



The exploration of Malaysian public awareness on MCMC's CYL campaign

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ABSTRACT

What is MCMC? How important is the MCMC label? Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is a Malaysian government regulatory body that regulates the communications and multimedia industry in accordance with the MCMC Act (1998). One of its best initiatives is the MCMC label. The MCMC label in every communication device in Malaysia is important as it verifies that the device is legal, safe to use and meets the Communications and Multimedia (Technical Standards) Regulation 2000. Yet, Malaysian users are still lacking of the awareness on the importance of the MCMC label in the communication devices that they purchase. In this context, this study aims to explore the public awareness and knowledge of the importance of the MCMC label for communications equipment, through the Check Your Label (CYL) campaign, organised by MCMC. The research adopted a qualitative method via focus group interviews to achieve this aim. A total of 16 participants were selected from public consumers who had purchased a communication device in Malaysia and shopkeepers who sell communication devices. The study demonstrates that there is a need to improve the visibility of the MCMC label and ensure that all products are MCMC-certified and safe to use. Additionally, marketing strategies should inject more creativity through videos, social media, and humour to raise more widespread awareness.

Keywords: **MCMC, public awareness, CYL, communication devices, MCMC label**

INTRODUCTION

Background of study

The Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is a regulatory body which is responsible for governing the communications and multimedia industry as accorded to it under the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission Act 1998. The MCMC governs the interests and needs of consumers and industry players, by regulating the communications and multimedia industry which include telecommunications, broadcast, Internet services, postal and courier services, and digital certification.

MCMC is also tasked with promoting digital knowledge and skills in the present age of information technology. Besides, citizens' knowledge, skills and behaviour are vital to harness the potential of digital media and communications effectively. The ability to utilise digital media effectively while accessing relevant information, to analyse the authenticity and reliability of the information they come across, and to ethically use digital media are key competencies and skills for digital citizens. These skills are extremely beneficial in terms of navigating the digital landscape, critically engaging with digital media, creating meaningful content, and positively contributing to the digital society. Hence, digital media literacy is seen as essential in education, economy and society, given that we have become even more reliant on digital technologies since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MCMC Digital Society Research Grant (DSRG) supports evidence-based research which aims to understand factors that affect the adoption of digital technologies and services as we navigate the country's transition towards a sustainable and digitally connected and informed society (Digital Society). One of the DSRG research areas is awareness of the MCMC label for communication devices. All types of communication devices including computer, facsimile, mobile phone, set-top box, smart TV, tablet, walkie-talkie, wireless device and wireless routers, are required to be certified according to regulations. Any certified communications device should bear a valid certification mark in the form of the MCMC label to indicate the device complies with the standards and requirements enforced by MCMC. Consumers are encouraged to verify the certification status using the 'Check Your Label' mobile application that can be downloaded from Google Play Store or Apple App Store. Alternatively, the certification status can be verified using IMEI or serial number via the SIRIM website (ecomm.sirim.my).

The MCMC label consists of the MCMC logo and manufacturer or supplier's unique identification number. There are two methods of labelling permitted by MCMC which is in the form of surface labelling (sticker, engraved, embossed or printed on the device) or in the form of e-labelling for devices with display (embedded in the device's firmware permanently). The MCMC label comprises two elements, logo and logotype. The logo consists of a black triangle line which is derived from the MCMC corporate logo. The certification mark comprises the logo and the word "Malaysia Communications & Multimedia Commission". Effective June 2015, a new regulation was implemented by the MCMC and SIRIM Qas International that introduced the Self Labelling Program (SLP) for certified communications and multimedia products, replacing the conventional labelling program which requires the certified products to be affixed with physical label (in the form of stickers). With the implementation of the SLP, certificate holders or principal/manufacturers are now required to label their products independently in accordance with the Guidelines on Certification Mark for Self-Labelling and SIRIM QAS International procedures.

CYL campaign

MCMC launched the “Check Your Label” (CYL) campaign in 2015 as an awareness campaign to educate on the importance of purchasing communication devices with a valid MCMC label. Essentially, customers are urged to check communication devices for the MCMC label and to confirm the certification status of the device before making a purchase. One aspect of this campaign is to guide consumers in verifying the validity of the MCMC label on communication devices. This has proven to be effective in promoting customer self-regulation, encouraging them to take important measures to promote the safe and effective use of communication devices, as well as to promote the industry’s growth and well-being in Malaysia. Moreover, the CYL campaign effectively improved the public’s knowledge regarding the significance of the MCMC label (MCMC, 2022).

