

SYNOPSIS

The mining industry is second in importance in the economic progress of Malaya, the first being the plantation industry. It is to the former that the major part of this exercise will be devoted. The particular aspect dealt with is the ownership and control of tin-dredging companies. There were 41 companies registered in the Malayan stock Exchange, but research was limited to 21 locally incorporated companies. The research methodology was based on primary data, gathered first-hand from the share registers kept at the local Registry of Companies.

The purpose of the study is to determine whether there are any significant trends in shareownership and control; and if changes are evident, to analyse these trends. Three broad trends, categorised by time periods, are discernible. Before 1937, the Chinese were the predominant owners. Between 1936-1950, foreign shareownership improved tremendously until they were the controlling owners. But between 1950-1964, foreign participation declined while local participation has increased.

Financially, these companies derive their source of capital from equity financing, through the issue of ordinary shares at a nominal value of \$1 per share. The shareholdings are classified into individual (personal), joint and corporate holdings. The corporate shareholders own the highest average value per shareholding. Amongst the local shareowners, the most numerous are the Chinese, while the Malays have not developed as shareholders as yet. More and more people from the lower occupational groups are beginning to own shares. On the whole, local participation is on the increase, with a corresponding decrease in foreign participation.