scholars and practitioners over-assessed the media's potential contribution to the process of development. An impression was created that mass media were powerful agents of national development. This impression was further bolstered by a myriad of studies on communication and development, focused primarily on the availability of and exposure to media. However, by the mid-1970s both communication and development theorists had to admit the apparent flaws in their theories and the need to go "back to the drawing board" (Schramm, 1976). An alternative paradigm of communication and development was developed in which emphasis was given to structural constraints of development and democratic participation by the public in planning and decision making (Rogers and Adhikarya, 1978, Shore, 1980; Dissanayake, 1983)

Participation of the public in development planning and administration became key concerns in the alternative paradigm. Through this process, the "public will be able to convey information not only about their values, attitudes and preferences, but also their own views on problem solving" (Menon, 1986, p,79). To achieve public participation, communication media and structure have to be democratized and decentralized (MacBride Commission, 1980; McQuail, 1987). These elements were used by Berrigan (1981) to discuss various media strategies for rural development in developing countries.

The MacBride Commission (1980) had identified the barriers to participation in communication, in the form of political systems, bureaucracy, professionalism of communicators, unavailability and inadequacy of media channels and vertical structure of communication. Menon (1986) critically observed that in the context of Asia and other developing countries, "there is the hierarchical, vertical, downward structure of administrative communication from the government to the people" (p.78). This and other barriers need to be remedied, otherwise, access, participation and self –management in communication media will only remain as empty catch phrases (Menon, 1986).

MEDIA IN AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

The mass media has been mentioned as playing an important role in development. When Malaysia gained its independence in 1957 the mass media, especially the radio, had been given the task of instilling the need for change among the population. The broadcasting media in Malaysia, through the services of the Rural Broadcasting Service, produced special programs for agriculture to help the newly independent states to achieve progress. Salleh Hassan (1989) chronicled the development of the Rural Broadcasting Service of Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) in serving the needs of the farmers, fishermen and the public, on issues pertaining to agriculture. Rural broadcasting in Malaysia began during the emergency period between 1948 - 1960. Rural broadcasts at that time served as the government's weapon during the emergency, that is in fighting communist insurgents. During that period a special service known as the Emergency Division was set up to produce specialized programs intended for the rural population to fight communist propaganda. This service, which was created in 1948, was later changed to the Community and Rural Broadcasts. The aim of this Service was to form a link between the rural population, including the farmers, mine workers and rubber plantations laborers, with the government, in addition to providing them with entertainment and information (Ahmad, 1981). Radio sets were distributed to community centers, especially in sensitive areas of the newly resettled Chinese villages and the far flung rubber plantations.

Among the popular programs during that time were the Chinese drama *Lee Dai Soh*, a talk program in Tamil known as Truth Teller and the Malay traditional theatrical show, the *Bangsawan*. Anti communist propaganda and development messages were injected into these programs. The programs were both entertaining and informative.

As a result, the threat of communist insurgency after independence in 1957 was significantly reduced. In 1960, the state of emergency was lifted. More systematic and unified strategies were used for programming, as compared to

the ad hoc nature of previous programs. Two programs were produced initially, thrice weekly the *Siaran Kemajuan Kampung* (Progress of the Village) program and once a week the *Halaman Pertanian* (Agriculture Digest) program. The government then embarked on a massive rural development program known as the 'Red Book' plan. The program *Progress of the Village* was specifically devoted to cover government activities pertaining to the 'Red Book' Plan (Ahmad, 1981).

A dramatized series that was very popular at that time was *Kebun Pak Awang.* This series was started in 1958 and it ran continuously for 10 years. The response from the audience was overwhelming. The show aroused the interest of both the rich and the poor, rural and urban, and young and old (Za'aba, 1967). Elucidating on the aim of the program, Za'aba (1967) states that,

> *"The program is an attempt to increase farmers' production and improve their standard of living by using modern methods of production; to instill in them the spirit of self reliance, to persuade them to utilize fully all the facilities provided by the government, to urge them to initiate their own efforts by which they may improve themselves, to discuss social problems in relation to their standard of living, to combat the influence of out-dated ideas and beliefs . . . and above all to instill in their minds the pride to be tillers of the land". (p.1).*

The story revolved around the character of Pak Awang (an elderly farmer); how he systematically coped with his daily life at home, in his farm and in the community, fitting himself into the general pattern of nation building.

In the period from 1970 to1990 RTM devoted considerable time and resources to producing and broadcasting specialized agricultural programs for specific target audiences, such as farmers and fishermen, the rural population, the low income urban population, the youth and the extension agents (Kayat, 1983). Lowe (1982) categorized the topics covered by these programs into development and agriculture. Under the development category the topics were: land development schemes, community development; national unity; economics

development; commerce and industry; rural health; farmers' cooperatives; youth activities; and armed forces and police. Topics under the agriculture category were: mechanized farming; rice growing; fruit growing; fisheries; poultry; agriculture production output; rubber smallholding and cash cropping. Among the programs during this period were:

Fajar Harapan (Dawn of Hope)

This program contained reports of activities and information for fishermen and farmers.

Sinar Pembangunan (Light of Development)

A daily capsule program of information regarding the services of government development agencies. It provided guidelines on how and where to obtain the services at the local levels.

Warung Peteri (Peteri's Store)

A dramatized or informal discussion program dealing with current issues of national interest faced by rural people.

Usahajaya (Success)

This was a program specific for business endeavors based on agricultural products, e.g., processing tomato sauce.

Maju Selangkah (A Step Forward)

This program highlighted new findings in agriculture research from the various agricultural research organizations in the country including the universities.

Fajar Di Bumi Permata (Dawn in the Bejeweled Land)

This was a dramatized series targeted at the land settlers of the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) schemes. It portrayed life in a land scheme with all the problems and intrigues among the settlers, but at the same time showing the progress and the ultimate prevalence of unity and peace.

Erajaya (Era of Success)

An innovative program which encouraged direct audience participation by using the telephone. This program ran for 50 minutes from 12.10 to 1.00 pm, 4 days a week from Monday to Thursday. It consisted of two sections. During the first section a guest for the day was interviewed on his/her activities. The guests were either officers from development agencies, successful farmers or business entrepreneurs. The interview ran for 20 minutes with music intercessions in between. The second section was the phone-in program where the public could ask the guest any question related to his/her presentation. The questions were answered directly over the air. This program still runs today.

Rencana Pertanian (Agricultural Feature)

A specific topic in agriculture was chosen and dealt with in detail, for example the problem of rats in rice fields. This feature, was broadcasted once in 2 weeks on Tuesdays, for 25 minutes, from 3.05 to 3.30 pm. This program alternated with the Agricultural Magazine program.

Majalah Pertanian (Agricultural Magazine)

It comprised of two sections. The first section encompassed interviews with farmers, fishermen, and others on their activities and successes. The second part was an Agricultural Quiz in which two questions were given. Prizes were given as incentives for participation in the quiz to audience members who provided the right answers.

Kerjaya (Career)

It provided career guidance on agriculture and other careers for the youth and general public.

Tunggak Harapan (Pillars of Hope)

This program presented the activities of youth in agriculture. It aimed to motivate, inculcate leadership, encourage changes in attitudes and to portray initiatives by youth.

