



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**THE USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA TO GRATIFY COGNITIVE NEEDS  
AMONG THE SEMELAI HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN TASEK BERA,  
PAHANG**

**MUHAMMAD PAUZI BIN ABD LATIF.**

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By

**MUHAMMAD PAUZI BIN ABD LATIF**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,  
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Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**November 2005**



Dedicated to

My parents to whom I owe my success

My late grandmother, Napsiah Abd Rahman

My late grandfather, Samad Abd Majid

My wife Latifah Nor Mahat, who is always beside me

My children, Abriezah, Amri, Absar and Amwal, my inspiration

My brothers and sister

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia  
in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman: Professor Md. Salleh Hj. Hassan, PhD**

**Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication**

Mass media has been used extensively in support of agricultural extension, diffusion of information technology, social reforms, education, and health awareness. Apart from media's advancement and capabilities, the social and environmental circumstances that lead the Semelai heads of households to turn to the mass media in order to gratify their cognitive needs are little understood. Therefore this study was conducted to determine how the Semelai heads of households use radio and TV to acquire and gather information that they need to gratify their cognitive needs which will enable them to present the information in a predictable manner, to define problems, and to seek solutions to them. The respondents for this study are the Semelai heads of households in Tasek Bera, Pahang. The sample size for this study is 266, based on the number of Semelai households in Tasek Bera, Pahang.

The findings revealed that radio programmes were believed to possess the characteristics of “keeping their listeners up-to-date on current issues and events and making them understand ways of good life”, while TV programmes were believed to possess the characteristics of “keeping their viewers up-to-date on current issues and events, and giving them brief accounts of many issues”. For the evaluations made on the media programmes, findings revealed that radio listeners felt that it was “good for radio programmes to have features such as current events, issues and making people understand ways of having a good life”, featured in their media programmes. The same features would also be best included in TV programmes. Findings on the gratifications sought and obtained from radio and TV programmes revealed that listeners and viewers tuned in and watched development, political and health programmes to gratify their cognitive needs.

Correlations and hierarchical regression were done to determine the relationships of beliefs and evaluations with gratifications obtained and whether gratifications obtained influenced the listeners’/viewers’ beliefs and evaluations of media programmes. The findings of the study revealed that the gratifications obtained were strongly related to the beliefs of media attributes but were not related to evaluations of those attributes. The belief component correlated more strongly with gratifications obtained than with the evaluation component because gratifications obtained should provide feedback to influence the belief that radio and TV actually possessed certain attributes but should not affect more stable evaluations of those attributes.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENGUNAAN MEDIA ELEKTRONIK BAGI PEMUASAN KEHENDAK  
KOGNITIF DI KALANGAN KETUA KELUARGA MASYARAKAT SEMELAI  
DI TASEK BERA, PAHANG**

Oleh

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Media massa telah digunakan secara meluasnya dalam usaha menyokong pengembangan pertanian, penyebaran teknologi maklumat, perubahan sosial, pendidikan, kesedaran mengenai kesihatan dsbnya. Selain daripada kemajuan dan kemampuannya, keadaan sosial dan persekitaran yang membawa kepada penggunaan media massa di kalangan ketua keluarga masyarakat Semelai untuk pemuasan kehendak kognitif mereka adalah kurang diketahui. Justeru itu, kajian ini dijalankan bagi memastikan bagaimana ketua keluarga masyarakat Semelai menggunakan radio dan TV untuk mendapat dan mengumpulkan maklumat yang mereka perlu bagi memuaskan kehendak kognitif mereka bagi membolehkan mereka menyampaikan maklumat, mengenalpasti masalah dan mencari jalan penyelesaiannya. Responden kajian adalah terdiri daripada ketua keluarga masyarakat Semelai di Tasek Bera, Pahang. Saiz sampel bagi kajian ini adalah 266, berdasarkan jumlah keluarga Semelai di Tasek Bera, Pahang.

