

Continuing the legacy of Children's Programming in Malaysia

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OBJECTIVE

- To discuss the initiatives taken by Radio Televisyen Malaysia (RTM) to sustain radio programmes for young adults
- To relate these initiatives with external environment

Outcome

After the end of this presentation, you are able to:

- Identify some of the initiatives taken by RTM to ensure quality programmes for the young adults
- Recognise the process involved in designing radio programmes for the young adults

Background

- The young adults today were brought up in the environment where there exist several sources to acquire information
- Media plays a very important role to inculcate correct mindsets among the youth
- In the 1970s – 1980s, the youth spent more time listening to the radio for knowledge and entertainment
- Between 1980 and 2000, the focus was on televisyen programmes, hence less time was spent listening to the radio
- After 2000, the shift towards the Internet.



Introduction

- To appreciate more the diversity of culture in Malaysia, the government has introduced a national radio station, **Nasionalfm** in Jan 2012
- Its focus: to disseminate information on government policies, education, health, environment, events etc.
- Young audience: 15 – 23 years
- A good blend of young and experienced DJs



Radio Programming

- To uphold the national interest, radio programmes for the youth are designed according to the policy set by the government
- The process of content design involves:
 - ✓ layers of decision-making
 - ✓ 'self-censorship'
 - ✓ gate-keeping



Designing radio programmes

- The self-censorship process is guided under a media regulatory framework in the Malaysian Communication Multimedia Commission (1998) section 211, 212 and 213 and described exclusively under its 'Content Code' (2004) of the media expected behaviour.
- This process of regulations has been articulated as essential **to sustain peace and harmony among the diverse ethnic** groups in Malaysia.



Guide to designing radio programmes

Principles from declarations and charters

Eg. UNICEF Principles for reporting on children and young people

- guidelines that UNICEF believes will help media to cover children in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner
- guidelines to support the best intentions of ethical reporters, serving the public interest without compromising the rights of children



Principles for reporting on children

Principles from declarations and charters

- The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance.
- In interviewing and reporting on children, special attention is to be paid to each child's right to privacy and confidentiality, to have their opinions heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm and retribution, including the potential of harm and retribution.



Continue...Principles for reporting on children

- The best interests of each child are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy for children's issues and the promotion of child rights.
- When trying to determine the best interests of a child, the child's right to have their views taken into account are to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.
- Those closest to the child's situation and best able to assess it are to be consulted about the political, social and cultural ramifications of any reportage.
- Do not publish a story or an image which might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used.



Content Code

The Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is entrusted with the responsibility to "grow and nurture local information recourses and cultural representation that facilitate the national identity and global diversity.

Content Code for Children

- designed specifically for children of and below 14 years reaches impressionable minds and influences social attitudes and aptitudes.
- Code Subjects must closely supervise and monitor the selection, control of material, characterisations and plot.
- Nothing in the foregoing shall mean that the vigour and vitality common to children's imaginations and love of adventure need be removed.



Content Code for children (1)

Specific attention must be paid to the following aspects:

Violence

- In children's content portrayed by real-life characters, violence should only be portrayed when it is essential to the development of character and plot.
- Animated Content for children, while accepted as a stylised form of storytelling, which can contain non-realistic violence, shall not depict violence as its central theme, and shall not invite dangerous imitation. 18
- Content for children must not contain scenes of violence, which minimise or gloss over the effects of violent acts. Any depiction of such violence must portray in human terms, the consequences of such violence to its victims and its perpetrators.



Content Code for children (2)

Safety, Security and Imitable Acts

- Content for children must deal carefully with themes which can threaten their sense of security, when portraying, for example; domestic conflict, the death of parents or close relatives, or the death or injury of their pets, street crime or the use of drugs.
- Content for children must deal carefully with themes which could invite children to imitate acts which they see on screen, such as the use of plastic bags as toys, use of matches, the use of dangerous household products as playthings, or dangerous physical acts such as climbing apartment balconies or rooftops.



Content Code for children (3)

Family Values

- The principles of intellectual and emotional equality of both sexes and the dignity of all individuals are to be respected. Despite societal discrimination, content should reflect an awareness of the need to avoid and overcome biased portrayals on the basis of gender. Women and men should be portrayed as equals both economically and emotionally, and in both public and private spheres.
- Content should portray all persons as supporting participants in the family unit, home management and household tasks. They should be portrayed as equal beneficiaries of family or single-person life, in both work and leisure activities and, as far as possible, under all types of thematic circumstances.



Radio content

Questions to ask:

How can the radio programmes contribute in fulfilling the national interest?

How can these radio programmes capture the interest of the youth?

- Private radio stations are driven by profit margins and ratings
- Public radio stations such as **Nasionalfm** prioritises societal needs:
 - Sustain harmony and peace
 - Culture continuity



Nasionalfm

Frequency: 95.3 (Selangor, Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur)

Tagline: **Sentiasa di hati** (Always in your heart)

E-Prezzo - A specific segment for youth

Time: 10 am – 12 midnight

Format: Entertainment

Content: Selection of songs with hourly news bulletin

Frequency: 95.3 (Selangor, Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur)

Social media:

Facebook

Twitter

Blogs – DJs as radio personality, creating followers



Conclusion

- Programmes for the youth have evolved in terms of content
- In designing radio programmes, producers and DJ consider the following:
 - Government policy
 - the medium (mainstream radio and the social media)



Thank you