Usahaniaga (Business Endeavors)

It discussed specific agricultural –based industries.

Suri Tani (Women Entrepreneurs in Agriculture)

The program covered activities of women in agriculture. It included interviews, advice and motivational programs.

Sorotan Tani (Agricultural Tidbits)

Provided news on agriculture events, which happened within the prior week and events in the coming week**.** It also promoted upcoming broadcasts.

Television Programming

For television, the specific agricultural program was <u>Halaman Pertanian</u> (Agricultural Digest) which consisted of 4 sections; i.e. highlights of successful farmers, new findings in agriculture, agro based business and industries, and questions from the farmers (Alwi, 1988).

LISTENERSHIP AND AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION IN MEDIA PROGRAMMES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

Several studies have been conducted to find out the extent of listenership and audience participation in development radio programmes in Malaysia. The studies cited in this paper were mainly conducted by the Department of Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

Audience Listenership and Benefits of Programmes

In developing countries, radio is important for informal education to enable people to gain knowledge and skills relevant for socio-economic development (Songco, 1978: Librero, 1985; Yadava, 1986). The effectiveness of a media as a tool for development and the level to which people will rely on it for information depends largely on the benefits in terms of useful and relevant information they

gain from it (Fett, 1974; Hurst, 1978; Rogers, 1983). Musa (1983), after a study on farmers' views in Masjid Tanah, Melaka, on the roles of Radio and Television Malaysia, reported that the radio is an important medium, above all other media, in projecting and promoting new ideas and modernization among the people. Among the programmes the rural audience often listened to was agriculture news, and the contents of the agriculture programmes they liked most included method demonstrations and interviews with subject matter specialists. Even though television is less used for rural broadcasts in Malaysia, Musa notes that television programmes on agriculture are useful supplements to radio programmes as the television programmes give a clearer picture. Findings from another study by Jaafar (1984) support this view. Jaafar reported, after a study on the effectiveness of the T.V. programme, "Kebun Kita" among farmers, that there was moderate interest in the programme and that about three-quarter of the respondents gained agricultural information through the programme.

A study among officers of development agencies in Malaysia found that at the national level the most popular programme was *Era Jaya,* the phone-in talk show (Salleh *et al., 1993*). Other popular programmes among the officers were *Fajar Dibumi Permata* (Dawn in the Bejewelled Land), *Rampai Satria* (Police Digest), *Langkah Kehadapan* (Marching Forward) and *Warisan Wawasan* (Vision Heritage) (Please see Table 1). In terms of local radio programmes it was found *that the programme Bersih dan Indah (Clean and Beautiful), Selamat Pagi* (Good Morning), and *Majlis Perbandaran dan Anda* (The City Council and you) were those that officers from development agencies tuned in to. These three programmes were broadcasted by all local radio stations and proved to be very popular (Table 2). The local stations also produced other programmes which were unique and specific to their locality.

Two researches were carried out in the state of Negeri Sembilan to identify the rural audience listenership of development radio programmes. Abdul Razak (1993) found that for the National Radio (Radio 1), the program of *Era Jaya*

was the most popular, followed by *Sinar Pembangunan* (Light of development), *Fajar harapan* (Dawn of Hope) and *Majalah Pertanian* (Agricultural Magazine). Listenership of local radio development programmes was also determined. The respondents in the area studied listened to the following on Radio 3 Seremban: *Veterinary Department and You* (34%); *Seremban Local Council and You* (33%) and *From the Agriculture Department* (21%). In a state wide survey, Md. Salleh and Zakariah (1993) discovered that the programmes most frequently tuned in to were: Seremban Local Council and You (43%), Your Health (42%) and Farmer's Organization Authority and You (38%).

Table 1 The National Radio Development Programmes Tuned in to by Development Agency Officers

Programmes	No. of Respondents Listening (n = 101)	Percentage
Era Jaya (Era of Success)	71	70.3
Fajar Di Bumi Permata (Dawn in the Bejewelled land)	47	46.5
Rampai Satria (Armed Forces Digest)	22	21.8
Ke Arah 2020 (Towards Vision 2020)	16	15.8
Polis dan Anda (Police and You)	11	10.9
Langkah Kehadapan (Marching Forward)	8	7.9
Warisan Wawasan (Vision Heritage)	5	5.0
Warung Puteri (Puteri's Store)	4	4.0
Warung Teh Tarik (Tea Store)	3	3.0

Table 2 The Local Development Programmes Listened to by
Development Agency Officers

Programmes	No. of Respondent Listening	Percentage
Bersih dan Indah (n=101) (Clean and Beautiful)	97	96.0
Selamat Pagi (n=101) (Good Morning)	89	88.1
Majlis Perbandaran dan Anda (n=101) (The Local Council and You)	65	64.3
Pertanian dan Anda* (n=85) (Agriculture and you)	38	44.7
Kesihatan dan Anda* (n=32) (Your Health)	17	53.1
Kelantan Permai* (n=32) (Scenic Kelantan)	13	40.6
Karyanika* (n=32) (Art and Craft)	15	46.9
Kampungku* (n=32) (My Village)	10	31.3
Wanita Masa Kini* (n=32) (Current Woman)	16	26.2
Ke arah Kegemilangan* (n=85) (Towards Excellence)	24	28.2
Setitik Peluh Segenggam Harapan* (n=61) (A Drop of Sweat A Handful of Hope)	14	23.0
Keringkat Bakti* (n=32) (The Fruits of Labour)	6	18.7
Keluargaku Sayang* (n=32) (Family Corner)	6	18.7
Halaman Keluarga* (n=32) (Family Corner)	4	12.5
LPP dan Anda* (n=61) (Farmers' Organisation Authority and You)	38	62.3

* These Programmes are locally produced and vary from one local station to another

The impact of the radio and TV programmes in terms of gratification of cognitive development was studied among a group of the aborigines in Pahang (Mohd. Pauzi,2005). A total of 266 Semelai household heads in Tasek Bera were surveyed on their use of media and the gratification that they obtained in cognitive development. Four categories of cognitive gratification obtained were measured namely politics, development, education and health. Five items statements were developed for each category and measured by using a 7 point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagre . The results, as shown in Table 3, showed that current issues and events was found to be the cognitive gratification obtained by the Semelai head of households in Tasek Bera, Pahang.

