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CONSUMERISM AND HEDONISM AS THE ROOT OF THE DECLINE IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT (TASAWUF AND ECOLOGY REVIEW)

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Abstract

Consumerism is the habit of buying things that are less necessary, while hedonism refers to the idea that the main goal of life is happiness. These two behaviors are often related and have a negative influence on the environment. A review of Sufism and ecology will help us in understanding the consequences of consumerism and hedonism on the environment. Sufism provides a religious view of life, justice, and simplicity. Ecology includes aspects of the environment and life related to health, well-being, and balance. By examining the impact of consumerism and hedonism on the decline in the carrying capacity of the environment, and by utilizing the perspectives of Sufism and ecology. This research explores these concepts in the context of environmental sustainability and human well-being. Thus, this research is expected to provide new insights in efforts to overcome environmental challenges faced by modern society.

KATA KUNCI:
Konsumerisme, Hedonisme, Sufisme, Lingkungan.

Abstrak

Konsumerisme adalah kebiasaan membeli barang-barang yang kurang diperlukan, sedangkan hedonisme mengacu pada gagasan bahwa tujuan utama hidup adalah kebahagiaan. Kedua perilaku ini seringkali berkaitan dan memberikan pengaruh negatif terhadap lingkungan. Tinjauan terhadap tasawuf dan ekologi akan membantu kita dalam memahami dampak konsumerisme dan hedonisme terhadap lingkungan. Tasawuf memberikan pandangan keagamaan tentang kehidupan, keadilan, dan kesederhanaan. Ekologi mencakup aspek lingkungan dan kehidupan yang berkaitan dengan kesehatan, kesejahteraan, dan keseimbangan. Dengan mengkaji dampak konsumerisme dan hedonisme terhadap menurunnya daya dukung lingkungan hidup, serta dengan memanfaatkan perspektif tasawuf dan ekologi. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi konsep-konsep tersebut dalam konteks kelestarian lingkungan dan kesejahteraan manusia. Dengan demikian, penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memberikan wawasan baru dalam upaya mengatasi tantangan lingkungan hidup yang dihadapi masyarakat modern.

INTRODUCTION

Social change occurs with the times. The rise of globalization is one such impact. In today's rapidly growing era of globalization, globalization is very beneficial for humans in various ways, such as transportation, and communication. Currently, technological advances encourage changes in people's lifestyles. These technological advances can have both positive and negative impacts on society. Globalization can lead to an increase in consumerism and hedonism lifestyles which are one of the negative consequences (Milani & Possamai, 2016).

Consumerism is defined as the behavior of a person or group that consumes large amounts of goods or services, especially material goods. Consumerism has always referred to the human tendency to continuously consume goods and services. While hedonism can be defined as an activity that seeks happiness in life through material measures and worldly pleasures (Prastiwi & Fitria, 2020). Hedonists often assume that they "live only once" so they buy things without considering the future impact. Both of these have a significant negative impact on the carrying capacity of the environment which is an important component in ecology. Both greatly affect the carrying capacity of the environment which is an important component in Sufism and ecology (White, 2022).

Consumerism refers to the tendency of people to constantly consume goods and services beyond their basic needs. According to Çınar and Kingir (2021), consumerism is "a social movement that aims to expand the rights and power of consumers in their relationship with sellers." However, in the modern context, consumerism is often associated with excessive buying driven by wants rather than needs. This is supported by the findings of Denegri-Knott and Zwick (2019) who state that "consumption has become the main way for individuals to express their identity and social status."

On the other hand, hedonism is a philosophical view that states that pleasure or happiness is the main goal in life. In the consumer context, hedonism refers to the search for pleasure and positive emotional experiences through consumption (Alba & Williams, 2022). Recent research by Voss et al. (2020) shows that "hedonic motivation plays an important role in consumer purchasing decisions, especially for products that have high symbolic and emotional value."

The relationship between consumerism and hedonism is very close. Yim et al. (2021) explain that "in a consumerist society, individuals are often encouraged to seek happiness through the purchase of luxury goods and exhilarating experiences, reflecting hedonic values." This condition is reinforced by sophisticated marketing and social media that promote hedonic lifestyles, making consumption a major source of pleasure and identity (Kozinets et al., 2020).