The campaign has been effective in educating consumers on how to check the MCMC label using the Check Your Label mobile application or website. The campaign helped the public understand that purchasing communication devices without the MCMC label can be detrimental to them. The use of a communication device without the MCMC label may not be safe as it could come with a substandard charger not in compliance with safety requirements, hence carrying the risk of electric shock or worst-case scenario, fire. Additionally, any communication device without this label may be unsafe to use and can expose it to frequency interference that may potentially disrupt the normal functioning of its basic system. Therefore, ensuring that communication devices carry the relevant label can help mitigate such incidents. This is a touchpoint where the promotion of CYL campaign to consumers is vital in improving their awareness.

The campaign raises awareness about the safety of communication devices, include highlighting potential risks and use of devices in a safe and responsible manner. This is where public awareness is crucial in influencing their perception, thus helping in their decision-making processes. Hence, CYL promotional activities and platforms are designed to reach direct users through various marketing strategies such as newspaper, magazine, public service announcement, public transport advertisement, promotional material, collaboration programs and billboard advertisement (MCMC, n.d.). Past government-led campaigns that have used mass media in sharing messages to large numbers of peoples has greatly lead into behaviour change among its target groups. In this regard, it is important to choose the right media platforms that can help navigate the way audiences and the general public communicate about a topic and its related issues, and allow the organisation to increase the visibility of their campaigns to mass audiences.

Consumers mostly focus on the information about a product before purchasing it, so consumer awareness and knowledge about the importance of CYL campaign is very important as it effectively influences purchase decisions. Informed consumers are more likely to make deliberate decisions that take into account factors such as product safety, regulatory compliance, and potential risks associated with a product. When consumers understand the importance of using safe and compliant communication devices, including those that meet the relevant regulatory requirements and carry the appropriate certifications, they can make more informed purchasing decisions. They may also be more vigilant in detecting and avoiding potentially dangerous devices that may cause interference or pose risks to themselves or others. Thus, the effective promotion of the CYL campaign as a means of disseminating safety-related information to the general public can help to raise consumer awareness, leading to more responsible and informed purchasing decisions.

Further, the CYL campaign aims to improve public knowledge about the importance of the MCMC label. Additionally, promoting the use of the ‘Check

Your Label' mobile application as part of the CYL campaign can also raise awareness among consumers about the importance of checking for certifications and labels. This encourages consumers to be more vigilant about verifying the authenticity of certifications and label on communication devices and promote a culture of responsible purchasing and usage.

In addition, digital platforms can widely promote the CYL campaign, as more and more companies and users are utilising digital channels for communication, commerce and information exchange. Leveraging digital platforms such as mobile applications, websites, social media, and other online channels can help disseminate information about CYL campaign including the significance of the MCMC label and the 'Check Your Label' mobile application.

Rationale/Significance of research

The research's rationale is to explore the extent of awareness of MCMC-labelled communications equipment as well as the effectiveness of the CYL campaign. The findings will aid in further improving and enhancing current and future CYL campaigns. For the present study, the following research objective was established:

To explore public awareness and knowledge of the importance of MCMC label for communication devices through the Check Your Label (CYL) campaign, organised by MCMC.

Problem statement

MCMC is responsible for certifying communication devices and equipment in accordance with the Communications and Multimedia (Technical Standards) Regulations 2000. All communication devices are required to be certified under these regulations. The certification process consists of two types: Compliance approval and Special approval. The MCMC label is a certification mark that indicates the communication equipment has been certified and meets the necessary standards and legal requirements. The certification process involves ensuring that the equipment is compliant with the Communications and Multimedia (Technical Standards) Regulations 2000. The certification mark is important as it indicates that the product has met the certifier's standards of safety, quality, or compliance with specific regulations. The MCMC label can be a physical label, which can be engraved, embossed, or in the form of a sticker on the equipment. Alternatively, it can also be a digital label for devices that have a display, allowing users to easily verify the certification status of the equipment.

Using communication equipment without the MCMC label can pose several risks, as these devices may not meet the necessary safety and technical requirements set forth by MCMC. Without the MCMC label, consumers may be subjected to a negative experience with defective devices as use them at their own risk. Devices without the MCMC label may not be safe since they do not comply with safety requirements. Incidents might occur when using non-certified devices, such as electric shocks or fires. Non-certified communication equipment may not be compatible with local networks, and consumers may experience frequency interference, compromising the device's quality and performance. Devices without proper verification by MCMC could be fake or counterfeit. Such misleading and deceptive conduct by unethical distributors and retailers can be curtailed by educating the public on consumer rights, such as lodging complaints to report abuse or misuse of the certification mark as well as how to verify genuine certification.

The rapid advancements of technology has led to the proliferation of communication devices in our daily lives. However, not all devices on the market meet the required safety

and performance standards. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that all communication devices are certified as the unlawful use, possession, or supply of uncertified communication devices is a serious offense. Offenders found guilty of violating this regulation face severe penalties, including a fine not exceeding RM300,000, imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years, or both.