Table 3 Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived Gratification Obtained through Radio Programmes

Perceived Gratifications Obtained (GO)	Mean	S.D.	Overall Mean
Politics			**5.38**
1. Keep me up-to-date on current events	6.20	1.21	
2. To know more about the Malaysian government	6.03	1.22	
3. Find out what kind of job our government is doing	5.08	1.35	
4. Become aware of what politicians are saying	5.05	1.22	
5. Find out about government officials	4.51	1.46	
Development			**5.15**
1. Keep up with current issues	6.12	1.12	
2. Be informed of things that are happening around me	5.86	1.28	
3. Seek information on special topics of interest to me	4.84	1.40	
4. Make up my mind about important issues	4.71	1.45	
5. Resolve my day-to-day problems	4.21	1.62	
Education			**5.43**
1. Become a more educated person	5.89	1.30	

2. Obtain a brief account of many things	5.79	1.35
3. Share knowledge with family members	5.59	1.30
4. Pass information to other people	5.20	1.50
5. Justify my own view points to other people	4.66	1.32

Health			**5.55**
1. To understand the path to a good life	5.88	0.99	
2. Obtain useful information about daily living	5.66	1.07	
3. Create a sense of awareness on diseases	5.64	1.04	
4. Improve the quality of my lifestyle	5.38	1.33	
5. Find out about issues affecting people like myself	5.17	1.16	

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Perceived GO from TV Programmes

Perceived Gratifications Obtained (GO$_i$)	Mean	S.D.	Overall Mean
Politics			**5.15**
1. Keep me up-to-date on current events	6.18	1.24	
2. To know more about the Malaysian government	6.06	1.18	
3. Find out what kind of job our government is doing	5.12	1.45	
4. Become aware of what politicians are saying	5.08	1.28	
5. Find out about government officials	4.42	1.61	
Development			**5.37**
1. Keep up with current issues	6.10	1.22	
2. Be informed of things that are happening around me	5.92	1.23	
3. Seek information on special topics of interest to me	4.89	1.38	
4. Make up my mind about important issues	4.69	1.50	
5. Resolve my day-to-day problems	4.15	1.64	
Education			**5.51**
1. Obtain a brief account of many things	6.06	1.35	
2. Become a more educated person	6.00	1.25	
3. Share knowledge with family members	5.72	1.28	
4. Pass information to other people	5.11	1.55	
5. Justify my own view points to other people	4.68	1.34	

Health		**5.56**
1. To understand the route to a good life	5.89	0.98
2. Obtain useful information about daily living	5.66	1.07
3. Create a sense of awareness on diseases	5.61	1.13
4. Improve the quality of my lifestyle	5.38	1.17
5. Find out about issues affecting people like myself	5.24	1.22

The use of electronic media such as radio and television has proven that informational-type gratifications obtained when attending to these media are more inclined towards these two items. The cognitive motivation was more in seeking media programmes in politics and development that contribute to knowledge on current issues and events around them.

The findings on gratifications obtained from radio programmes revealed that the item on keeping the respondents up to date on current events under the political category is the most highly rated among the 20 items followed by the item under the development category, keeping up with current issues. The item 'giving the respondents a brief account of many things', under the education category, is the third highest rated item. (Table 4)

The findings on gratification obtained from TV programmes revealed that the item on keeping the respondents up to date on current events under the political category is the highest rated item followed by the item on keeping up with current issues under the development category, as the second highest. The third is the item on giving a brief account of many things under the education category.

Audience Participation

In order to determine the practice of audience participation among producers of rural and agricultural radio and TV programmes Salleh (1989) conducted a study among the producers of RTM in Peninsular Malaysia. The study revealed that more than half of the producers (54.2%) claimed to have always practiced

media participation in programme production. Twenty-six producers (31.3%) said they did it most of the time; 11 (13.3%) did it sometimes; and only one producer said he never involved audiences in his programs (Table 5). The methods used by producers to get participation from the rural people are rank ordered in Table 6. The most frequently mentioned method was interviewing rural audiences in programs, either live of pre-recorded. The next most common method was through phone-in shows or segments. This method was mentioned by 15 producers. Other methods used were: critiques of programmes by listeners and viewers; through letters; through informal discussions; initiating dialogue in programmes; inviting members of the audience to the studio; and utilizing local people as news readers, script writers and script presenters.

Table 5 Producers' Frequency in Using the Media Participation Method in Media Programming

Frequencies	Frequency	Percentage
Always	45	54.2
Most of the time	26	31.3
Sometimes	11	13.3
Never	1	1.2
Total	83	100.00

Table 6 Techniques of Media Participation Used by Producers

Techniques	Frequency [a]	Percentage [a]
Interview as part of programme	79	96.3
Through phone-ins	15	18.3
Through letters	13	15.6
Informal Discussions	8	9.8
They criticize the programs	5	6.1

Invite the audience to the studio	3	3.6
Dialogue with audience during the programme	3	3.6
As script writers	3	3.6
As script presenters	1	1.2
As news readers	1	1.2

[a] Total <u>n</u> do not add up because producers could give more than one answer.

On the statement that audience participation was lacking in rural radio programmes, 72 (86.7%) producers disagreed. Likewise 60 (72.3%) producers disagreed when asked about lack of audience participation in rural television broadcasts. The results showed that media participation was felt to be practiced more in radio than in rural television programmes. Although most producers said rural radio and television programmes were not lacking in audience participation, there were others who felt that such participation was unsatisfactory. Among the reasons cited for unsatisfactory audience participation in rural radio programs were: rural people were shy; lack of funds to carry out such practice; it was difficult for rural people to come to the station; audience members were afraid to participate; lack of telephone services in rural areas; and problems of using standard language in radio broadcasts. Lack of participation in rural television programs was said to be due to lack of television programs dedicated to rural topics; television was city-centered; people were too shy to participate; program formats were not suitable; and policies tended to discourage participation.

Producers' views on the levels at which the rural public should participate in rural broadcasting were sought. The levels listed were: a) policy making; b) program planning; c) as part of program; d) as part of production team; and e) all the above levels. Most producers (77.1%) agreed on participation of rural public as part of programs, 34.9% agreed with participation at the program planning levels, 28.9% felt that rural receivers should participate as part of the production team, 19.3% agreed that participation should be carried out at

policy making level (Table 7). The results indicated that producers were ready to encourage public participation in program preparation and production but were less willing to let them participate at policy and program planning levels. Many producers expressed their unwillingness to allow participation at policy formulation and program planning levels. Many producers expressed their unwillingness to allow participation at policy formulation and program planning levels because they felt policy matters to be the prerogative of RTM. Other reasons given were that the public lacked knowledge to contribute and that the policies set by the public might interfere with policies of other departments.

Table 7 Producers' Views on Level of Participation By Rural Public In Broadcasting

Levels of Participation	Frequency [a]	Percentage [a]
Policy making	4	4.8
Planning of programs	29	34.9
Taking part in program as guests, speakers and others	64	77.1
Taking part in producing programs	24	28.9
All of the above	16	19.3

[a] Total n do not add up because producers could make more than one choice.

Another research on audience participation was conducted by Md. Salleh and Zakariah (1993) on the Seremban local radio station. The station encouraged audience response to all its programmes through phone-ins during programme broadcast. As a means of ascertaining the effectiveness of their programmes and also to ascertain the informational needs of the rural folk, the local radio station encouraged direct cooperation between their programme producers and the rural people through local development agencies . Audience involvement in radio programme production was in the form of live radio discussions and

telephone interviews with audience members conducted by the radio staff as part of radio programmes. Sometimes, such discussion were recorded in the field and played back at the studio. Other times, the discussions were part of live broadcasts. During such live discussions, the panel is often made up of a radio programmer who acts as a host or moderator, representatives of local and state development agencies and two or three members of the local community (Md. Salleh & Zakariah, 1993).

A study was conducted in the extension area of University of Agriculture Malaysia (now Universiti Putra Malaysia) to determine the knowledge and level of participation in the popular programme *Era Jaya.* Abdul Razak (1993) found in this research that 75% of the respondents listened to the program. Among those who listened, only 32% who knew the time of broadcast, 48% knew the duration of broadcast and 47% knew the content. Of the 75% who listened to the program only 2 respondents reported that they used the telephone to call in to the program when it was on air. It is apparent from the research findings that the level of participation of rural audience in radio programmes is low.