The increasingly mobile and informal lifestyle of society often requires the consumption of many people who become consumptive. The variety of products such as fast food, fast fashion, and electronics has become a necessity that is difficult to ignore. In consumerism, materials are often a measure of one's happiness so they tend to be unthrifty and excessive. Meanwhile, the consumerist lifestyle is the tendency to prioritize excessive purchases as a major part of daily life (Wijaya, 2023).

According to (Farid & Saputra, 2021), the process of lifestyle creation occurs because of the impossibility of a person avoiding the choice of consumer goods and engaging in self-transformation by promoting lifestyle. (Farid & Saputra, 2021) said that consumption makes humans not seek happiness, do not try to get equality, and the absence of intensity to homogenize humans actually makes differentiation (differences) which are references in lifestyle and values, not economic needs. This is what happens in today's society so Baudrillard calls it a consumerist society (consumer society).

However, both of these phenomena have also faced criticism. Critics argue that consumerism and hedonism can lead to excessive materialism, wider social inequality, and mental health problems such as anxiety and depression (Burroughs & Rindfleisch, 2022). Furthermore, Sheth et al. (2023) highlight significant environmental impacts, stating that "unsustainable consumption patterns, driven by consumerism and hedonism, contribute greatly to climate change and ecosystem degradation."

Humans who must always meet the needs of their lives are the largest consumers in the world. Every day we must consume everything on earth in different forms. A consumer will spend his income to get what he needs. But often they buy not for needs but desires which cause the emergence of consumptive behavior (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012). Our excessive consumption behavior often ignores the sustainability of natural resources and the environment, such as single-

use plastic containers ((Seminar Nasional Pengabdian Masyarakat LPPM UMJ Website: Http://Jurnal.Umj.Ac.Id/Index.Php/Semnaskat E-ISSN: 2714-6286, n.d.)) dan menumpuknya sampah makanan (Timbulan et al., n.d.).

The lifestyle of the human consumer cannot stand alone, such a comprehensive scheme of life will have to bear the consequences of the deterioration of nature. Excessive and unlimited consumption behavior can cause a decrease in the carrying capacity of the environment. For example, fast food which results in an increase in the amount of production, including using large amounts of water for agricultural and processing processes that cause a decrease in groundwater sources, as well as waste from continuous fast food packaging such as plastic, sterofoam, and single-use paper that ends up in landfills (Gani, 2019).

A decrease in the carrying capacity of the environment is a decrease in the ability of the environment to support the life of all living things in it. The results of a study show that there is a significant relationship between hedonistic lifestyle and consumptive behavior. That is, the higher a person's lifestyle, the higher his consumptive behavior (Appau & Awaworyi Churchill, 2019).

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with literature study methods and content analysis. The data will be analyzed qualitatively by identifying patterns of consumerism and hedonism behavior and their implications for the environment. Data will be collected through literature studies related to consumerism, hedonism, Sufism, and ecology, as well as empirical research that has been done previously on the relationship between human consumption and the environment. Qualitative literature research methods using literature in the form of journal articles, books, papers, scientific journals, and other sources (Farid & Saputra, 2021).

Data will also be collected through the analysis of content related to consumerism and hedonism. Which research procedure will produce descriptive data in the form of words and words from the observed YouTube video content. Content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful data) with the context in which it is used (Krippendorff, 2004).

The steps of content analysis according to (Eriyanto, 2011) are; Formulate research questions or research hypotheses, Sampling data sources to be analyzed, create categories used in analysis, create units of analysis to be coded, conduct data analysis, draw conclusions from the results of the analysis.

Content analysis is a systematic and objective research method to analyze communication or text using certain categories and coding the unit of analysis. The steps include problem formulation, sampling, categorizing, determining units of analysis, coding, data analysis, and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hasil

Consumption is the state of being overly concerned with buying and owning things that are not actually needed according to the Cambridge dictionary definition. A society with higher consumption can cause production to increase simultaneously and haphazardly, leading to increased use of natural resources and thus damaging the environment. Consumerism encourages mass production of goods and services to meet growing consumer demand. This results in overexploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution, and increased greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change (UNEP, 2015). Global material consumption has

increased eightfold in the last century, causing significant environmental damage and accelerating the loss of nonrenewable natural resources (World Watch Institute, 2015).

Consumerism creates ever-increasing consumer demand, driving mass production of goods and services. This results in overexploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution and increased greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change (UNEP, 2015). Global material consumption has increased eightfold in the last century, causing significant environmental damage and accelerating the loss of non-renewable natural resources (World Watch Institute, 2015). As defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, "consumerism is a situation where too much attention is paid to buying and owning things that are not actually needed". (Jain & Jain, 2019) considers consumerism as a tool to measure global environmental impact.

