

LIFE WITH LESS, LESS WASTE: PROMOTING LIFE SUSTAINABILITY AWARENESS

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to promote living the life with less which will impact less waste production and practicing life sustainability. Life with less means being minimalist. Being minimalist means less waste and we are practicing sustainability of life. Why is this so important? People should be aware and realize our standard of living is physically and environmentally unsustainable. Waste is one of our biggest problems in our country, take a look in some of our seas there are tons of waste everywhere. It's not only polluting the environment but it's also threatening the creatures which live in it. The fact of plastic waste needs 1000 years to be fully decomposed, while decomposing it will contaminate the soil. By practicing life with less the goal of less waste and the awareness of living sustainability life will help the world we are living to be healthier for the next thousands of years. The action needs to be done by ourselves, and one of the educational institutions' duties is to spread the issue to the educator practitioners and the whole ecosystem in order to be more aware and to practice everything that needs to be done. The research uses the netnography, it is one of qualitative research methods which is initiated by consumer research name Robert Kozinets.

Keywords: life with less, minimalist, less waste, sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Corona virus attacked the world, on 11 March 2020 WHO announced the corona as global pandemic. The whole population of the world were kept in their own houses to prevent the virus transmission. People were busy finding things to do in their home, one of the biggest entertainments at that time was Netflix. Everyone watches all the movies and series which are provided by Netflix. Mari Method is one of the most widely watched series by Indonesian society. According to Joshua Becker, author of things that matter (2022), minimalism is about getting what makes you happy and eliminating what doesn't. It's practical and like living simply. It shifted the definition of being happy and rich. Happiness is when you have a lot of money and you can buy anything that you want in the world. Less is more, is the new mantra for being minimalist. Some of the researchers believed that being minimalist will not produce much waste. Bissmont, 2020, emphasized the role of individual action in waste minimization, highlighting the importance of altering consumption practices and normalizing waste prevention. Starting from our home, from ourselves to minimize less waste production.

Waste is one of the biggest problems that our country and even the world has. What is the best way to regulate all the waste which is produced by the people. Data from the National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN) of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) in 2022, the result input from 202 districts/cities throughout Indonesia, states that the amount of national waste will reach 21.1 million tons. From the total national waste production, 65.71% (13.9 million tons) can be managed, while the remaining 34.29% (7.2 million tons) has not been managed properly.

The waste of 7.2 million tons is an enormous amount, Indonesia's society is not familiar nor practices the 3R (reduce, reuse and recycle) even though it has been resonated and advertised years ago. The practice and the awareness are still low, it is shown from the landfill which is still full with a stack of waste. The society is still having the thoughts that waste management will be conducted by others/the government or the trash men, they just think their homes are waste free and the duty is done. The mindset that has to be changed and the very first step is starting from ourselves. This study aims to promote life sustainability by living minimally, which will lead to less waste production.

1. The 'Vagueness' of Sustainability

"Sustainability means meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (wikipedia.com). In an environmental context, sustainability often refers to practices that support the sustainability of ecosystems and reduce negative impacts on the environment. For some, sustainability is "the way to live in harmony with the environment" (Glasby,2002, in Keiner,2006). This includes natural resource management, waste reduction, and biodiversity preservation. If we are practicing sustainability by living with less and producing less waste. Hopefully, we will create a healthy earth for the next thousands of years to come so our grandchildren will still enjoy living in the world with all the beauty in it. Nevertheless, is it possible not to do any damage to the earth? Where do we continue to use all the natural resources? To be honest we cannot guarantee it, Hughes and Johnston (2005) state, "economic growth is now increasing the world's environmental burdens much faster than population growth." Glasby (2002) argues that "only a massive decrease in world population and resources usage phased over a century or more would permit attaining a new equilibrium that is more appropriate to a long-term occupation of planet earth." In Indonesia there are some companies claim supporting the sustainability, one of the examples from beauty company it's called Base, they use natural resources to produce their products. If you visit their web, www.base.co.id. You will be presented with their products which are vegan and the sustainability process they do in producing the product, and they create their own community to spread what they believe in committing to sustainability.