Audience attitudes towards the communicator (Partil, 1985) and the communicator's attitudes towards his audience (Upendra, 1986) are factors that determine the success of effective communicators. Salleh (1989) found that generally the broadcasters held positive attitudes towards their audience. Producers of the radio programmes realized the necessity of being aware of rural problems when producing rural development programmes. Also, the study by Md. Salleh and Zakariah (1993) showed that the rural audience has positive attitudes towards the local radio stations and this in turn has a positive influence on audience participation in radio development programmes.

MEDIA AND NATIONAL UNITY

Schramm (1964) has written about the integrative, nation-building role of mass media in developing countries. Firstly, communication can be used to contribute to the feeling of 'nation-ness'. Secondly, communication has a role

as 'the voice of national-planning'. Thirdly, it can help to teach skills attendant on development. Fourthly, it can be used to extend industrial and commercial markets. Fifthly, through the mass media, people can be prepared to play their new parts, understand their new responsibilities, and face the new problems that come with development. Sixthly, communication prepares a nation for its role among other nations. In terms of its integrative role, modern communication can help to weld together isolated communities, disparate-subcultures, self-centered individuals and groups, and separate developments into a truly national development (Schramm, 1964).

Malaysian leaders perceive the country's mass media as performing the integrative role in national development. An address at a seminar of newspaper editors and publishers in 1974 by Tun Abdul Razak, then Prime Minister of Malaysia, is illustrative:

> *The press and other mass media act as (an) intermediary between the Government and the people. Their functions and responsibilities are more important and complex in a multi-racial country like Malaysia. All those concerned should take heed to ensure that whatever is published for the general public should not cause misunderstanding or be detrimental to certain groups. In this way, the press and the mass media could help the Government foster the spirit of understanding and strengthen friendship among the people... The press should also avoid publishing materials which will give rise to tension among... various parties (p. 20)*

Earlier in 1973, Ghazali Shafie, then the Minister of Information, said that television was not regarded by his ministry as an 'entertainment box'. He said that television was perceived to be a means of imparting knowledge and multiplying the flow of information on development and nation building. He explained that imported television programs were being selected, and local productions being developed, with a view to screening content which was consonant with the national goals set out in the *Rukunegara* (i.e. the 5 national goals: Belief in

God, Loyalty to King, Upholding the Constitution, Rule of Law, Good Behaviour and Morality):

> *Through dramas, music, dances, etc., television must enlarge the awareness of the aspiration and development of the nation in terms of unity, democracy, just society, etc., as envisaged in the Rukunegara... canned syndicated films will be shown only if they are in line with the national objectives --- for example, race relations, education, rule of law, cultural ties.(p. 8)*

The mass media, especially the broadcasting industry has played a crucial role in cultivating the national unity process. Therefore, various radio and television programs that contain national unity messages are created for audience's consumption. There are various themes of campaigns on nationalism, cultural and religious celebrations, health, road safety, environment recycling, etc that are embedded with national unity messages, in public service announcements aired over TV and radio.

Television stations have incorporated national unity elements in public service announcements. However, the issue on the condition of the nation's national unity remains in *stable tension* (Madinah Mohamad, 2005). The phenomenon indicates that national unity in Malaysia is stable on the surface but it is tensed at the deeper level. In Malaysia, the multi-ethnic races; Malays, Chinese and Indians respect the diversity of each others' cultural values, beliefs and religions. The fact is, this does not apply in every situation as they are still suspicious about each other's culture.

Why does this situation still occur even after 50 years of independence? Are the government and NGO campaigns through various mass media ineffective? From another perspective, how has the audience perceived the efforts of the national unity process?

Based on these concerns several studies were conducted to assess the role of media in promoting and inculcating national unity and national integration. Md. Salleh et al. (2005) in a study in Klang Valley among respondents from

different ethnic groups found that TV was the main media through which the population was being exposed to messages of national unity and integration. Table 8 shows the different unity and integration messages and the percentages of the respondents being exposed to such messages. The three main messages contained in the media especially TV were: 1) Festival celebrations in Malaysia are celebrated by all ethnics 2) All Malaysian citizens should be concerned about the difficulties/suffering of other ethnic groups, Various cultures in Malaysia are not only accepted but jointly celebrated.

In order to find out whether the media are effective in promoting and inculcating national unity and integration the respondents were asked to rank the effectiveness of the messages in terms of individual, society and national integration. Table 9 shows the effectiveness of the messages on society, based on ethnic group comparisons. The results showed significant difference in terms of message effectiveness perception between the Malay ethnic group and the other groups. The Malay respondents were found to be significantly higher in perceiving the positive effects of the national unity messages compared to the Chinese and Indians.

Table 8 Respondents' Exposure towards National Unity and National Integration Message by Sources (n=896)

Message	TV	Percentage Newspaper	Radio
All celebrations in Malaysia are celebrated by all ethnic groups	65.8	24.3	9.9
Malaysian citizens should be concerned over difficulties / suffering of other ethnic groups.	61.2	30.0	8.8
Various cultures in Malaysia are not only accepted but jointly appreciated.	58.2	30.1	11.7
Love our county like we love our family.	57.9	28.6	13.5
Malaysian citizens should respect other ethnic group cultures.	55.9	31.1	12.9
Malaysian society can live together harmoniously.	54.3	30.8	15.0
National unity should be instilled from young.	53.9	34.6	11.5
Differences in language, culture and religion do not obstruct Malaysian citizens from uniting.	53.1	36.0	10.9
Sympathy is the basis in instilling relationships among ethnics.	51.3	32.4	16.2
Understanding among ethnics is not only during celebrations.	51.3	34.3	14.3
As Malaysian citizens, we should tolerate other ethnic beliefs.	49.6	33.9	16.5
Sharing authority and consensus will guarantee harmony and peace in a multi ethnic society.	47.5	39.5	13.0
Consensus is important in nation development.	49.9	37.4	12.6
As Malaysian citizens we share happiness and sadness in achieving well being.	48.5	35.8	15.8
Citizen of Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia share the same visions of national development.	47.8	41.2	10.9
Malaysian citizens from Perlis to Sabah share in the nation's happiness and prosperity.	47.4	36.6	16.0
All ethnics in Malaysia share the same vision of the nation's future.	47.1	37.3	15.6
South China Sea is not a barrier to National Integration.	42.4	42.6	15.0

Table 9 Respondents' Perceptions towards Positive Items on Society about National Unity by Ethnic Category