The Check Your Label (CYL) campaign was launched in 2015. CYL is a consumer awareness campaign initiated by the MCMC to educate consumers on the importance of certified communication devices that adhere to safety and performance standards, ensuring the protection of users and communication networks. In addition to promoting awareness, the CYL campaign provides resources to help consumers verify the certification status and validity of the MCMC label on communication devices. This can be done through the Check Your Label mobile application or the campaign's official website. The CYL campaign plays an important role in educating consumers on the MCMC label to ensure consumer safety and communication device compliance with legal requirements. Educating consumers about the MCMC label helps raise awareness of the importance of purchasing certified communication devices and avoiding counterfeit or uncertified products. Furthermore, a well-informed consumer base can help reduce the sale of uncertified devices and the potential legal consequences faced by distributors and retailers.

Research Questions

To achieve the research objective stated earlier, the following research questions were formulated:

RQ1: What are the key challenges faced by the CYL campaign, and what recommendations can be provided to improve its effectiveness among consumers?

RQ2: How much are consumers aware of and how well do they understand the importance of the MCMC label for communication equipment?

RQ3: How effective has the CYL campaign been in connecting with and influencing consumers?

Analytical/Theoretical Framework

This study's framework is grounded on three underpinning theories: metacognition theory, theory of effectiveness and self-regulation theory. The theory of effectiveness was introduced by Smith and Schwartz (1985). According to this theory, a natural measure of the effectiveness of an organisation is how well it achieves its goals, indicated by measuring its performance. This study used this theory to argue that the effectiveness of the MCMC campaign depends on public awareness and knowledge of the importance of its certification and label. Consumers who are aware of the CYL campaign, and its messages promoting the importance of checking for MCMC label, are more likely to engage in central route processing and exhibit positive attitudes and behaviours towards checking for MCMC labels.

The effectiveness of the CYL campaign can be measured in terms of changes in consumer attitudes and behaviours towards checking the MCMC label, which is positively influenced by consumer awareness and knowledge about the MCMC label. Using the theory of effectiveness, this study examined the role of consumer awareness and knowledge on the effectiveness of the CYL campaign. A CYL campaign that focuses on consumer awareness and knowledge may be more effective without encountering problems. To explain further,

consumers who have a higher motivation and the ability to process information, are more likely to pay more attention and carefully process the information in CYL campaign. Based on the effectiveness of the CYL campaign, thus the assumption would be consumers will practise self-regulation in checking the MCMC label of products before purchase. The effectiveness of the campaign serves as a correlational relationship with the self-regulation variable. But the foundation is the CYL campaign, whether it manages to disseminate the intended message and awareness (call for action) to consumers.

Limitations

The limitations of this research are mainly explored in the context of public consumers' knowledge and awareness of the MCMC label for communication equipment, and its marketing communication activity which is the CYL campaign.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of the MCMC label and Check Your Label (CYL) campaign in Malaysia

In recognition of the importance of consumer protection, the Malaysian government has and continues to implement various initiatives, such as the certification of communication devices. All communication devices supplied and sold in Malaysia must be certified and carry the MCMC label to prove that they comply with the national safety standards and legal requirements. The MCMC label is awarded to products that meet all the safety and quality requirements set by this Malaysian agency. MCMC has also launched its CYL campaign as a consumer education program aimed at guiding consumers to check the validity of certified communication devices. The campaign was designed to educate consumers on the importance of reading the label on products and services. The campaign also encourages consumers to ask questions and to seek further information when purchasing communication devices. In short, the CYL campaign is designed to educate the public about their consumer rights and empower them to make informed purchases.

There are various ways to check the veracity of the MCMC label. The most efficient and fastest way is to use MCMC's Check Your Label app that can be downloaded through Google App Store, Apple App Store and Recee.my. There are only 4 steps involved in checking the MCMC label before making any purchases:

1. Look for the MCMC label on the device.
2. Find the IMEI number or device's serial number.
3. Key the number into the Check Your Label mobile apps or go to eComM website to retrieve the device's approval information.
4. Confirm the device's approval information that is displayed.

The CYL campaign has successfully supported consumer protection in Malaysia by raising awareness of the importance of product certification and labelling as well as increasing consumer confidence in their purchase.

Consumer self-regulation

Self-regulation refers to an individual's reflection on what to think, to feel, say, and, eventually, take action. This is particularly salient in making a "good choice". In the context of consumerism, self-regulation (i.e., label checking) is a process in which consumers take responsibility for their safety by monitoring and understanding the information on

the label of the products they intend to purchase. It is a form of consumer protection, as it allows consumers to make informed decisions about the products they buy and to ensure they are getting what they are paying for (Zulkupri et al., 2022). Consumers should also compare prices and choose the best product for their needs (Abkari et al., 2018).