The term hedonism comes from the Greek word "hedone" which means pleasure (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011). Hedonism is a lifestyle that prioritizes pleasure which is the ultimate goal of life. In the hedonism lifestyle, a person tends to overdo it, there are no limits, egoism, and only prioritizes pleasure alone so as not to think about the future impact. Hedonism encourages people to consume goods excessively. Consumerism is a mental attitude that emphasizes the excessive consumption of goods and services as a means of achieving happiness and acquiring social identity. In Sufism, these two concepts are often regarded as deviations from the true spiritual path. (Park & Baker, 2007). Hedonistic behavior often uses materials that are not environmentally friendly. This leads to the depletion of natural resources, causing water, air and soil pollution, and damage to the surrounding ecosystem. In the context of Sufism, hedonism is a view that prioritizes pleasure and is often contrary to spiritual values.

Sufism emphasizes the importance of fulfilling spiritual needs and the search for deeper happiness, rather than the search for material pleasure or physical satisfaction. Excessive consumerism can lead to the misuse of natural resources and disrupt ecosystems, which contradicts the ecological values in Sufism that emphasize the importance of maintaining the balance of nature. (Milani & Possamai, 2016).. In the perspective of Sufism, these two concepts are considered a form of deviation from the right path, as they focus on worldly pleasures and material interests, while followers of Sufism are encouraged to seek true happiness through devotion to God and spiritual self-development. Therefore, these two concepts can be considered as the roots of the decline in carrying capacity in both Sufism and ecology, as they lead to spiritual imbalance and environmental degradation. (Varul, 2013).

In the view of Sufism, consumerism and hedonism are manifestations of excessive human lust (Nasr, 1987; Al-Ghazali, 1995). This lust encourages humans to pursue worldly pleasures without limits, without considering the impact on the balance of nature. Sufism teaches the importance of controlling these desires and maintaining a balance with mutmainnah desires, which are calm and in harmony with the divine will. According to Al-Ghazali, a major figure of Sufism, humans must be able to maintain a balance between physical and spiritual needs. By controlling lust and cultivating mutmainnah lust, humans can live in harmony with nature and preserve the environment (Al-Ghazali, 1995).

Sometimes humans only focus on their pleasure without paying attention to the surrounding environment. Humans who are part of nature should understand nature. When humans destroy nature, they actually destroy themselves. Humans actually have a mandate to preserve the universe, but most do not realize they are only looking for pleasure. As abdullah or servants of allah, humans accept and carry out whatever the provisions of allah, including those related to nature (Fahruddin Faiz on Youtube). In an Islamic perspective, humans or caliphs on earth have the responsibility to make active efforts to preserve and maintain nature in accordance with sunnatullah (natural laws established by Allah SWT), To better understand nature, not by positioning nature as an object to be understood and we humans as subjects to understand, but uniting nature with us because we are part of nature too (Department of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.2010).

The fact that Islam restricts the consumption of certain goods and services such as alcohol, pork and gambling is a basic convention in Islamic scholarship. We do not intend to delve into this issue in detail. Suffice it to say that Islam encourages humanity to take care of its health, both its own and that of society at large. This is a recurring theme in the Qur'an: 'And do not throw yourselves into destruction with your own hands' (2.195) or 'And do not kill the life which Allah has forbidden' (17.33). These statements emphasize the fact that Allah has bestowed health on mankind and shown them how to live well: 'He [the Prophet] commands them what is just, and forbids them to do what is evil; he allows them to do what is good, and forbids them to do what is bad' (7.157). Hence, mankind is responsible for its own deeds because the good ways of life have been explained to it.

Nature itself is perfect because it is governed by laws and regulations established by God. Our initial dependence on nature has been replaced by alienation from nature and dominion over the meaningless material world. While destructive in terms of earth domination, this mindset can be understood in the broader context of evolution as an important stage in human development. Just as in the past, when individuals needed a strong ego to emerge and assert themselves against regressive forces in order to return into the unconsciousness and dependency of childhood, so too must humanity distance itself from the primodial remnants of our early and future history and wholeness with nature (Fahruddin Faiz on Youtube). In the view of (Devall and Sessions.1985), the exploitation of nature by humans with an anthropocentric view or placing humans as the center and separate from nature, has caused severe environmental damage. They emphasize the importance of changing human perspective and behavior from exploitation to appreciation and respect for nature to restore environmental balance. On the one hand, environmental communication aims to directly influence environmental behavior and practices. On the other hand, environmental communication also builds a shared understanding of the relationship between humans and nature" (Cox, 2013, p. 20).