Perception Item		Percentage				χ^2 (significant level)
		Total	Malay	Chinese	Indian	
Main mass media have managed to play their roles in instilling national unity effectively.		n = 871	n = 461	n = 253	n = 157	
	Agree	62.5	70.5	50.2	58.6	29.92
	Disagree	37.5	29.5	49.8	41.4	(0.000)
Reports related to ethnic issues in main mass media have reduced negative perceptions towards other ethnics.		n = 871	n = 461	n = 253	n = 157	
	Agree	64.2	72.0	52.6	59.9	28.42
	Disagree	35.8	28.0	47.4	40.1	(0.000)
Messages in mass media have shown the importance of sharing nation development in the region.		n = 871	n = 461	n = 253	n = 157	
	Agree	72.6	79.8	60.5	70.7	31.05
	Disagree	27.4	20.2	39.5	27.4	(0.000)
Reports in main mass media have helped to create one Malaysian nationality.		n = 871	n = 461	n = 253	n = 157	
	Agree	71.3	70.3	57.3	67.5	43.37
	Disagree	28.7	19.7	42.7	32.5	(0.000)
Reports in main mass media have increased the tolerance spirit among ethnics with different belief and culture.		n = 871	n = 461	n = 253	n = 157	
	Agree	68.2	77.0	53.0	66.9	43.68
	Disagree	31.8	23.0	47.0	33.1	(0.000)

Md. Salleh and Mariah *et al.*, (2007). studied youth audience involvement with messages pertaining to national unity which were broadcasted in public service advertisements (PSA). Among the questions of concern were:

1. What are the youth's attitudes towards national unity messages aired by the television stations?

2. What are the factors contributing to their (youth audiences) involvement in the public service announcements?

3. What are the patterns and level of their involvement with regards to national unity messages aired? and

4. What are the outcomes portrayed by youth audiences due to their involvement in national unity messages aired by the television?

This study was conducted using focus group discussions (FGD). The informants for this study were youths of Malay, Indian and Chinese and mixed ethnicity. For each category of ethnicity, the youth were chosen based on the following criteria :

- Age range between 18 and 24 years
- They must be either Malay, Indian, or Chinese (as stated in their identity card)
- Regardless of gender
- Stay in Klang Valley (Kuala Lumpur, Shah Alam, Gombak, Petaling jaya, Puchong, Serdang, Kajang, Ulu Klang, Bangi, Putrajaya)
- Like to watch television
- Malaysian citizen
- Regardless of educational background
- Can be working or jobless youth
- Volunteer to take part in this study

Before the discussion started, five public service announcement video clips, four embedded with national unity messages, were shown to the group.

The discussions were then conducted using an interview protocol that tried to deduce the teenagers' involvement in the messages. Each FGD lasted nearly one hour with all the informants participating actively, talking, arguing, listening, and giving out ideas. The discussion was audio-visually recorded.

The transcribed data was then analyzed in accordance with the research questions. Hundreds of themes emerged from the study. Subsequently, the themes were categorized into bigger categories.

Initial youth attitudes towards cultural integration messages aired on television

Table 10 shows the results of the youth's initial attitudes towards cultural messages in TV public service announcements.

<u>Malay youth audiences</u>

All the Malay youth like to watch the public service announcements on television

<u>Indian youth audience</u>

The data indicated that the Indian youth audience developed three different attitudes towards national unity messages in the public services announcements. These three attitudes are like, sometime like and dislike

<u>Chinese youth audience</u>

Initial attitudes of this group of youth are divided into two groups, who 'like' and have 'no comments'. For those who 'like', they are portrayed in five themes.

Table 10 Categories and themes of initial attitudes towards PSAs amongst Malay, Indian, Chinese, and Mixed Group Youth Audiences.

Malay	Indian	Chinese	Mix group
A. LIKE	**A. LIKE**	**A. LIKE**	**A. LIKE**
1. High interest in TV viewing	1. Likes to view PSAs	1. Likes watching, but solely related to the Chinese only.	1. Likes watching television .
2. Seldom flip channels when PSAs which contain cultural integration messages appear on television.	2. Attempt to understand the messages conveyed.	2. Continuous watching	2. I like the PSAs, because they contain special messages
3. Only flip channels when the PSAs is deemed boring due to regular airing		3. Seldom flip channels when PSAs appear on the television.	
4. Seldom leave the television when PSAs which contain cultural integration messages appear.		4. Do not switch off the television when PSAs appear.	
5. Seldom work on something else when PSAs [that contain cultural integration messages] appear on television.		5. Able to understand the direct and indirect messages delivered.	
6. Do not switch off the television when PSAs [that contain cultural integration messages] appear on television.			

7. Willing to view PSAs [that contain cultural integration messages] that appear on television with some level of concentration.

8. Try to understand the direct and indirect messages being delivered through PSAs [that contain cultural integration messages] that appear on television.

B. SOMETIMES LIKE

1. Will only view the PSAs if it is interesting.

2. Will only view the advertisements if it's newly aired.

C. DISLIKE

1. Flip channels when PSAs appear

2. Leave the television when PSAs appear

3. Never view the PSAs at all

B. RESERVED

B. SOMETIMES LIKE

4. Like it….if the PSAs are interesting, if not, I'll flip to other channels

5. Will watch the PSAs until the end if it has not finished

6. I'll choose…..if I understand or if I find it is boring, I will do something else during the PSAs

Mixed Ethnic Teenage Audience

The attitudes derived from mixed ethnic youth are 'Like' and 'Sometime Like'.
In the category of 'Like' there are two other themes that emerged from the analysis, while the category of 'Sometimes Like', was supported by three other themes.

The contributing factors of involvement

Malay Youth Audiences

There are eight themes or factors that contributed to the involvement of these youth
Seven out of the eight factors depend on the public service announcements while the remaining factor is due to the audience.

Indian Youth Audiences

There are 7 themes that explained the contributing factors of Indian youths' involvement
All of the factors explained that the strengths are derived from the announcements, not from the audiences.

Chinese Youth Audience

There are three themes or contributing factors for this group's involvement.

Mixed Ethnic Youth Audiences

15 themes emerged from the analysis of the contributing factors for youth audience involvement.

Please refer to Table 11 for further information.

Table 11 Factors contributing to involvement amongst Malay, India, Chinese, and Mix Group youth audiences.

Malay	Indian	Chinese	Mixed Groups
1. The existence of comic, humor and joke elements	1. Love it because of the humor, jokes	1. Existence of humor elements	1. Elements of humor and jokes exist
2. Portrays interesting characters	2. Easy to understand the messages	2. Evokes emotions	2. Portray subjects that evoke feelings
3. Portrays sad events that evoke emotions	3. Portrays interesting characters	3. Persuade the community to be culturally integrated	3. Because there are songs
4. Portrays interesting storyline	4. The message provides awareness		4. Because it broadens the mind
5. Indirectly portray positive values	5. Promotes cultural integration elements		5. Short but meaningful
6. The message provides awareness.	6. Cultivate patriotism		6. Concise and easy to understand
7. Portrays sarcasm			7. The message is easy to remember
8. Provides valuable experience			8. It relates to life
9. Tells new things/stuff			9. The narration is creative
10. Use songs and sketches			10. Cute children in the cast
11. Promotes cultural integration elements			11. Love it because it contains messages and provide guidelines and education
12. Cultivate patriotism			12. Educates on friendship, integration and harmony amongst all
13. I am the type who loves PSAs			13. Looks like real event
			14. Common people are in the cast.
			15. Portrayal of historic subjects

The Patterns and Level of Involvement Amongst the Youth Audience Towards the Cultural Integration Messages

<u>Malay Youth Audience</u>

The patterns of their involvement are 'totally involved' due to unanimous interests of cultural integration messages in the public service announcements shown. The involvement consists of three levels: cognitive, affective and behavioural.