Everyone is experiencing their very first life, we don't have the perfect guidance on how to live this life well. In addition, we are living in this internet era where information is abundant, if we want to know everything, we just need to move our fingers and find out all about it. Cowley, 2003, we are living through a period of rapid change and deep disturbance, having little idea in which direction we are moving, no reliable roadmap to follow, little belief in progress, and much anxiety about the dangers that lie ahead. We may not know what dangers our great grandchildren will face if we don't care about the environment in this day and age. Similar to Hales and Prescott,2002, as stated in Keiner,2006, wrote that: "making progress toward sustainability is like going to a destination we have never visited before, equipped with a sense of geography and the principle of navigation, but without a map or compass." In short, we never know what the future holds for us, but the future will be determined by our actions in the present days. We continue to use the natural resources which we believe will not last for long, but there is one thing that we could do to manage it well by protecting the earth well. If we keep our planet safe, the planet will give us the abundance of kindness that we give to it.

2. Life with less = Being minimalist

Minimalism as lifestyle, has been associated with various wellbeing benefits, including autonomy, competence, mental space, awareness, and positive emotions (Lloyd, 2020).

These days, being minimalist is regaining its popularity among the young people who are literate to sustainability and environmental awareness. Minimalism is having fewer possessions, from fashions, things that we use at home daily, the consciousness of how we buy things. Once we possess things, we have to use it until it worn out, for example the use of clothes, or we can sell it in the second market so it can be reused by others. Elgin and Mitchell, 1977 as stated by Lloyd & Pennington,2020, simplicity is a lifestyle that embraces the core values of material simplicity, self-determination, self-sufficiency, ecological awareness, social responsibility, spirituality and personal growth. Being minimalist means feeling adequate in everything they own, no feeling less or more just being grateful. In Japan, minimalism is linked to gratitude and peaceful disengagement, which are considered key components of well-being (Kan,2009). Furthermore, minimalism is seen as a sustainable lifestyle, with behavioral representations such as clutter removal, cautious shopping; longevity, and self-sufficiency, and is associated with enhanced flourishing and reduced depression, (Kang, 2021). Based on these studies how being minimalist contributes to the positive effects and offers a big change for our life, which will impact our souls and body.

“Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect”, Vince Lombardi. When we know the knowledge without practice it will remain knowledge, after we know something it’s better for us to perform the actual action that will result in something. The concept of practice is explored in various fields, each field provides its own unique perspective. For instance, (Woody 2021) challenges the notion that quantity of practice is the most important skill in acquisition, instead advocating for deliberate and efficient practice. So how often we practice it will lead us to a better result in any skill that we pursue. Furthermore, (Woody 2021) add, through consistent practice over time, skills that began as highly conscious and effortful progress to ultimately becoming fluently and automatically performed. In practicing life with less we need some knowledge, the attentiveness of everything will be much better if we practice life with less. For example, we don’t need to buy clothes when you feel you have enough with the clothes we have. Marlous van der Veen said, “why is it never enough? Or how come there is always something newer, better or cooler to pursue?”. But when we understand about minimalism, because minimalism is not about quantity but quality. Less is more, (Walker 2011) indicated, when it comes to dress, less can most definitely be more.

METHOD

This study is applying netnography. Netnography is online ethnography, that is the study of the cultural and the social on the internet (Kozinets 2015 as stated in Bissmont 2020). This qualitative research method was introduced by consumer research name Robert Kozinets in 1998. Alavi 2015 wrote in his journal, as a method, netnography is faster, simpler, and less expensive than ethnography and more naturalistic and unobtrusive than focus groups on interviews. The data in this study come from Instagram accounts who are practicing life with less waste management and some websites that have certain communities that promote and practice sustainability. The Instagram accounts who often share their daily life, how they practice minimalism and resonate to their followers to do the same in order to keep the healthy earth withstand for extended periods of time.

This study was limited to Indonesian Instagram accounts and Indonesia independent websites who practice the three factors that were discussed in this study. Studies on social media were complemented by reading the content and the followers’ comments. This study focused on the content that contains minimalism, waste

management and sustainability. How these actors of change post on their social media to give the influence and to share the information to their followers. Studying everyday posts in social media has limitations

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

There are so many things that have yet to be discovered through this research. By showing these three steps, the readers are awakened, aware and ready to take the action to do in their life. In helping the world get its right to keep healthy and can give humankind more kindness than it can give in the present day. They are decluttering and get used to practicing the 5R (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle).

