

# Growing Environmental Awareness Through The Use of Social Media By The Semarang City Environmental Office

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## Abstract

*Environmental awareness is increasingly urgent in facing current global environmental challenges. In order to achieve environmental conservation goals, the use of social media by local governments is becoming increasingly important. This research discusses the main role played by social media in facilitating the growth of environmental awareness by the Semarang City Environmental Service. This study explores various aspects of the strategies and initiatives taken by the Environmental Service to use social media as an environmental communication and campaign tool. The research methodology includes content analysis of the agency's social media, in-depth interviews with agency staff involved in social media management, and surveys of people who actively participate in environmental programs distributed via social media. The research results revealed various strategies for using social media, including environmental campaigns, outreach, and promotion of regional environmental programs. Social media is used to disseminate information about environmental issues, gather public support, and mobilize real action in environmental conservation. In addition, this research also evaluates the impact of the agency's use of social media in achieving environmental awareness goals, including changes in attitudes and community participation in environmental activities. However, the research also identified several challenges, such as efficient content management and changes in social media algorithms that can impact message reach. This research concludes that the use of social media by the Semarang City Environmental Service has succeeded in increasing environmental awareness in the community. The implication of this research is that social media can be a very effective tool in supporting local government efforts to increase environmental awareness at the community level. Recommendations are provided to strengthen the use of social media and overcome challenges that may arise in the process. It is hoped that higher environmental awareness will have a positive impact on environmental conservation in Semarang City and elsewhere in Indonesia.*

Keywords: Environmental Awareness; Use of Social Media; Community Participation.

## Introduction

In this modern era, awareness of environmental issues is increasing in various countries, including Indonesia. One of the important environmental issues is the waste problem, which is a serious challenge in maintaining environmental sustainability and public health. In this case, waste is one of the main causes of problems in every region in Indonesia. In this case, waste management is an interesting thing to study, because waste here is one of the main causes of flooding in the rainy season. Like plastic waste which is very difficult to decompose in the environmental ecosystem.

Semarang City, as one of the big cities in Indonesia, is facing similar problems related to waste management. Based on data from DLH, before the pandemic, waste production reached 1,437 tons per day. Meanwhile, during the pandemic or around the beginning of 2020, waste decreased by 900 tons per day, the total daily waste production in the city of Semarang was almost 17 percent or 187 tons was organic waste, or 73 thousand tons of organic waste per year, from this data. This condition makes the Jatibarang landfill which has a capacity of 60 thousand tons even more worrying (Source: <https://jateng.tribunnews.com/2022/11/23/pen-gelolaan-sampah-berbasis-community-jadi-jurus-jitu-atasi-over-load-trash-in-semarang>)

city accessed on March 3 2023).

In an effort to overcome the waste problem, organizations have emerged that call the association an environmental community that has good goals for environmental sustainability, one of which is the waste bank community "Semarang Wegah Nyampah". This waste bank community is still under the auspices of the Semarang City Environmental Service which emerged as a community initiative in managing and reducing waste at the local level. Through social media it has become a popular and powerful platform for communication and sharing information. The Semarang City Waste Bank Community "Semarang Wegah Nyampah" is actively voicing positive calls for awareness in proper waste management. People are increasingly dependent on social media in their daily lives, including in terms of environmental awareness. In this context, the waste bank community in Semarang City can utilize social media as a means of creating wider environmental awareness among the community. Through social media, the waste bank community can convey environmental messages, share knowledge and best practices, and mobilize community participation effectively.

Therefore, this research aims to fill this knowledge gap and see to what extent the use of social media by the waste bank community "Semarang Wegah Nyampah" can influence the formation of environmental awareness among the community.

## **Literature Review**

In Saputra's research, 2017, entitled "Fostering Environmental Awareness through Social Media-Based Habituation to Foster Moral Virtue towards Environmental Conservation". This research aims to describe the development of environmental awareness through social media-based habituation in order to foster moral virtue towards environmental preservation, the implementation of citizenship education learning through social media-based habituation as an effort to foster environmental awareness.

In Fatmalasari's research, 2019, entitled "Strengthening Ecological Citizenship as an effort to change people's environmentally

conscious behavior through the Kampung Selo Beraksi program (Study in Pojok Village, Tawang Sari District, Sukoharjo Regency)". This research aims to find out: (1) Strengthening ecological citizenship in changing environmentally conscious people's behavior through the Kampung Selo Beraksi program; (2) Obstacles faced in realizing the Kampung Selo Beraksi program. This research uses qualitative research methods and a descriptive research approach. The results of this research include: (1) Strengthening ecological citizenship is needed to raise community environmental awareness through environmentally friendly activities, namely the Kampung Selo Beraksi program. (2) The obstacles faced in realizing the Kampung Selo Beraksi program come from internal and external sources.