<u>Indian Youth Audience</u>

The patterns of their involvement are 'not totally involved' as they consist of youth that are 'really involved', 'situationally involved' or 'not involved'. These are common categories which are supported by the themes that emerged during the data analysis processes.

There are 3 levels of involvement: affection, cognitive and behavioural. These stages are supported by the themes that emerged during data analysis.

<u>Chinese Youth Audiences</u>

There were eight themes that showed the pattern of involvement that can be categorised as 'totally involved', 'situationally involved' and 'not involved'. From the themes mentioned, it shows that the level of involvement exists in three stages: cognitive, affective and behavioural.

<u>Mixed Ethnic Teenage Audiences</u>

There is 'total involvement' (totally involved) for this particular youth audience group as all of them like the cultural integration messages in the public service announcements aired. There are eight themes describing their preferences in the messages.

In terms of patterns of involvement, it only affected their level of cognitive and affective involvement. Both categories are supported by the themes that emerged during the data analysis process. For further information on these findings, please refer to Table 12

Table 12 Patterns of involvement amongst the Malay, Indian, Chinese, and Mixed Group teenage audience.

Malay	Indian	Chinese	Mix Group
TOTALLY INVOLVED	**NOT TOTALLY INVOLVED**	**NOT TOTALLY INVOLVED**	**TOTALLY INVOLVED**
I) REALLY INVOLVED	**I) REALLY INVOLVED** **II) SITUATIONALLY INVOLVED** **III) NOT INVOLVED**	**I) REALLY INVOLVED** **II) SITUATIONALLY INVOLVED** **III) NOT INVOLVED**	**I) REALLY INVOLVED**
I) REALLY INVOLVED	**I) REALLY INVOLVED**	**I) REALLY INVOLVED**	**I) REALLY INVOLVED**
1. While watching, try to understand the message.	1. While watching, try to understand the message	1. Flatters me.	1. Watch with feeling
2. While watching, understand what should be done in daily lives.	2. While watching, we know what we should do in our daily life	2. While watching, I understand the message	2. Able to relate the discussion with PSAs which are not shown here
3. While watching, realise own mistakes.	3. While watching, realises\ personal mistakes	3. While watching, I understand what should be done in daily life	3. While watching, try to understand the message
4. Relate the advertisement to personal attitude.	4. Relate the PSAs with past	4. Relate the PSAs with past experiences	4. Initially, the viewing is unintended, after that continue watching until understand

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5. Able to relate the statements in the advertisements which are not exposed here.

6. Viewed it accidently, I tend to like it after that.

7. If the PSA is interesting, it never bores me even though they show it many times.

8. View to get entertainment.

9. View with enthusiasm.

10. Relate the PSAs to past experience.

11. Have emotional relationship with the characters in the PSAs.

12. Does identification process, try to relate characters in the PSAs with him/herself.

5. Develop emotional relationship with the characters in the PSAs

6. Able to relate other PSAs that were not shown in the

5. Develop emotional relationship with the characters in the PSAs

5. Relate PSAs to past experience

6. While watching, realise personal mistakes

7. While watching, understand what should be done in the daily life.

8. Develop emotional relationship with the characters in the PSAs

13. Relate the reality with the events in the PSAs.

14. Developed psychical relationship with the characters in the PSAs.

15. If the PSAs are boring, flip to another channel.

I) SITUATIONALLY INVOLVED

1. Will only watch until get bored of it.

2. Watch for the purpose of entertainment

II) SITUATIONALLY INVOLVED

1. Flatters me.

2. While watching, I understand the message.

3. While watching, I understand what should be done in daily life

4. Relate the PSAs with past experiences

5. Develop emotional relationship with the characters in the PSAs

III) NOT INVOLVED

1. It's break time

III) NOT INVOLVED

1. Tries to avoid advertisements

For the Malay youth audiences, all the informants had attitudes of "like" in the genre being studied; pattern of involvement was "totally involved", with the level of cognitive, affective and behavior; and have the outcome as referential references, critical references and physical actions. As for the Indian youth audiences, their attitudes can be divided into three types: "like", "sometimes like", and "dislike", having patterns of involvement of "not totally involved" because the patterns are of three categories such as "really involved", situationally involved", and "not involved". However for those who are "really involved" and "situationally involved", their involvement is at three levels: "cognitive", "affective", and "physical actions". The outcomes of their involvement can be categorized into three levels: referential and critical involvement, and physical outcomes.

The Chinese youth audiences are divided into two groups: 'like' and "no comments". Their patterns of involvement were "not totally involved", but to those who "like", it involves their affective and behavior levels. The outcomes can be seen through referential and critical reflection, and physical outcomes. All the ethnic youth audiences mentioned that the factors contributing to their involvement are due to the television genre itself which contains elements such as humor, empathy and educational values in the content.

The differences of involvement amongst the youth audiences of different groups occurred due to the different socio-demography, socio-economy, socio-cultural, and socio-political factors amongst them. Moreover, the public services announcements shown to the participants are in the Malay language and portrayed events that involved mainly the Malay community. This condition might be due to the different interpretations by them as explained by the Encoding and Decoding Model pioneered by Hall (1973) and developed by Morley (1980). According to the model, mass media offers some symbols which represent the diverse social identities from different social and cultural groups of people. The groups will then decode meaning from the symbols differently by adopting and

adapting them to their individual frames of references and experiences. This might explain the higher involvement amongst Malay youth towards messages of national unity in the genre studied.

In a more recent study on youth involvement with national unity messages in TV PSAs Nobaya *et al.* (2008) found that at the cognitive level, the youth understand the reasons for messages of unity being disseminated through the PSAs, they understand how difficult it is for the government to focus on issues of unity in a muticultural community and they realize the importance of unity in ensuring the well being of the country (Table 13). At the emotional level they feel proud that this country is comprised of various ethnic groups, cultures and religions, they are touched by the messages of unity that were being conveyed and they feel that the current level of interethnic relations is not depicted in the contents/plots of unity messages on television. (Table 14). The youth audience involvement with the PSA messages on TV at the behavioral level showed that they feel more sincere in giving assistance to members of other races, as they feel that they should extend friendship to people of other races and messages of unity make them to greet friends of other races more often. (Table15).