Decluttering

Being disorganized is detrimental to Iman. People are more aware of decluttering, because it not only makes you healthier in your mind but also it makes your home spacious because it is free from things that you don't use. Peter Walsh once said "*The life you want will never come from the stuff you buy! NEVER! We are taught that if you just buy the right stuff you will acquire the life you want, Total Crap!*". In Islam there is this hadith, the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) said; "Verily, Allah dislikes for you three things...(among them) idho'atul maal; squandering the wealth. Nowadays where everything is so easy to get, if you want to buy some clothes, foods, things, you do not need to go to the store. The power is right at your fingertips, just open your handphone, click one of your e-commerce apps and voila all things that you need were presented right in front of your eyes. Not to mention all the sales and the discounts, we never actually need things but we were tempted by how cheap the products are and in seconds we consciously buy those products. While the products were in the way, we waited at home excitedly and when the products arrived you got temporary happiness, used it for a while, forgot it and became cluttered. This doesn't mean that shopping is banned, but you know what stuff that you need which you can use for a long period, you truly make the use of it.

Most of us are not aware that mass consumption plays a huge role in global warming and the problems we are running into the environment. In contrast, Matsuyama,2000, stated that the rise of a mass consumption society is thus an essential element for sustainable development. The reality hits hard, when we are at home and see things are all over the place it gives you a headache. It shows how messy the places are far from peace and solitude. Quoted from the Indonesian Konmori community, the reason why we should declutter. Cluttering can cause stress due to increased cortisol and make the brain associate it with failure. This stress can also increase appetite to increase weight (Peter walls, 2019). A neuroscience study explained that an environment with a lot of clutter can cause our bodies to feel tired. As additional information, these researchers show how clutter damages our body and souls. Ward (2015) found abnormal activity in the basal ganglia and medial prefrontal cortex in adults who clutter, suggesting difficulties in speech motor program control. Erez (2014) further explored the impact of clutter on the representation of target objects in the occipitotemporal cortex, revealing that heterogeneous clutter interferes with the neural representation of target objects. These studies reveal an intricate relationship between clutter and the brain, offering valuable insights for comprehending and resolving clutter-related issues.

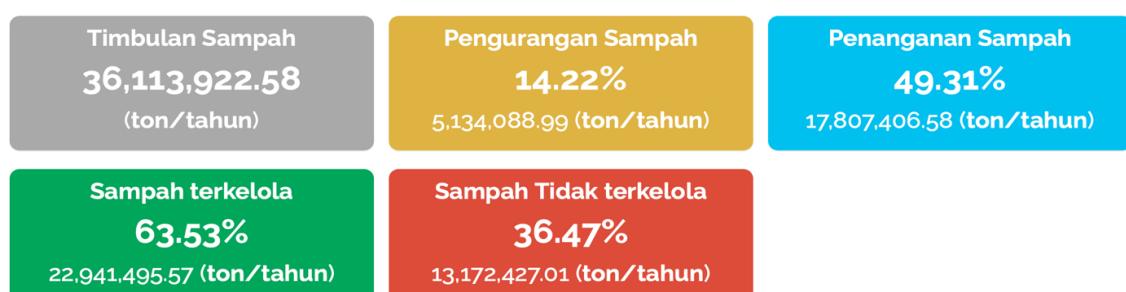
5R (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle)

In the past we were familiar with the 3 R (reduce, reuse and recycle) and in the present day it has been 5 R to develop the original of the three. In minimizing the waste these five steps can help us to manage and to reduce our waste production. In Indonesia about 6,500 tons of waste is disposed of every day. About 20 percent of the waste flows into the river or into the sea and the rest is taken to the landfill (megapolitan.kompas, in hidayat, 2012 as stated in Arianti et al, 2018). Furthermore, Arianti, et al, 2018 stated that the waste problem can be handled better if waste is managed wisely at the household scale, but unfortunately efforts to handle waste at the household level have not been well socialized. I couldn't agree more, if many or all of the housewives and each of us understand how to manage the waste well, we might produce less waste that send to our landfill site.