By checking labels, consumers can be assured of buying the most cost-effective product and getting the best value for their money. Their choices are guided by standards, motivation, monitoring, and willpower necessary to ensure they make the safest and most informed decision possible. In conclusion, label-checking is an important part of consumer self-regulation. It allows consumers to make informed decisions about the products they buy and to ensure they get what they are paying for. It also helps consumers save money and protect themselves from safety risks.

Self-Labeling Program (SLP)

The Self-Labeling Program (SLP), which came into effect June 2015, emphasises on the importance of purchasing communication and equipment products with a valid MCMC label. The program encourages a certificate holder or principal to self-label their certified products according to MCMC's Guidelines on Certification Mark for Self-Labeling and SIRIM QAS International's procedures. This process helps to easily identify products that comply with standards, more inter-operability networks, reduced interference, as well as consumer safety. The MCMC label is a strict yet compulsory certification to prove that communication and equipment products comply with the standards and requirements set out in the 2000 Communications and Multimedia (Technical Standards) Regulations.

Instead of affixing stickers, the new label should be displayed on the product either through "e-Labeling" in electronic form or "Surface-Labeling", whereby the certification mark is engraved, embossed, or printed on the product, depending on the product design (Bernama, 2015). In this way, the labelling can be completed quickly and accurately without the need for a physical label from SIRIM QAS International. The MCMC label is shown in Figure 1, which was obtained from the MCMC website.

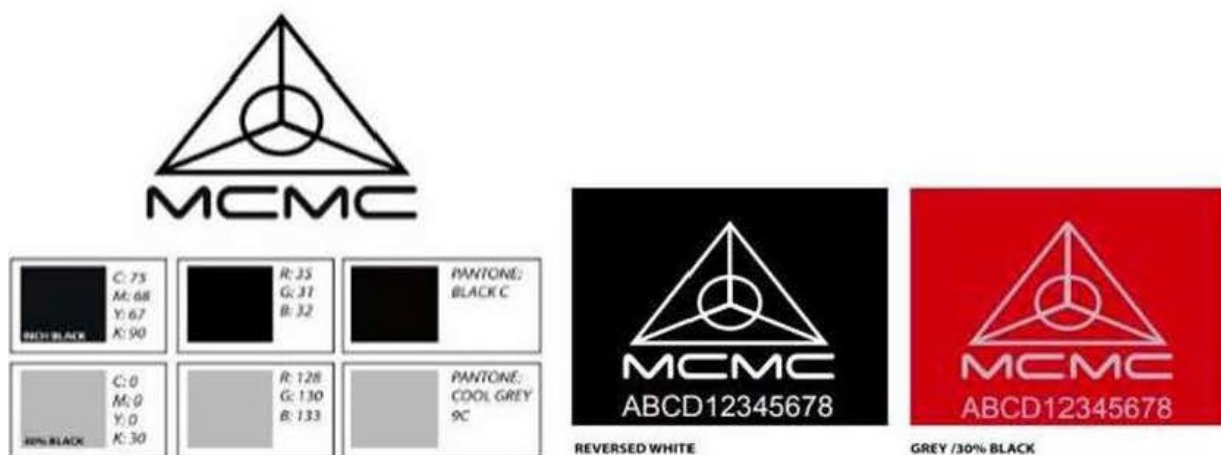


Figure 1. MCMC label

Consumer awareness and knowledge about MCMC label

Consumer awareness and knowledge of the MCMC label is essential to ensure the safety and quality of communication products that are bought by consumers. Thus, consumers should be made aware of the different categories of labels, as well as the requirements for

each category of the label. Being aware of the importance of MCMC label, empowers consumers to make informed choices and purchase products that comply with standards and regulations, thereby protecting their rights as consumers. Consumer awareness and knowledge of labels, such as those issued by the MCMC, are vital in understanding the safety, security and quality of products and applications (Murai et al., 2017).

In one of the surveys carried out by Murai et al. (2017), it was found that the vast majority of participants were aware of the MCMC label. However, only 14.1% selected the correct option when asked about the purpose of the label. This suggests that while awareness of the MCMC label is high, knowledge about the purpose of the label and its implications is relatively low. The results of this survey suggest that more efforts should be made to educate consumers about the purpose of the MCMC label. Hence, the CYL campaign must be made more prominent in public spaces for instance (train stations, inside LRTs, MRTs, or even busses) to bring mass awareness to the public.

Metacognitive theory

Systematic frameworks used to explain and guide cognition, metacognitive knowledge, and regulatory skills are described as “metacognitive theories” (Moshman, 2018). There is a fundamental difference between “knowledge about cognition” (also known as “metacognitive knowledge”) and “regulation of cognition” (also known as “metacognitive control mechanisms”). According to Moshman (2018), the term “cognitive knowledge” refers to what people know about their own or other people’s cognitive processes. The three types of knowledge are conditional knowledge, procedural knowledge, and declarative knowledge (knowing why and when). The term “regulation of cognition” refers to metacognitive practices that aid in cognitive control.