Table 13 Items implicating Respondents' Level of Involvement on Cognitive Level

No.	Statement	Mean
1.	I understand the reasons for messages of national unity disseminated through PSAs on television. \	4.13
2.	I feel that messages of unity that are disseminated by PSAs on television are difficult for youth like me to comprehend.	2.47
3.	I feel that unity is a major issue faced by this country at the present moment.	3.43
4.	I understand how difficult it is for the government to focus on issues of unity in a multicultural community.	4.00

5. I have finally realized how important unity is in ensuring the well-being   3.97
   of the country.

6. I accept the democratic approach taken in the administration of   3.79
   this country.

7. I think the sharing of power practiced in this country forms the   3.73
   backbone to racial unity in this country

Table14 Items implicating respondents' level of involvement at emotional level

No.	Statement	Mean
1.	I feel bored with the messages that are disseminated through PSAs on television	2.14
2.	I feel that the level of interethnic relations currently is not as depicted in the contents/plots of unity messages on television.	3.47
3.	I am proud that this country is comprised of various ethnicities, cultures and religions.	4.21
4.	I am touched by the messages of unity that are being conveyed	3.61

Table 15 Items implicating respondents' level of involvement at behavioral level

No.	Statement	Mean
1.	Messages of unity make me feel more sincere in giving assistance to members of other races when they are in trouble	3.73
2.	After watching advertisements that call upon unity, I feel that I should extend my friendship to my friends of other races	3.68
3.	I tell my family members about the call for unity as shown on television	3.25
4.	I tell friends of my race of the call for unity as shown on television	3.36
5.	I tell my friends from other races of the call for unity as shown on television	3.12

6. Messages of unity that are shown on television help in motivating me   3.75
   to greet my friends of other races.

7. Messages of unity make me greet my friends from other races more   3.54
   often

8. Messages of unity make me feel that it is important to call or send   3.11
   text messages to my friends from other races more often than I used to

9. Messages of unity make me feel more open to attend open houses by   3.50
   my friends   from other races

10. My friends from other races and I often act out scenes from unity   2.73
   advertisements that I watch

MEDIA AND THE INCULCATION OF SOCIAL VALUES

In achieving a progressive and industrialized society, as outlined in the National Vision 2020, the Nation wishes to create a caring society and culture (Mahathir, 1991). Social scientists have observed that as a country becomes more industrialized, the complexity of people's lives and the physical as well as mental demands exerted on individuals would increase, resulting in the increased breakdown of people's ability to cope (Zaharah, 1992). The values, ideas and practices of caring culture need to be promoted through various communication channels to complement efforts to achieve the national aspiration. Rogers and Storey (1987) mention that effective communication strategy is needed to enhance the awareness and understanding of social values and ideas.

In order to understand the role of media in inculcating positive social values among the population several studies were carried out. Md. Salleh et al. (1997) found that television was the main source of positive social value messages. The television program in magazine format was mentioned by the majority of respondents as containing social value messages. Television news, religious programs and television drama were the next most frequently mentioned programs. Majority of the respondents felt that the media were effective in

inculcating positive social values among the population. In a related study on Malay television drama Md. Salleh and Barudi (1999) found that the social values of love, affection, generosity and honesty were the dominant values present in the local dramas broadcasted over TV3 and TV1.

Another study to determine the positive social values found in a popular youth television program, RSB on TV3 was conducted in 2000 (Md. Salleh and Huzalshah, 2001). Nine positive values were identified in this show and the most frequent values depicted in the program were self-confidence, being caring and hardworking. A focus group discussion was also carried out among 15 UPM students to find out their opinions on the program. The result of the focus group showed that 12 respondents agreed that the messages in the program were effective as each segment of the program could inculcate positive values among teenagers. They were also of the opinion that the program was suitable for all levels of society especially the youth as the program could be used as a channel to provide information and advice as well as to explore the problems that are facing the youth.

Md. Salleh, Khairani and Mohd. Pauzi (2005) conducted content analysis of local animation programmes broadcast over TV1 and TV2 to identify the social values being portrayed. The research findings revealed that social values closely associated with cooperation and helpful attitudes were the most important values portrayed in the children animation programs with a total percentage of 38.85%. Other important values were harmony (13.3%), sympathy (7.64%) and respect (7.0%) (Table 16). Table 16 also shows that the values related to generosity and caring values were almost absent. These values only comprised 1.27% from the total values portrayed.

Table 16 Distribution of Moral Values According to Priority in Local Animation
Programmes on TV1 and TV2

No	Moral values	No (n=157)	Percentage
1	Cooperative	61	38.85
2	Harmony	21	13.38
3	Sympathy	12	7.64
4	Respect	11	7.01
5	Loving	8	5.10
6	Responsible	7	4.46
7	Caring for nature	7	4.46
8	Equality	6	3.82
9	Honesty	5	3.18
10	Patience	4	2.55
11	Being humble	4	2.55
12	Loyalty	4	2.55
13	Others	3	1.91
14	Generosity	2	1.27
15	Politeness	2	1.27
16	Dignity	0	0
Total		157	100

Positive Social Values in TV Advertisement

There are two components of broadcast, that is, the programmes aired and
the advertisements or commercials. Television advertisements serve to create
awareness among the target audience and persuade them to consume the product
or services advertised. The Advertising Code adopted by all Malaysian television
stations, among others, encourages advertisements with social messages in line
with the government's objectives of creating a disciplined and caring society.
Musa et al. (1997) conducted content analysis of television commercials that
contained positive social values. This study found that 'caring' was the most
frequent value depicted in the television commercials followed by cooperation,
harmony, appreciation and empathy. Md. Salleh, Abdul Muis and Chang (2005)
conducted another study to determine the content and pattern of positive social

values in the advertisements being broadcast on the government-owned TV2 and the private station, TV3. As there could be more than one social value contained in one television commercial, it was decided to record a maximum of three values, i.e. the possible measurement of values in an advertisement is three (3), two (2), one (1), or zero (0). The study shows that 16.1% of the advertisement had no social value. On average, every advertisement had almost two values (mean = 1.85; standard deviation = 1.20) in this study. There were 14 social values identified in the analysis. Overall, the top five values are Caring, Trust, Unity/Harmony, Love and Appreciation. In comparing the ranking of the values within the two channels, it was found to show variation in certain values. The following table shows that the variations of more than 10% occurred for the values Trust, Self-Discipline, and Respect.

Table 17 Distribution of Social Values in Advertisements According to TV Stations

Variable	Category	TV2 (%)	TV3 (%)	Total (%)
Social Value	Caring	29.59	28.33	28.90
	Trust	9.18	31.25	21.33
	Unity/Harmony	21.94	15.83	18.58
	Love	13.27	22.50	18.35
	Appreciation	16.33	19.17	17.89
	Sharing	20.41	15.00	17.43
	Cooperation	9.69	14.58	12.39
	Safety	9.69	10.42	10.09
	Security	11.73	6.67	8.94
	Self Discipline	18.37	0.83	8.72
	Generosity	5.61	10.42	8.26
	Respect	12.24	2.08	6.65
	Patriotism	8.16	0.83	4.13
	Politeness	6.12	0.83	3.21

From the above, it indicates that the top five rankings for TV2 are Caring, Unity/Harmony, Sharing, Self-Discipline, and Appreciation. While TV3 has Trust, Caring, Love, Appreciation, and Unity/Harmony as its top five values.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

The role of media in development in this paper is discussed primarily in terms of the broadcast media. Other media channels such as newspapers, magazines, and films are not cited and discussed because there were not many studies on the roles of these media. The author's own studies mainly deal with the role of the broadcast media. There is a need to understand the overall role of media in the realm of development. There are cross references of content for example between Television, radio and newspapers. Therefore studies need to ascertain the functions of these cross contents and their impacts at the national level?