Hasil kajian mendapati program radio adalah dipercayai mengandungi elemen yang membolehkan pendengar mendapat berita mutakhir tentang isu-isu semasa, peristiwa dan menjadikan mereka lebih faham tentang cara kehidupan yang sempurna, sementara program TV pula dipercayai mengandungi elemen yang membolehkan penonton mendapat berita mutakhir tentang isu-isu semasa, peristiwa terkini dan membolehkan mereka mengetahui dengan lebih lanjut tentang banyak perkara. Bagi penilaian yang dibuat terhadap program media, hasil kajian mendapati pendengar radio merasakan adalah baik bagi program radio untuk memiliki ciri-ciri seperti isu-isu/acara terkini dan membuat pendengar faham tentang cara kehidupan yang sempurna seperti ditonjolkan dalam program media mereka. Penonton TV juga merasakan ciri-ciri yang tersebut di atas adalah baik untuk dimasukkan dalam program TV. Hasil kajian ke atas kepuasan yang dicari dan diperolehi daripada program radio dan TV mendapati pendengar radio dan penonton TV mendengar dan menonton program pembangunan, politik dan kesihatan untuk memuaskan kehendak kognitif mereka.

Korelasi dan regresi hierarki dijalankan bagi mengenalpasti hubungan antara kepercayaan dan penilaian dengan kepuasan yang diperolehi dan bagi memastikan samada kepuasan yang diperolehi mempengaruhi kepercayaan/penilaian pendengar dan penonton terhadap program media. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa kepuasan yang diperolehi mempunyai pertalian yang kuat dengan kepercayaan terhadap media tetapi tidak mempunyai pertalian dengan penilaian pendengar dan penonton media. Komponen kepercayaan



mempunyai hubung kait yang kuat dengan kepuasan yang diperolehi jika dibandingkan dengan komponen penilaian kerana kepuasan yang diperolehi harus dapat mempengaruhi kepercayaan yang radio dan TV sebenarnya mempunyai apa yang dikehendaki.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

JHEOA	-	Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli
MCMC	-	Malaysia Communication and Multimedia Commission
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
RTM	-	Radio Televisyen Malaysia
STMB	-	Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad
AMP	-	Airtime Management and Programming

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The last decade has seen an enormous change in the electronic media scene in Malaysia. The Malaysian media have undergone substantial deregulation since the mid 1980s and 1990s. The focus and commitment toward growth and industrialization have resulted in policies that favor liberalization and deregulation in order to nurture a competitive environment. The Malaysian government aims to gain recognition as a developed country by the year 2020, and is committed to the national policy as stipulated in the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Gunaratne, 2000). The following are the government's core objectives in the future development of the industry.

- To increase the ICT awareness rate among Malaysian  
(The awareness rate targeted by 2020 is 50 for every 100 people in the country as a whole and 25 for every 100 people in rural areas)
- To provide quality service at affordable costs  
(In addition to availability, accessibility and meeting certain quality standards, services will also be provided at reasonable costs)
- To develop proper infrastructure  
(Adequate and effective communications and multimedia infrastructures are to be developed to support overall economic development)

- To make the country a global hub

(The country is to be developed as a global hub for communications and multimedia industries in this region)

The media systems that exist in Malaysia can be described in several dimensions. It is not prudent to say that Malaysia has a single media system. In fact, the country has several media systems. If we take technological variables into consideration, then the country has the electronic media and the print media systems. Radio, TV, video, films and the new electronic newspaper can be subsumed under electronic media. The print media systems include newspapers, magazines, books and any publicly printed materials. Ministry of Information (Information Malaysia Yearbook, 2000) estimated that in 2001, about 17.2 percent of every 100 people in Malaysia owned a TV receiver. This translates into a penetration of about 85 percent of the population, assuming that there are five persons to a family. AC Nielsen Malaysia's Media Index (2002) shows that 96 percent of adults (15 years and above) live in homes with TV sets.

Malaysia was one of the earliest British colonies to operate a radio broadcasting service. However, the British government did not show much interest in radio in its early stage of development (Asiah Sarji, 1994). Amateurs, electric companies, telecommunication personnel, and radio enthusiasts were among those who started the ball rolling. In 1921, A.L. Birch, the chief electrical engineer of the Johore state government, experimented with a Peto Scott type of wireless set obtained from overseas (Malay Mail, July 30, 1921). In 1923, he

formed the Johore Wireless Society, which triggered the formation of nearly one dozen radio societies throughout Malaya. News, music, and songs from the phonogram were among the first programmes broadcast.

