

Contemporary Issues in

ISLAMIC COMMUNICATION

Editor

Mohd Yusof Hussain



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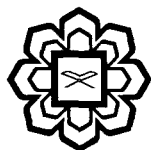
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The Need for a Standardised Communication Policy in Muslim Countries

MOHD YUSOF HUSSAIN

Since the 1980's, a number of conferences on the need to formulate national communication policies were held in developing countries. An example is the 1983 conference on National Communication Policy held in Kuala Lumpur, organised by the Ministry of Information Malaysia. Despite these conferences, very few developing countries have succeeded in developing an effective national communication policy. Malaysia is no exception

This chapter discusses the need to formulate a standardised communication policy for Muslim nations. Rationales for a standardised communication policy as well as clarifications to questions related to communication policies are discussed in the subsequent sections.

The Need for a Communication Policy

The call for a communication policy arose because of the general belief in the power of the media to exert its influence on the audience. There is still widespread belief in Muslim societies that the undesired or negative impact of Western culture on the Muslim Youth is attributed to the hedonistic content of the media although research on the voting behaviour in the West particularly at Columbia University in the 1940s (Berelson, 1949, Berelson et al., 1954; Lazansfeld et al., 1948) has shown that the media influence is "limited."

The dominant influence mechanism, many Muslims thought, is simple learning through watching repetitive media messages. It is thought that the power of the Western media on Muslim society could be reduced, control, or