Figure 1. Example Of Consumerism Behavior, Source: Rawpixel/Freepik.

A deep understanding of ecological principles is essential for solving complex environmental problems and preventing further environmental damage. By understanding how ecosystems work and how humans depend on them, we can develop more sustainable strategies for managing natural resources and protecting biodiversity" (Gerald, 2008, p. 10). An ecological system (or ecosystem) refers to a community of organisms that interact with their surrounding physical environment, forming an interrelated whole. The environmental problems facing modern societies have taught us that no generation has the freedom to squander and impoverish the earth's

resources, or damage or disrupt biodiversity. The principles of intergenerational equity and sustainability are now firmly established in international law (Weeramantry, 1988, p. 198).

Ecological principles also emphasize sustainability, balance with nature, and responsibility for the environment. Sufism helps humans understand their relationship with nature as a form of gratitude to God (Aminul, 2019). The link is that consumerism and hedonism often contradict the values of Sufism and ecological principles. Consumerism and hedonism tend to encourage excessive consumptive behavior and damage the environment, while Sufism and ecological principles teach simplicity, sustainability, and empathy for nature and other creatures.

From an ecological perspective, the uncontrolled practice of consumerism and hedonism can lead to overexploitation of natural resources, which in turn reduces the carrying capacity of the environment (Meadows et al., 1972). Environmental carrying capacity refers to the ability of the natural environment to support life and provide resources for living things. When the carrying capacity of the environment decreases due to overexploitation, the balance of the ecosystem will be disturbed. This can threaten the sustainability of human life itself, such as the occurrence of food crises, clean water scarcity, global warming, and various other environmental problems (Chapra, 2008).

(Jackson, 2009, p. 103) argues that there is a social-consumerist logic inherent in the modern capitalist economic system. This logic creates a constant need for economic growth and greater consumption to maintain social and employment stability. As a result, society is caught in a vortex of consumerism and unsustainable exploitation of natural resources. Advertising seeks to make people want what they don't need, thus generating new desires in their lives (Jain & Jain, 2019).

Some hedonistic behaviors are actually in the environment around us, or even we do it without realizing it. Like the nature of shopping, especially when there is a discount event some of us will flock to buy it. This behavior illustrates that we are less able to control ourselves from living in momentary pleasure. Another example is buying delicious food all the time, besides including wasteful behavior that Allah does not like, it will also cause food waste or food waste if it is not spent. The amount of food waste that accumulates can cause serious problems for the environment including increasing the production of greenhouse gas emissions. In the Islamic view, food should be grateful because it is a gift and should not be squandered.

Figure 1.2 example of food waste, source: Freepik.

To overcome the environmental crisis caused by consumerism and hedonism, an approach that integrates the perspectives of Sufism and ecology is needed. Sufism provides a spiritual and ethical foundation to control consumerism and hedonism, while ecology provides a scientific understanding of the importance of maintaining the carrying capacity of the environment. Developing Spiritual Awareness and Environmental Ethics One of the main solutions that can be offered is to develop spiritual awareness and environmental ethics in society. The teachings of Sufism can provide a spiritual foundation to control lust and cultivate mutmainnah lust that is in harmony with divine will (Al-Ghazali, 1995). To overcome consumerism and hedonism, there needs to be an effort to revive the values of Sufism in modern society. This can be done through education, lectures, and campaigns that teach the importance of living simply, controlling passions, and living in harmony with nature (Foltz et al., 2003).

Figure 2. Example Of Food Waste, Source: Freepik.

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Meanwhile, the ecological perspective can strengthen awareness about the importance of maintaining the carrying capacity of the environment and the balance of the ecosystem (Meadows et al., 1972). By integrating these two perspectives, people can foster awareness and moral responsibility to live simply, respect natural resources, and minimize negative impacts on the environment (Nasr, 1996; Foltz et al., 2003). With that, it is also expected that humans can adopt a simpler lifestyle, respect natural resources, and live in harmony with nature. Society must cultivate awareness to control consumptive and hedonistic desires, and prioritize basic needs and environmental sustainability (Nasr, 1996; Foltz et al., 2003). Promoting Environmentally Friendly Lifestyles From an ecological perspective, a solution that can be offered is to promote environmentally friendly lifestyles that reduce the exploitation of natural resources. This can be achieved through public education, government policies, and incentives for individuals or companies that implement sustainable practices (Spaargaren & Mol, 2008). Finally, developing a Circular Economy and the 3R Concept (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) One important effort is to develop a circular economy and apply the 3R principle (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) in production and consumption. This can reduce the exploitation of natural resources and the waste produced, thus maintaining the carrying capacity of the environment (Chapra, 2008).