Planning (choosing methods and allocating resources), monitoring (on-line awareness of understanding and task performance), and evaluation (appraising the outcomes and regulatory processes of one’s learning) are three fundamental and widely acknowledged regulatory skills. According to Moshman (2018), the metacognitive theories are based upon the integration of one’s knowledge regarding the regulation of cognition. The theory supports the association between consumer awareness and knowledge of the MCMC label and consumer self-regulation. The metacognitive theory also escalates the phenomenon related to self-regulation or planning. John Flavell presented the theory as thinking regarding thinking or in other words, metacognitive explains one’s information that shapes one’s cognitive procedures on something associated with them. The monitoring of the cognitive process is also referred to as the understanding of the metacognitive theory. In this perspective, the theory supports that consumer awareness as an incremental behaviour perpetuates self-regulated behaviour.

The concept is related purely to self-cognition, so according to the theory, the rationale or sequential procedure to ponder upon thinking before finalising or concluding a certain behaviour is an approach conveyed by metacognitive theory. The theory states that there are four levels of metacognitive apprentices: aware, strategic, tactic and reflective. The metacognitive theory is also related to the “theory of mind,” where self-regulated behaviour is properly and prolonged reflected by a person who governs his/her attitude and behaviour towards some understanding (Teng et al., 2022).

Theory of effectiveness

The theory of effectiveness was introduced by Smith and Schwartz (1985) where effectiveness is in the context of “organisation.” In the research context, the theory of

effectiveness refers to the capability of a person or an entity (firm) to effectively utilise current/present resources so that the aims and objectives of the entity (firm) can be accomplished (Xu et al., 2022). This theory supports the association between consumer knowledge and the MCMC label with the effectiveness of the CYL campaign. When consumers have high motivation and the ability to process information, they are more likely to engage in central route processing. Consumer knowledge about the importance of the MCMC label can serve as a central cue that influences consumers to pay more attention and carefully process information given in the CYL campaign.

On the other hand, the MCM label, recognised as a regulatory requirement for product safety and quality, serves as a credible source of information for consumers. When consumers are aware of the importance of MCMC label, they are more likely to support the CYL campaign, which promotes checking MCMC labels to ensure they are credible and trustworthy. Thus, this perception enhances the effectiveness of the CYL campaign. The theory backs the relationship between the two constructs potentially because the theory of effectiveness highlights the effective combination of a person's capability to believe and make a decision regarding something, and the results are reliant based on the ability to achieve.

According to Argyris and Schön (1974), three criteria are necessary for a consulting relationship to be effective. The consultant must first gather accurate information regarding the issue in question. Problem identification, problem solving, and decision-making are impeded when essential information is suppressed or buried (intentionally or unintentionally). Second, it is critical to foster an environment that supports free and informed decisions, rather than forced ones. Third, unless the person seeking aid freely decides to take action and keep track of their success or failure, no progress can be made. The effectiveness theory also elaborates that the best usage of capabilities results in the best outcomes, whether in terms of an organisation or a person's skills or capabilities etc. Many researchers have proposed that measuring effectiveness evaluates the variation in behaviours and the environment that is changed with assessing the end state achievement of any object or effect creation (Dalgetty et al., 2019).

Self-regulation theory

According to the self-regulation theory, the components and procedures are outlined based on what to think, say, feel and perform. The self-regulation theory elaborates it as a pathway or clarity in the direction of a huge sense of agency or a perspective of agentic (Bandura, 1991). This theory potentially backs the relationship between the effectiveness of the CYL campaign and consumer self-regulation. The more effective the CYL campaign, the bigger the impact on consumer self-regulation. Therefore, the theory elaborates on aspects of psychology and perception as the frequency and intensity of impulses can be decreased through self-regulation of stress or other negative environmental effects (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007).

Roy Baumeister explained four important components of the self-regulation theory: motivation to fulfil/meet standards, the standards of desirable behaviours, the supervising situations, and the thoughts that precede violating standards and willpower. According to this theory, there are three dimensions in the framework of self-regulation, which includes emotional, cognitive, social, prosocial and biological. The person's thoughts are guided according to the concept of this theory, which also backs the relationship because the effectiveness of the CYL campaign is associated with consumer's self-regulation.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative methods as a part of the requirements of the research grant funder, MCMC. For this paper however, it focuses only on the qualitative aspect to analyse the study constructs and draw findings with regard to the different challenges faced by the CYL campaign along with suggestions to increase its effectiveness.

For data collection, the sample for the focus group interviews included 16 participants, two representatives from MCMC, another two from SIRIM QAS International and the rest (12) public consumers and shopkeepers. The interviews were conducted to collect detailed data on the perceptions and awareness of the MCMC label as well as to provide appropriate recommendations for the CYL campaign.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The focus group interviews were recorded and later transcribed. From these discussions, various themes emerged and were subsequently combined to form an overarching theme of the CYL campaign, as displayed in Figure 2.