Another media channel that is of increasing importance now is the Internet. Many scholars have discussed on the useful role of the Internet. The Internet is a multipurpose tool, a medium of communication and perhaps the most flexible medium currently available. It has the potential to be integrated within a wide variety of efforts that have objectives such as local participation, training, education, research, technical support and institutional strengthening. Thus, endeavors that might find a role for Internet applications could range from training to the development of criteria and indicators for sustainable agriculture (Talero and Gaudette, 1995). The Internet is not a panacea for development, but it does bring new information resources and can open new communication channels for rural communities. It offers a means for decreasing the gaps between development professionals and rural people through initiating interaction and dialogue, new alliances, interpersonal networks and cross-sectoral links between organizations. It can create mechanisms that enable bottom-up articulation and sharing of local knowledge. Benefits include increased efficiency in the use of development resources, less duplication of activities, reduced communication

costs and global access to information and human resources. Research on the role of the Internet in development needs to be explored. Further, the convergence of the traditional media and the Internet provides for an interesting study on their impact on the nation's development.

To date the efforts made in developing society through broadcasting programs is designed to fit the four general functions of broadcasting media. The four functions are:

i.   The source of entertainment and arts,

ii. The source of news and information,

iii. The source of analysis and comments,

iv. The source of education and directives (Hibert, 1991)

In providing various kinds of entertainment programs in the form of music, dances, songs, action movies, love stories, sports programs, cartoons and so on and so forth, the taste and preference of the society is slowly shaping towards the image portrayed by the programs. Even if the program does not alter one's taste and preference, broadcast programs will at least accompany him when he gets lonely. Once in a while, we will find a program that is meant for a clear objective such as to boost up public confidence and strength whenever the nation is facing difficulties (Mehra, 1989)

The types of media programming for development need to be diversified and creatively produced. In the current situation the pace of life is fast and ever changing. The audience has little time to spend to listen or to watch lengthy programs. This may be especially true of radio. Saiful (2002) in his study of the 'Use of Radio as a Sourc e of Information Among the Malays in *Lembah Pantai,* Kuala Lumpur' found that the audience preferred the 'infotainment' concept of programs in which information is delivered through short messages between musical selections. In particular the radio station ERA fm was popular among the respondents due to this infotainment approach. This programme format needs serious consideration by broadcasters who are working on media for development.

Factors affecting society now such as globalization, democratic ideals, global tolerance and cultural responsibilities are also changing the landscape of media. These effects can be seen everywhere in this region, whereas, this phenomena was not common in the early years of the last decade. Media practitioners have slowly developed their professional skills in accordance with their comprehension of future media needs. They have to be fit to survive. This includes detailed comprehension of the changing definition of new societal values for designing development programs. Future media practitioners must design values for development programs and design a development program which incorporates all significant groups:. Nationality, identity, religion or skin color, will become less important. Perhaps, broadcasters should no longer bother to include such characteristics in their report (Stone, 1998).

Malaysian broadcast programs, for instance, have done a great deal for development services in the past. However to be relevant, media program producers need to be creative in their offerings of programs. Development content is quite a dry subject and therefore needs to be presented in an informative and entertaining manner. As the demands of society upon broadcasting programs increases each day, the need to know their feedback is also vital. There are many ways to derive the feedback from media consumers. Among this is by conducting surveys on a random basis at a certain period of time. Through this, TV provides analysis and interpretations in various forms of reports, open forum, documentaries, critics, advertisements so on and so forth. This phenomenon has introduced a new opportunity to media consumers in general to get the facts and feedback that they want. In return, society will also be able to give their comments and opinions in the programs broadcast. This opportunity has undoubtedly promoted the participation of society from time to time.

The Broadcast medium has a great potential to further develop and promote the educational process and directives (Mansor, 1983). TV today has been widely used to pipe in educational programs not only in cable forms but also

via satellite. There are lots of broadcasting stations these days that have aired quizz programs, historical documentaries, educational TV programs, so on and so forth. Examples of such programs include Jejak Rasul, Nona, 3R, Minda, Bincang-Bincang, Al-Kulliyyah and Remaja. These programs cater to the various needs and demands of the Malaysian society at large.

CONCLUSION

Media for development in Malaysia is a never ending struggle in building a better society. The logic is simple. As long as there is a future, we need to plan ahead. In planning ahead, media programs must always be reformed to fit the needs of the ever-changing society (Baran and Davis, 1995). Therefore, the future is already here. We are witnessing the changes in the society along with the development programs in the country.

Few visionaries predict that the art of broadcasting might vanish over time as the new Internet technology replaces it. Others argue the notion by rationalizing on how the radio is surviving strongly despite the existence of TV sets, video players, teleconferencing tools, and also multimedia devices. Whatever the notions and the points debated, the hunger to influence the masses through information still stands as the nucleus of the relationship between technology and broadcasting. As Kenichi Ohmae (1990) puts:it as *where information reaches, demand grows; where demand grows, the global economy has a local home.*

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BIOGRAPHY

Md. **Salleh H. Hassan** obtained his Bachelor in Agriculture Science from the University of Malaya in 1976. He then furthered his studies to earn his Masters in Development Communication at the University of the Philippines at Los Banos (UPLB) in 1979. His study at UPLB was made possible through the scholarship from the Southeast Asia Research Center in Agriculture and Graduate Studies (SEARCA). He started his career in UPM as a lecturer in 1979 serving the UPM Branch Campus in Sarawak (Semonggok Campus) from 1979 to 1981. He continued his service at UPM Serdang Campus from 1981 until the present. He proceeded to do his PhD at the Ohio University, USA in 1985 and obtained his Doctorate in 1989 in the field of Mass Communication. He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1994 and Professor in 2004.

He has been serving UPM in various capacities and at various levels. He was appointed as the Principal of Tun Perak Residential College, UPM from 1989-1996. In 1990 while serving as the Principal he was also appointed the Head, Department of Development Communication, Centre for Extension and Continuing Education (CECE) until 1992. He was later appointed again as the Head, Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication in 1996 to 2000. From the year 2000 to 2003 he served the Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication as the Deputy Dean in charge of Research and Graduate Studies. His career at UPM moved to the next phase when he was appointed as the Deputy Director at the Institute for Community and Peace Studies in 2005 and in 2006, being appointed as the Director of the Institute. The name of the Institute was officially changed to Institute for Social Science Studies in 2007 and he continues to serve as the Director.

As a lecturer at the Department of Communication, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication he has taught courses at the Bachelor, Masters and PhD levels. He was instrumental in introducing the program Bachelor of

Communication in 1998 when he was the Head of Department. During his tenure as the Head of Department the program Masters in Corporate Communication was also introduced. This program has been a popular program among managers and professional in the communication industries in the country. He has been active in supervising graduate students whereby 23 Masters students and 10 PhD students have graduated under him.

His research interests are in the area of development communication, mass communication and new communication technology. He is especially interested in the role and impact of media on society. Todate he has conducted more than 40 research projects with funding from IRPA, Science Fund, FRGS, and International funding agencies such as International Development Research Center (Canada), Center for Integrated Rural Development and JICA. He has done consultancy works for government agencies such as the Department of National Unity and Integration, FELCRA, and international agencies such as World Council of Mosques, Regional Centre for Islamic Dakwah for Asia and Pacific and World Bank- Risda Project.

He has been active at the international level attending and organizing conferences and seminars. Currently he serves as the Vice President of the World Communication Association (WCA). He is also a member of the International Communication Association (ICA), Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC), International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD), life member Society for International Development and Malaysian Association of Social Sciences. He had also served as the President, Association of Malaysian Educators in Communication (1996-2000) and President of Malaysian SEARCA Fellows Association (1995-2000).

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AL-FATIHAH.

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