In Ismiwati's research, 2013. Entitled "Overview of Community Participation in waste management at the independent UKM waste bank in RW 002 Tamamaung Village, Panakkukang District, Makassar City". This research aims to determine the description of community participation in waste management at the UKM Mandiri waste bank in RW 002, Tamamaung District. This research uses a qualitative case study approach. The results of the research are that the level of community knowledge is categorized as good, the level of attitude, the level of action and the community who are waste customers are categorized as good and those who are not waste bank customers are also categorized as good. (Ismawati, 2016).

Based on several existing studies, the researcher's research examines the formation of environmental awareness through the use of social media by the Semarang city waste bank community (case study of the Semarang Wegah Waste Community). The researcher's research discusses the strategies used in forming environmental awareness through the use of social media by the Waste Bank in Semarang City on the Semarang Wegah Nyampah account, then regarding the public's response and participation in the environmental awareness campaign carried out through the Semarang Wegah Nyampah social media. This research aims to determine strategies for creating environmental awareness in the community through the use

of social media by the Waste Bank in Semarang City.

## Method

This research was conducted at the Semarang City Environmental Service. The method used in this research is descriptive, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The descriptive method is a method that examines the status of a group of people, an object, a condition, a system of thought, or a group of events in the present. The purpose of using descriptive

The research method is to make it artistic, factual and accurate. description or description of facts and particular characteristics of a population or region. The reason why researchers raised this theme is Community Involvement in growing legal awareness.

### *Data Collection Techniques*

Data collection techniques are the most strategic step in research, because the main aim of research is to obtain data. The data collection techniques that will be used in this research are as follows:

#### 1. Observation

According to Sutrisno Hadi in Sugiyono (2010:203), "Observation is a complex process, a process that consists of various biological and psychological processes." Some of the information obtained using this observational data collection technique includes: space (place), perpetrator, activities, objects, actions, events, times and feelings. (Noor, 2011: 140). This research uses participatory observation with a type of observation with passive participation, namely the researcher comes to the research location but is not involved in the activities there.

#### 2. Interview

Interviews are data collection a technique characterized by two people meeting to exchange ideas and information through questions and answers. Esterberg (Sugiyono, 2010:233) suggests several types of interviews, namely:

A. Structured interviews (Structured interviews) Structured interviews are used as a data collection technique, if the researcher or

data collector knows exactly what information will be obtained.

B. Semi-structured interview (Semistructured interview) This type of interview is included in the in-depth interview category, where its implementation is freer compared to structured interviews.

C. Unstructured interviews: Unstructured interviews are free of charge, interviews where the researcher does not use an interview guide that has been prepared systematically and completely for data collection. The type of interview used in this research is a structured interview, where the researcher conducts the interview first.

## Result and Discussion

This research discusses the efforts of the Waste Bank community in collaboration with the Semarang City Environmental Service in raising environmental awareness through the use of social media. Based on analysis and observations of the Waste Bank community, we obtained the following results:

Utilization of Social Media as an Educational Tool: The Waste Bank Community has used social media as the main platform to educate the public about environmentally friendly practices, wise waste management, and the benefits of recycling. They regularly publish articles, videos and posts that provide relevant and educative information.

Increase in Membership and Community Involvement: Over the past few years, the Waste Bank community has seen a significant increase in membership and community involvement. Social media allows them to interact with members and the public, answer questions, and promote their activities. This reflects that the people of Semarang are increasingly interested in participating in environmental conservation initiatives.

Use of Visual Content and Success Stories: The Waste Bank Community has effectively used visual content such as images and videos to document their activities. They also often share success stories from community members who have succeeded in changing their behavior to be more sustainable. This provides inspiration to society and shows that positive change is achievable.

The results of this research indicate that the Waste Bank community in partnership with the Semarang City Environmental Service has succeeded in utilizing social media as an effective tool in raising environmental awareness. Some points that need to be considered in the discussion are:

**Educational Role:** The use of social media as an educational tool has proven itself in changing people's perceptions and behavior towards the environment and waste. The Waste Bank Community has become an effective change agent in spreading knowledge and information about sustainable practices.

**Community Participation:** The increase in community members and participation reflects that social media has succeeded in motivating the community to get involved in environmental conservation efforts. This is a positive indication that environmental awareness is growing among the people of Semarang.

**Importance of Narratives and Success Stories:** The use of success stories and positive narratives has helped in inspiring people to follow suit and practice sustainable behavior. This shows that positive messages and personal motivation can have a strong influence.

However, the challenges facing the Waste Bank community include limited resources and the potential to reach more levels of society. Continued efforts could include further strategy development in social media, increased collaboration with the Environmental Service, and reaching out to communities that may not have been reached.

## **Conclusion**

The use of social media by the Waste Bank community in collaboration with the Semarang City Environmental Service has been successful in raising environmental awareness and increasing community participation in environmental conservation efforts. Next steps could include developing a more sophisticated social media strategy, reaching out to the broader public, and investing in human resources who understand the world of social media and environmental awareness. In this way, the Waste Bank community has paved the way for innovation

in more effective environmental awareness through social media.

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