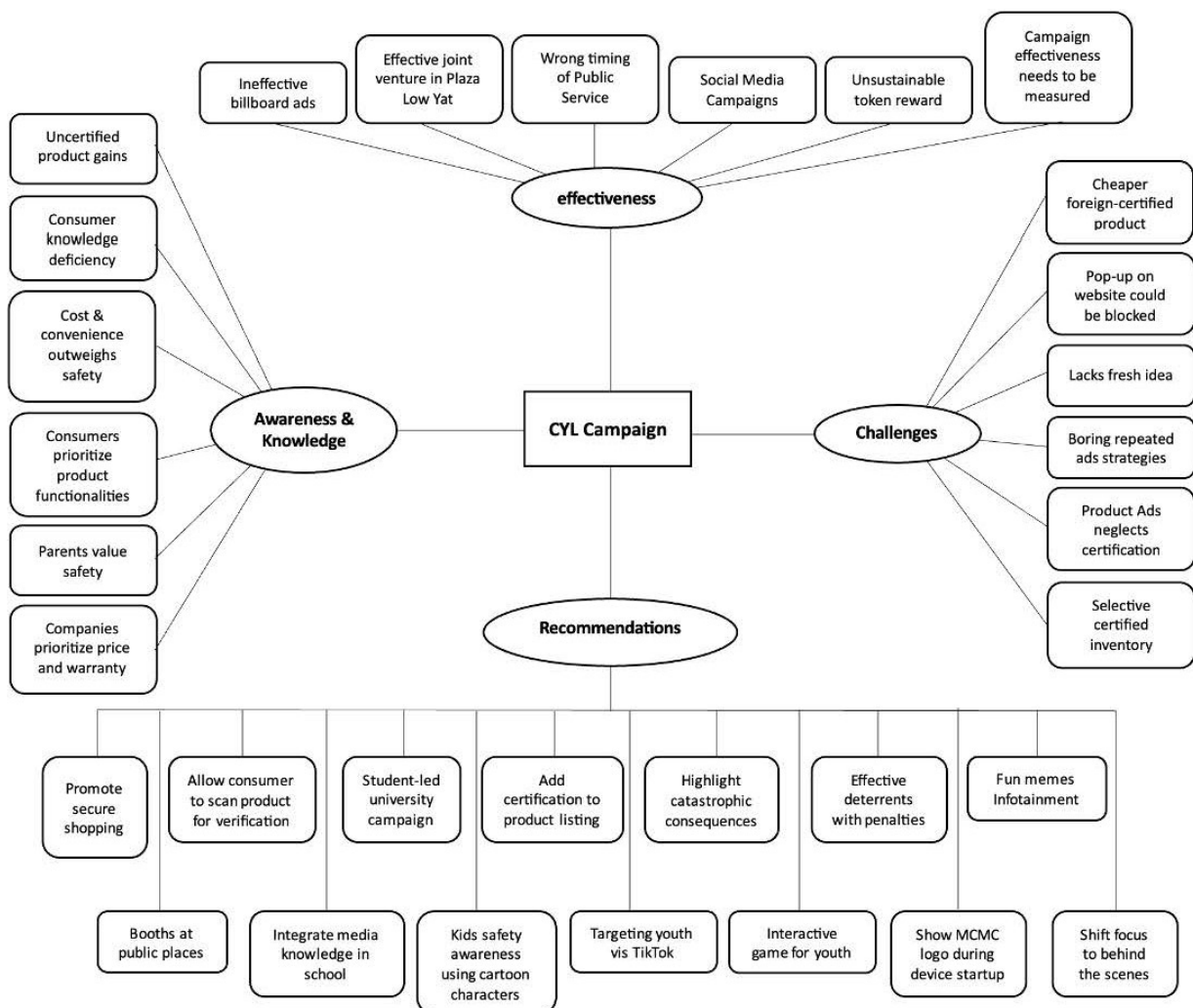


Figure 2. Thematic network map

The following sections present the summary of the focus group interviews based on the research questions.

RQ1: What are the key challenges faced by the CYL campaign, and what recommendations can be provided to improve its effectiveness among consumers?

Key challenges

One of the major challenges faced by MCMC is the proliferation of online purchases due to lower pricing and foreign certification. Pop-ups are a powerful advertising approach, but they may be difficult to install and can become irritating to users. The CYL campaign faced constraints in terms of resources and new ideas for improvement, as previous strategies lost their appeal and intensity with the target demographics. The absence of innovative and effective ideas led to a lacklustre campaign performance and impact. End-users and viewers may have become bored with repetition. Thus, collaboration with influencers and authorities may not be enough to re-energise the campaign. Further, consumers frequently ignored MCMC certification for communications device in advertising, preferring to focus on other aspects such as price, brand, and processor. Lastly, MCMC's certification is not found on all products as not all have undergone the certification process.