CAPAIAN KINERJA PENGELOLAAN SAMPAH

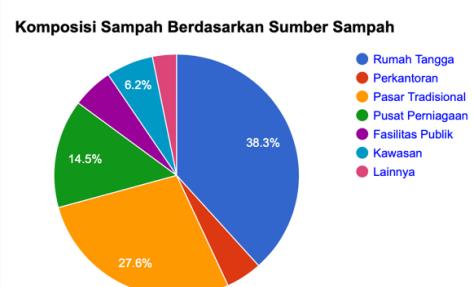
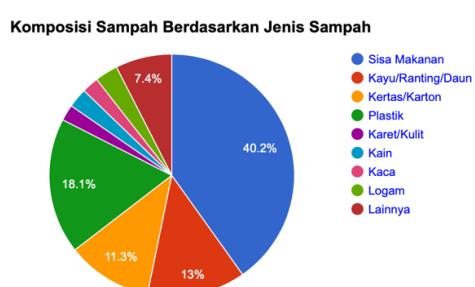
Capaian Kinerja Pengelolaan Sampah adalah Capaian Pengurangan dan Penanganan Sampah Rumah Tangga dan Sampah Sejenis Sampah Rumah Tangga.

Data capaian dibawah ini adalah hasil dari penginputan data yang dilakukan oleh 310 Kabupaten/kota se-Indonesia pada tahun 2022



GRAFIK KOMPOSISI SAMPAH

Grafik Komposisi Sampah terbagi 2 yaitu Grafik Komposisi Sampah berdasarkan Jenis Sampah dan Grafik Komposisi Sampah berdasarkan Sumber Sampah. Grafik Komposisi Sampah dibawah ini adalah Tahun 2022.



These are the data that we got from the National Waste Management Information System (SIPSN).

We can see how much wastes were not managed well per year, and if it keeps accumulating what disaster might be approaching.

Refuse: This practice of refusing unnecessary items and packaging not only helps in preventing waste but also promotes a more sustainable and eco-friendlier lifestyle. By consciously making choices to reduce our consumption, we can significantly contribute to minimize the overall environmental impact caused by excessive waste generation. “*Everyday Wisdom from Perry, 2023*”; ‘*Sometimes people try to avoid mistakes by not making a decision, but not making a decision is still a choice that has consequences*. Decisions we make in our everyday activity will impact the future consequences, refusing sometime in our culture is hard but when you calculate the result for not doing it, will give you so much more horrible impact.

Reduce: How we reduce our everyday waste such as not using plastic packages, using our own tumbler for drinking when we go outside of the home. Little things but it will make a greater good, by implementing reduction of the amount of waste generated by using fewer resources, consuming less and making more sustainable choices.

Reuse: using the clothes, things over and over again to extend their lifespan we can significantly reduce waste and minimize our impact on the environment. Additionally, embracing a culture of reuse promotes resource conservation and encourages creative thinking to find innovative ways to repurpose items.

Repurpose: repurposing is the process of reusing items that are discarded, thereby promoting a circular and sustainable economy. There are tons of videos on YouTube about how you can change clothes, mop, t-shirt turn to dress. To change things becomes something else that we can use for another purpose, if we do the action, it doesn't only help the earth to zero waste but also it evokes our creativity.

Recycle: the process of recycling materials that can be processed and used to create new products and reduce the need for new raw materials. Plastic is part of our life, there are many kinds of items made of plastic. If we practice how to sort the plastic waste before we throw it into our dust bin, it will help a lot of the scavengers who collect plastic waste to sell to the collectors, from collectors to bigger waste management. Considering that plastic is a significant problem for the environment and can threaten the lives of living things, it takes hundreds of years to decompose (zerowaste.id;2023).

CONCLUSION

We are living our very first life on this planet, there is no right nor exact guidance to living this life. How to make this planet earth is safe to be living for thousands of years to come. Starting from ourselves to make a good habit in using, buying, wasting, and the 5R thing in our daily activity. Promoting our habits on our social media is one of the ways we can influence friends and colleagues. Raising awareness from little things like bringing your own drink whenever you go outside the house, be an example from yourself for others with hope others may follow. There are many good benefits that will come along the way as we practice our decluttering action and the 5 R (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle). It is our duty as an educator to spread the information with great hope people will raise their awareness and change their mindset and mentality to cultivate waste management well. The job cannot be done by certain people or institutions, the collaboration is needed between society, government, and waste management organizations. The article underscores how important to live as minimalist which will lead to less waste and promoting sustainability awareness.

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