Discussion

The following content has been analyzed in relation to consumerism and hedonism that are pervasive in society:

Content analysis of the video titled "The Challenge of a Hedonistic Lifestyle, Here's How Islam Answers" from the Muslimah Media Center channel.

In this content, Ustadzah Wiwing Noraeni as a resource person conveyed the Islamic view of hedonism behavior. The Prophet actually taught us to live simply, the Prophet and his companions donated all their wealth only in the way of Allah. Muslims have been designated by Allah as khairu ummah or the best people. But with globalization, Muslims are faced with hedon and consumptive life. Hedonism is actually contrary to the teachings of Islam which teaches simplicity. This means that the lifestyle of hedonism is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Hedonism has a negative impact such as the emergence of consumptive behavior, wastefulness, and trying to justify all means to achieve worldly happiness. Meanwhile, Islam interprets life as a field of charity as a life savings in the hereafter. Hedonism arises because we live in a capitalist system that teaches people to live materialist, individualist, and hedonistic lives. To avoid this, we must return to the teachings of Islam, namely living simply or zuhud. Islam teaches that humans are khalifah or caretakers of the earth. Consumers are encouraged to choose environmentally friendly products and must separate between needs and wants. Islam calls on mankind to avoid waste and organize lifestyles according to the average economic level of the community so that the poor do not feel inferior.

Content analysis with the title Trend Lifestyle of Youth in the Modern ERA from the Paradox channel.

This content contains interviews with several sources, namely Jogja residents who are mostly students. With the cover of the content that reads Getting to know the most consumptive gen-z. From all the interviews that have been conducted, it can be concluded that technological advances always demand humans so that they give rise to the term trend. The trend of fashion, makeup, or skincare is followed by the average gen-z society. The income from their side jobs is actually not always sufficient for them to spend on following these trends. Some buy it just because of prestige. This behavior is included in consumptive behavior. Indeed, gen-z is the one who turns the wheels of the economy, but we need to consider again, we buy it because we need it or just want it.

Content analysis with the title Consumerism from the Our Changing Climate channel.

The content explains the history of consumerism, which began with American Christmas Day activities that increased emissions of complex consumption. Many studies have found that once a person's needs are met, extra consumption does not increase their well-being. Despite the fact that corporations are known to be the main cause of 70% of global emissions, the reality is that the people who use the products of those corporations burning the fuel are us. When people in wealthy countries indulge in luxury goods and new technologies, they use energy at much higher levels of emissions compared to the majority of countries whose populations are affected by climate change. The blame for overconsumption should not and cannot be placed solely on individuals, but rather on the governments and corporations that created this mess. The level of consumption in each country is of course different. We are led to believe that growing the economy, which for individuals means buying more, supporting new eco-friendly technologies, or wearing eco-friendly clothes, is how we stop climate change. Whatever one does to change their consumption behavior, global emissions will continue to rise. This is a complex systematic problem for which global companies bear a great deal of responsibility. One solution is to reduce emissions from companies and change individual behavior. In short, buying nothing you don't need is better for the environment and climate.

CONCLUSION

In terms of Sufism and ecology, consumerism and hedonism have proven to be the root of the alarming decline in the carrying capacity of the environment. While Sufism teaches the

values of simplicity, connectedness, and blessings in every action, consumerism and hedonism invite the fulfillment of unlimited desires that ultimately destroy nature. Through deep reflection, we are reminded of the importance of returning to the values of wisdom, awareness, and connectedness with the universe.

As a global society, our challenge is to change our mindset and consumptive behavior to be more sustainable and responsible. By strengthening ecological awareness and integrating Sufism values into our daily lives, we can shape a more harmonious future between humans and nature.

Thus, let us join hands in preserving nature, enriching spirituality, and reviving the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and the Creator. Together, we have the power to create positive change for future generations and the planet we inhabit.

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