RQ2: How much are consumers aware of and how well do they understand the importance of the MCMC label for communication equipment?

Despite being aware about MCMC certification, some sellers selectively certify their products as they may be driven to generate extra income from their non-certified products due to inflation. Some consumers are only familiar with the SIRIM label, while others are familiar with the MCMC certification but not the CYL campaign. There is also some confusion about the roles of MCMC and SIRIM.

Consumers are more likely to buy products online if they can find a good deal. However, if the price difference is not significant, they will choose the convenience of buying from a physical store. This is because consumers value convenience and cost over product safety. Consumers care more about how a product works rather than whether it is certified. They want to make sure that the product is user-friendly and meets their needs and expectations, and certification is not always a guarantee of that.

Parents are always looking out for the best interests of their children, and that includes making sure that they are using safe and reliable products. Even if non-certified communication products may be cheaper, parents are willing to pay more for products that have been certified by a trusted organisation. When purchasing communication equipment, companies prioritise both price and warranty over MCMC certification. This is because they want to get the best possible value for their money and ensure that the equipment they purchase has warranty in case of malfunctions or defects.

RQ3: How effective has the CYL campaign been in connecting with and influencing consumers?

The billboard ads for the CYL campaign were ineffective as there is a limited time for drivers to absorb the advertisement message when they drove past quickly. However, a joint venture between MCMC and Plaza Low Yat resulted in an impressive response. The

campaign captured the attention of previously unaware tenants, who gradually showed interest and searched for more information about the MCMC label. Then, MCMC produced Public Service Announcements (PSAs) with radio and television stations, starring Malaysian musician Dato' Siti Nurhaliza, although they were not shown during prime time due to free messaging. This proved futile as most individuals were sleeping at the time the PSAs were aired. To overcome these setbacks, MCMC moved its focus to social media platforms, engaging with influencers and celebrities like Izzue Islam and Cik Manggis. Interactive campaigns with prize incentives resulted in a successful widespread engagement with consumers.

Recommendations

The following are some recommendations from the study's participants on improving the effectiveness of the CYL campaign and raising awareness about the MCMC certification.

Effectiveness of the CYL campaign

- Promote smart purchase system which can emphasise the need for MCMC certification to ensure its interoperability and safety.
- Allow consumers to scan product for verification: Use QR code scanning instead of manually keying in the code.
- Add certification to product listing: Ensure all products are certified and safe with clear descriptions and customer support.
- Student-led university campaign: Engage university students to lead campaign targeting 18–24 year olds.
- Promotional booths at public places: Set up educational booths in malls, schools, or universities with interactive elements.
- Highlight consequences: Emphasise consequences of safety and security defects such as disruption of emergency communication services and air traffic control and encourage checking for certification status before purchase.
- Target youths via TikTok videos: Use different advertising methods for different audiences (traditional for older consumers, digital for younger ones).
- Interactive game for youths: Use interactive games and offer age-specific incentives for using the CYL app, such as coins or points for popular games like Roblox or Minecraft for youths.
- Shift focus to behind-the-scene: Educate consumers about the certification process and the significance of purchasing certified products.

Raising awareness of MCMC certification

- Effective deterrents with penalties: Impose fines for non-compliance with regulations for older adults.
- Show MCMC label during device start-up: Display a protection message during transactions or device activation, and preload the MCMC label on smartphones before sale
- Integrate media knowledge in school: Integrate MCMC awareness into the syllabus of “Reka Bentuk dan Teknologi (RBT)” to educate students.
- Use of cartoon characters: Make learning enjoyable for young children with familiar characters and interactive methods.
- Fun memes and infotainment: Use creative marketing strategies (videos, social media, humour) to captivate consumers.

Researcher's comments

Here are some of the researchers' comments on the recommendations from the participants to improve the effectiveness of the CYL campaign and raise awareness about the importance of MCMC certification.

Effectiveness of CYL campaign

Communication device retailers and sellers must emphasise MCMC certification for all communication products to guarantee the safety of their use in terms of interoperability. Unfortunately, not all consumers are equally concerned about product safety. The CYL campaign can be improved by creating tailored messages for specific groups of consumers, such as parents, seniors, or people who have been affected by unsafe products. The campaign should also highlight how MCMC certification can specifically address their concerns and ensure the safety of their loved ones. QR codes are mobile-friendly, a quick and easy way for consumers to verify the authenticity of a product. They are also more secure than manually keying in a code, as there is less risk of a human error. An MCMC certification status with a check mark next to the communication device should be added on product listings — this helps consumers make informed decisions about which products to buy. The benefits of doing this include increasing customer trust, which can lead to better sales.

