



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

**THE RESEARCH ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RIVER
POLLUTION AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN MALAYSIA**

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Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
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This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
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ABSTRACT

According to Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, Department of Irrigation and Drainage, rivers provide 97% of our drinking water supply in Malaysia. However, river pollution is a nuisance although there are few river preservation campaigns in Malaysia. Thus, this research focuses on the effectiveness of existing river pollution awareness campaigns in Malaysia. The data accumulated from this research will be applied for the river protection campaign in the near future.

ABSTRAK

Menurut Kementerian Sumber Asli dan Alam Sekitar, Jabatan Pengairan & Saliran, sungai di Malaysia menyediakan 97% bekalan air minuman kepada kita. Namun, pencemaran sungai di Malaysia masih serius walaupun adanya beberapa kempen memelihara sungai. Kajian ini mengkaji keberkesanan kempen pencemaran sungai. Data yang dikumpul akan diaplikasikan ke dalam kempen pencemaran sungai pada masa depan.

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CHAPTER 1

1.0 Introduction

Public service advertising, as defined by William Wells et. al. (1992) in Advertising Principles and Practice– 2nd Edition, it is a type of advertising that communicates a message on behalf of some good cause such as a drug-free America or preventing child abuse. These advertisements are created by professionals whereas the space and time are donated by the media. River pollution awareness campaign considered as one of the types of public service advertising (PSA) campaign based on the definition above.

Public Service Advertising (PSA) also known as a non-commercial advertising (www.masterliness.com/a/Public.service.advertising.htm, visited September 23rd, 2008). Non-commercial advertising guise is a powerful educational tool that is capable for reaching and motivating large audiences. The same advertising techniques are also using to promote commercial goods and services to inform, educate and motivate the public about non-commercial issues. Non-commercial advertising emphasizes on changing attitudes and behaviors in relative to some idea or cause (William Wells et. al. 1992). For the statement above, we knew that public service advertising campaign is using commercial advertising techniques for non-commercial purposes such as educate the public

for the good cause. In Malaysia, there are a few river pollution awareness campaigns, such as Campaign “Cintai Sungai Kita” generated by Jabatan Pengairan dan Saliran Malaysia (JPS), Campaign “Water4Life” and Campaign “1 State 1 River” produced by Global Environment Center, and Campaign “Tak Pa Bumi Binasa”, by Kementerian Sumber Asli dan Alam Sekitar (KSAAS).

Although there is some river pollution awareness campaigns launched in Malaysia together but quality of the river water is still disputed, even more polluted than before.

(Sungai Langat Tercemar, 9 august 2008, Utusan Online)

1.1 River Quality in Malaysia

Regarding to Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, the rivers in provide 97% of our drinking water. Among the 189 river basins, 30 of them function as reservoirs that supply the 25 million people living in Malaysia with clean water which flows through our taps.

(River intro, <http://www.water.gov.my>)

There are more than 100 river systems in Peninsular Malaysia and more than 50 river systems in Sabah and Sarawak. In year 2006, the number of rivers in the cleanest category was almost the double that of 2005. The number of polluted river basins was also below but is still more than half of that number. Only seven of Malaysia's 146 river basins were categorized as polluted in year 2006, down from 15 the year before.

However, five rivers that were in Class I in 2005 fell to Class II last year. In the Sungai Klang basin, for instance, all but one of its 11 rivers has been categorized as Class III, compared with six in 2005.

(River Basin Initiative. <http://www.riverbasin.org>)

Besides, Utusan Online on the date of 9 August 2008 stated, the problem of river pollution is still serious although there are a few campaigns of river protection in Malaysia.

Based on the report from underwatertimes.com on 25 April 2007, a 14-year campaign ("Love Our Rivers") to clean up Malaysia's rivers has been branded a failure by the country's environment minister after nearly one of the ten has become over polluted that subsequently affecting human beings by just have a touch on the water. The ever-increasing pollution had rendered 17 out of 186 river

systems in Malaysia became toxic therefore the water was unsafe for humans to touch. There is quite a number of news that had been published showing that the public's awareness for river pollution in Malaysia is too superficial.

1.2 River Pollution Source

Based on the official website of Jabatan Alam Sekitar, water pollution were caused by point and non-point sources. **Point** sources include sewage treatment plants, manufacturing and agro-based industries and animal farms. **Non-point** sources are defined as diffused sources such as agricultural activities and surface runoffs. In 2006, the Department of Environment (DOE) registered 18,956 water pollution point sources comprising mainly sewage treatment plants (9,060 : 47.79% inclusive of 601 Network Pump Stations), manufacturing industries (8,543 : 45.07%), animal farms (869 : 4.58%) and agro-based industries (484 : 2.55%) represents the distribution of industrial water pollution sources from agro-based and manufacturing industries compiled by the DOE in 2006 through field surveys and questionnaires.

From the data above, sewages treatment plants is the main factor that caused river pollution in Malaysia.

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Azmi Khalid mentioned in New Straits Times that Malaysian did not realize that the campaign “Cintai Sungai Kita” was also aimed at keeping rivers free from pollution and rubbish. Besides, 17 rivers in Malaysia were unable to sustain any form of life, and that improperly treated of sewage effluent was a major source of river pollution. He also said that there are studies showing that 91 percent of sewage treatment plants in the country were running inefficiently.

(Report: Malaysia's 14-year Campaign to Clean-up Rivers a Failure; 10 Percent Unsafe to Touch ,Underwatertimes.com, April 25, 2007)

1.3 Classification for River Quality

According to national standards, a river is classified from Class I to V, with Class I being the cleanest and Class V, the worst polluted.

