

REDIFFUSION:
ITS ROLE AND FUNCTION IN
MALAYSIAN BROADCASTING

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SYNOPSIS

Rediffusion is an unique mass medium in Malaysia. It is the only private wired broadcasting station allowed to operate in Malaysia. Its areas of operation cover the market centres of Kuala Lumpur/Petaling Jaya, Ipoh and Penang/Province Wellesly.

This academic exercise aims to examine the role Rediffusion plays in Malaysian broadcasting.

For the purpose of this study, interviews with both Rediffusion and Radio Malaysia's officials were conducted; references to related books, information booklets; studies of various surveys & marketing reports prepared for Rediffusion by research companies were also made. The broadcast of Radio Malaysia's domestic networks & Rediffusion's Gold and Silver Network were listened to over a period of five weeks.

In this study three hypothesis relevant to this topic were drawn.

The first hypothesis states that " Rediffusion is permitted to operate by the Government but with some regulation and control ". The assumption here is that the Government employs various mechanisms to regulate and control Rediffusion's operation and programming. Mechanisms such as the licence to operate as well as other factors used in the control were presented and examined.

The second hypothesis states that " The degree of control exercised varies with different policy areas ". This represents an extension of the first hypothesis whereby,

the degree of Government's control over different policy areas were discussed. It is further shown how this varying control has affected Rediffusion's programming.

Consequently, the third hypothesis was drawn to examine the rationale behind the Government's varying degree of control over different policy areas. The Hypothesis is, " Regulation and non-regulation of Rediffusion policy is designed to make it play a complementary role to Radio Malaysia."

Findings from this study show that Rediffusion is controlled by the Government. The Government in varying its degree of control, has effectively use Rediffusion as a penetrating medium to reach a segment of the population otherwise not reach by Radio Malaysia. In this manner, Rediffusion acts as an extended arm of the Government by filling the entertainment vacuum and relaying government messages to a significant portion of the population in the market centres.