The suggestion to engage university students to lead a campaign targeting youths in the 18-24 age group is a good idea. MCMC should also partner with influencers who have a strong following within this target demographic. These influencers can help spread awareness about the campaign through their social media platforms, blogs, or YouTube channels, effectively reaching a wider audience. University students are a large and engaged demographic, and they are more likely to be aware of and interested in campaigns that are led by their peers. A student advisory board can be set up and student volunteers can be recruited to develop and implement the campaign. The board can provide feedback on the campaign's goals, message, and materials. Setting up educational booths in public places with interactive elements is another effective way to improve the campaign's reach, engagement, and retention. Booths can reach a large audience of people who might not otherwise be aware of the campaign. Interactive elements can help engage users and get them interested in the campaign. People who interact with the campaign are more likely to remember it and to take action.

It is important that consumers are made aware of the catastrophic consequences of using non-certified devices such as disruption of emergency communication services and air traffic control. In this way, consumers can be encouraged to check for certification status before purchasing. The campaign can highlight real-world examples that have been caused by unsafe products. This will help to make the risks and dangers more real and tangible for consumers. Strong visuals, such as photos or videos, can be used to illustrate the dangers of unsafe products as visuals are a powerful way to grab attention and communicate a message.

For older consumers, traditional advertising methods can be deployed. Traditional advertising methods, such as TV commercials, print ads, and radio ads, can be effective for reaching older consumers. These consumers are more likely to watch TV, read newspapers, and listen to the radio, so these channels can be a good way to reach them. In contrast, the campaign can invest in digital advertising for younger consumers. Digital advertising methods, such as social media ads, search engine ads, and email marketing, can be effective for reaching younger consumers. These consumers are more likely to use the internet, so these channels can be a good way to reach them.

Using interactive games and offering age-specific incentives is a good way to improve the campaign's reach, engagement, and learning. Games can be a fun and engaging way

to teach young people about safety. This can help to increase engagement, motivation and improve learning and retention with the CYL app. By creating behind-the-scenes content, it helps consumers to understand the certification process and the significance of purchasing certified products. By educating consumers about the certification process, it helps to increase awareness of the issue among consumers, increase demand for certified products and improve public perception of MCMC.

Raising awareness of MCMC certification

The display of the MCMC label during a device start-up is a good way to raise awareness of the MCMC certification and its importance to consumers. When consumers see the MCMC label, they can be confident that the device has been tested and meets safety standards. This can help to increase consumer confidence in the device and in the company that manufactured it. Companies that show the MCMC label can improve their brand reputation by ensuring interoperability in communication devices. This can help them attract new customers and retain existing customers.

Integrating MCMC awareness into the syllabus of the “Reka Bentuk dan Teknologi (RBT)” is a good idea. This will help to educate students about the importance of MCMC certification and its role in ensuring the safety of electronic devices. The following topics can be included in the syllabus:

- Potential dangers of using unsafe electronic devices and the importance of purchasing devices that have been certified by a reputable organisation, such as MCMC;
- How to look for the MCMC logo on electronic devices and how to verify that the device has been certified by the MCMC;
- The importance of following the manufacturer’s instructions.

Using cartoon characters and interactive methods to raise awareness of the MCMC certification among young children is another good idea. This makes learning about the MCMC certification enjoyable and engaging for children. Interactive content, such as a cartoon video about the MCMC certification, a mobile app that includes educational game quizzes and activities, and hosting local community events using cartoon icons to feature fun activities, games, and prizes, are fun but effective ways to teach children about the MCMC certification and raise awareness among young children.

Lastly, creative marketing strategies, such as videos, social media, and humour, can significantly raise awareness of the MCMC certification as it can attract attention and shape the message to become more memorable.

CONCLUSION

Advancements in information and communications technology have accelerated Malaysia’s communication and multimedia industry growth. In ensuring safe and cost-effective communication products for the public, MCMC and other regulatory bodies have and continue to develop and implement various important regulations and policies. In this regard, the MCMC certification and label was established to ensure communication product safety and authenticity. According to the guidelines of MCMC, any communication device without the MCMC label is not safe or authentic and might also impact the service quality. To encourage self-regulation, the MCMC launched CYL, an awareness programme that has been beneficial in increasing consumer self-regulation.

The current study reveals that the promotion of the MCMC certification and the CYL campaign can be accomplished through a variety of means, including increasing the visibility of the MCMC label, targeting specific audiences, assuring product safety, and

strengthening the CYL app. To ensure MCMC's message reaches far and wide, creative marketing methods, as well as engaging university students and young children can prove to be effective. TikTok, as one of the most popular social media platforms among Malaysian youth, can also be utilised to promote the MCMC certification to younger generations. This will assist in providing the public with the necessary information and awareness regarding the MCMC certification and label, which will ultimately lead to transparency, better customer satisfaction and the sustainable growth of the multimedia and communication industry.

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