(River intro, <http://www.water.gov.my>)

Class I river water has a good conservation with natural environment. This class of water supplying does not need any treatment and therefore can be used as hygienic drinking water. Besides, in the fishery aspect, we can discover there are extremely sensitive aquatic species in the water.

Class IIA river water needed conventional treatment in order that can be drinking safely by human. Sensitive aquatic species also can be found in the river. Followed by, is Class IIB river water which is more suitable for recreational usage such as body contact with the water, such as swimming.

Class III river water considered as polluted water and needs extensive treatment before it is suitable for drinking. This is common because of economic value; it is used as the tolerant species of livestock drinking water.

Class IV river water can only be using for irrigation such as growing rice, fruits or other flora species. It is not suitable for human as drinking water.

Class V considered extremely polluted river water and cannot be used for any purposes. It is harmful to be used and yet touched. The Class V river is the worst and is termed as a septic river. As a result its water is the worst and is termed as septic river water. This most horrible river will have the highest rank of pollutants and the lowest intensity of dissolved oxygen. Dissolved oxygen is crucial to the survival of aquatic life and is one of the most important indicators of environmental health.

1.4 SWOT analyses

Strengths

Current river pollution awareness campaigns are focusing on the practical way to solve the problem, which is finding the solution to clean the river. Besides, this is also involved in choosing talents of all the current campaigns material and the using of language that are closed to Malaysians culture.

Weaknesses

The media that used to promote the campaigns is limited and not detailed. They did not transmit the river pollution affairs to the entire Malaysia thoroughly. Information on how to prevent river pollution among the public is still insufficient and superficial.

Opportunities

Regarding to Robin Landa (2004) in Advertising by Design, the gist of a good campaign is to find a way to make benefits of the social cause relevant to the audience's lives. The current campaign can use fear appeal in the advertising to warn how river pollution affects to Malaysian daily activities, this will make everyone concerns and takes it serious about the problem.

Threats

Nowadays, there are too many entertainments for the public. Malaysian becomes ignorant to the priority in solving environmental issues because of the distraction of these entertainment activities. Besides, the economic issues, for example maximizing profits for the food stall will cause the river pollution.

1.5 Problem Statement

1. Current campaigns only focus on the selected rivers in Malaysia.

The river pollution awareness campaigns in Malaysia are targeted on the areas where the rivers were seriously polluted and thus the actions that are taken to solve the problems. For an example, Campaign Water4Life by Global Environment Center (GEC) only focuses on Sungai Way, a tributary of Sungai Pencala, which eventually flows into Sungai Klang. This will only educate the people around Sungai Pencala about the seriousness of river pollution but not to the entire Malaysia.

2. Lacks of variation of promotional items by current river pollution awareness campaigns in Malaysia.

The campaigns' exposure materials are insufficient and lack of reaching out to outsides and also as the mediums to educating public about the seriousness of this problem. For an example, Campaign "Cintai Sungai Kita" only spotlighted through the billboards beside all Malaysia's rivers. On the other hand, the campaign "I state 1 river" and the campaign "Water4Life" by GEC are gladly to see if volunteers to design their campaign exposure materials.

3 Inconsistency of campaign materials.

Regarding to Robin Landa (2004) in *Advertising by Design*, he mentioned that a good campaigns often seems to be an underlying template - a compositional structure or format – that utilized for individual advertising in a campaign. The visuals and line changes but the compositional template must stay the same. Colors palette, style of image, same font family also used to identical and recognize by target audiences. For an example, Campaign “Cintai Sungai Kita” uses the different style of imagery and font in each campaign materials.

1.6 Objectives

- To study the effectiveness of current river pollution awareness campaigns that launched in Malaysia.

In Malaysia, they were a few river protection launched since the years ago, but the river pollution is still serious. Study the strategies of current campaign to understand the effectiveness.

- To analyze the data collection of the successful and latest river pollution awareness campaigns.

Successful river pollution campaign that launched around the world to be analyzed to understand the latest approaches that able to communicate with target audiences.

- To suggest an effective and relevant campaign to encourage Malaysian in taking river pollution prevention as a way of living.

Data collections in the research create an effective campaign that able to connect with Malaysians' lifestyle later.

1.7 Importance of Research

“Rivers in Malaysia have made immense contributions to overall development of Malaysia. They have provided power generation, water for domestic and serve as means of transportation and communication for people.”

Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid (1992). Rivers of Malaysia, pg6

Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, as the representative of Minister of Agriculture

Malaysia in 1992 stated how important the rivers to the country and the citizens. Water then comes from the river is a main source of drinking water in Malaysia. Clean water can directly threaten human's health, agriculture and economic development. What's more, water is our most precious natural resource because our life is very much defined by means of the association with water. It is of critical importance for transportation, recreation, manufacturing, food production, home and personal care, and safe reliable drinking water.

Regarding New Straits Times Online at 28th July 2008, three million people in Malaysia may not get clean water supply by 2015 if people continue with their lackadaisical attitude in protecting water resources.

Deputy Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Maznah Mazlan said although Malaysia had many water sources, they are always under threat of contamination. Polluted rivers will degrade the clean water level and affect our daily activities. This research is important to ensure the clean water source available in Malaysia.

Water from taps also very important, it is always using for plates washing, laundry, cars, watering our plants and bathing. So, clean water can treats as a healthy living basic component.

Rivers are used as one of the form of transport in Malaysia. Ferries, harbors, ships are frequently used in Malaysia for commercial purposes. Besides, ships and boats also play as very important transports for tourism in Malaysia.

In the aspect of agriculture, we need clean water for growing healthy food. This water is usually diverted from rivers to irrigate (water) crops and plantations. Besides, industries also need clean water to manufacture the products such as canned food, clothes and even toilet papers. As we can see, every step in producing commercial products could do with clean water.