The first radio station was established not in Singapore but in Kuala Lumpur. It was the up-country gathering point for rubber estate workers and tin miners and also the capital of the Federated Malay States. It was an unofficial body and an amateur radio club, which organized plans to create a local service. Although experimental broadcasts of the Singapore amateur group had begun earlier, the Kuala Lumpur operation was more successful. The Kuala Lumpur Amateur Wireless Society started experimental work in November 1929 and officially commenced its regular broadcast service at 6.30 pm in April, 1930, with "tea dance music from the Selangor Club". A talk on the activities of the radio club was also transmitted that night. For this and subsequent broadcasts, the group was allowed the use of the Post and Telegraphs Department transmitter located on Petaling Hill. The station had been constructed in 1928, and then rebuilt the following year to make it a permanent installation. This was the central station in the Malayan telegraphic network, but the amateurs managed to convert it to operate telephonically so that voices and music as well as Morse code could be transmitted.

In 1931, the Kuala Lumpur Amateur Radio Society (KLARS) acquired its own transmitter, a crystal-controlled "Marconi S3A", through government channels and began using it in May, 1931. The chief enhancement afforded by the new equipment was that it operated on shortwave. By functioning on much higher

frequencies, the transmitter could provide signals to cover the full length of the peninsula, parts of the Netherlands' East Indies and Borneo, even though its power was only 180 watts. The Posts and Telegraphs Department of the Federated Malay States (FMS) was responsible once again for providing the new equipment to the amateurs, and it volunteered to "render any assistance to the society". The selection of the exact wavelength was debated upon by the members, but in the end, 75 meters (about 4.00 MHz) was chosen as best for reception for the whole country. After two years of operation, the station shifted to 48.92 meters or 6.125 MHz. In 1933, more permanence was given to the amateurs when they were allocated space to construct a studio next to the transmitting room at Petaling Hill (McDaniel, 1994).

Asiah Sarji (1994) contends that the broadcasting facilities came in handy for the Japanese during their occupation of three years and eight months. Although the Japanese used broadcasting for propaganda, they used the Malay language extensively, followed by English, Chinese, Tamil and Japanese. However, the voices the people heard on the air were those of their own people, especially Malay.

After the Japanese surrender, the British military administration took charge of broadcasting. On April 1, 1946, the day the Malayan Union came into being, the government set up the Department of Broadcasting or Radio Malaya (Glattbach & Balakrishnan, 1978; Sarji, 1994). The sole function of broadcasting until the country's independence in 1957 was to help the government to control the social and political confusion that followed the war and the communist revolt of 1948.

The political, educational, and national language policies planned during this period grew simultaneously with broadcasting, a process which helped to bring about social change (Karthigesu, 1997).

Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) first introduced black and white TV on December 28, 1963 (Adhikarya, 1977) with the establishment of one TV network, Saluran 5 TV Malaysia, which operated from its temporary studio in Dewan Tuanku Abdul Rahman in Jalan Ampang (Ampang Road), Kuala Lumpur. Initially its area of coverage was confined only to the capital city. Later between 1964 and 1965, the nation witnessed the greater expansion of TV transmitters. Finally, on October 6, 1969, broadcast operations in the nation's capital moved to its present site, Angkasapuri. Six days later, radio and TV broadcasting operations were officially merged and kept under the purview of the Malaysian Information Department. On November 17, 1969, RTM started its second network. In 1969, Channel 2 was launched and in 1978, color TV was introduced. Despite the rapid development of broadcasting in West Malaysia, East Malaysia received their first broadcasting programmes in 1971 (Sabah) and 1975 (Sarawak).

The first private commercial broadcasting station was established in June 1983 by Sistem Televisyen Malaysia Berhad (STMB) and was named as TV3. This was the decade of privatisation. It all began with the shifting to a new administration, from the former Prime Minister Tun Hussein Onn's to the new administration of Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad. This new administration's firm belief in privatisation has sped up the establishment of many private broadcasting stations.