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COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF ORGANIC AND INORGANIC WASTE MANAGEMENT TO ACHIEVE ENVIRONMENTAL CLEANLINESS IN KOSAR VILLAGE, CIPEUNDEUY SUBDISTRICT, SUBANG REGENCY

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Abstract

The waste problem in Kosar Village, Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency, does not stem solely from inadequate infrastructure, but also from the way residents perceive and manage waste, particularly the habit of mixing kitchen waste with plastic wrappers and cans in a single disposal container. This study aims to examine the extent to which residents of Kosar Village understand the differences between organic and inorganic waste, as well as to identify the factors underlying their relatively simple waste management practices. The researchers conducted direct field observations, interviewed community leaders and environmental cadres, and reviewed supporting documents from the village office. The findings indicate that residents' understanding of waste classification is relatively adequate; however, this understanding is rarely followed by consistent action. Waste sorting is still considered inconvenient and has not yet become part of residents' daily habits. This condition is largely influenced by limited environmental education, the lack of adequate waste-sorting facilities, and long-standing practices of burning or indiscriminately disposing of waste. This study concludes by proposing several practical measures, including continuous and tiered environmental education and strengthening the role of environmental cadres, which are expected to encourage changes in residents' habits toward more organized and sustainable waste management.

Keywords: Community Awareness, Organic Waste, Inorganic Waste, Environmental Cleanliness, Waste Management

INTRODUCTION

In many parts of Indonesia, the amount of waste generated by communities continues to increase along with population growth and changes in lifestyle, ranging from shopping habits to patterns of food consumption. This condition is not only a problem in major cities; small rural communities are also facing similar challenges, although in different forms and scales. When waste is allowed to accumulate without proper management, its impacts can extend to various aspects of daily life, including water pollution, the spread of disease, and declining comfort and quality of life within the community.

Kosar Village in Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency, represents a small-scale

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example of this problem. Initial field observations revealed a situation commonly found in many rural areas: kitchen waste, plastic packaging, and used cans are disposed of together in the same container. Some waste is burned in residents' yards, while other waste ends up in vacant land or along nearby rivers. Such practices do not necessarily indicate that residents are completely indifferent to environmental conditions; rather, they demonstrate that environmental concern has not yet been transformed into consistent daily actions.

One relatively simple starting point for improving this situation is encouraging residents to sort their waste at the household level. However, this seemingly simple step is difficult to implement without sufficient understanding and support from the surrounding social environment. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the level of community awareness regarding organic and inorganic waste management in Kosar Village, while also identifying the factors that prevent such awareness from being translated into daily habits.

Based on the above background, this study seeks to answer one main question: what is the level of awareness among the residents of Kosar Village, Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency, regarding organic and inorganic waste management, and what factors shape this awareness as a basis for promoting cleaner and more sustainable village environments? This study was developed based on observations and direct activities carried out as part of the Community Service Program (KKNM) in Kosar Village, including an environmental clean-up activity conducted together with local residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definition of Awareness

In everyday conversation, awareness is often simply equated with knowledge, although the two concepts are not identical. A person may know that plastic waste is harmful to the environment, but such knowledge does not necessarily lead them to stop burning plastic in their yard. Awareness is more appropriately understood as the connection between what a person knows and how they respond to that knowledge through actual behavior. It develops gradually and is shaped by personal experiences, environmental habits, and continuous learning processes rather than emerging instantly.

When related to environmental issues, awareness can be observed through the extent to which individuals feel involved and responsible for the conditions of their surroundings, rather than merely knowing that an unclean environment is undesirable. Signs of growing environmental awareness can often be seen in small actions, such as residents becoming uncomfortable when they see waste scattered around, being willing to participate in community clean-up activities, or gradually changing the habit of indiscriminate disposal into the practice of sorting waste.

Several factors generally influence how quickly such awareness develops within a community, including residents' educational backgrounds, the frequency with which they receive information or environmental education, long-standing habits passed down through generations, the availability of supporting facilities such as waste-sorting bins, and the presence of local figures who are willing to set examples through direct action rather than simply giving instructions.

Definition of Organic Waste

Organic waste generally refers to waste originating from materials that were once part of living organisms, whether from plants or animals, and which can naturally decompose through the activity of microorganisms within a relatively short period. In households, examples include onion skins, leftover rice, coconut residue, used banana leaves, and animal manure from residents who raise livestock. Because organic waste decomposes relatively easily, it actually has considerable potential for reuse that is often overlooked. When properly processed, it can be turned into compost for improving soil fertility or used as additional livestock feed.

Unfortunately, this potential is rarely utilized optimally. Even simple composting methods can significantly reduce the volume of waste that must be transported to final disposal sites while also creating opportunities for additional income through compost or manure products. On the other hand, when organic waste is left to accumulate without proper treatment, its decomposition can create new problems, including unpleasant odors, the presence of flies and rats, and leachate that may seep into and contaminate surrounding soil and groundwater.

Definition of Inorganic Waste

Unlike organic waste, inorganic waste originates from non-living materials and is generally produced through industrial processing. Examples include plastic packaging, glass bottles, beverage cans, and paper coated with waterproof materials. One of its main characteristics is its very slow decomposition process, which for some materials can take decades or even hundreds of years. Nevertheless, not all inorganic waste has to end up as useless waste. Used paper, metal, and certain types of plastic can still be sold or processed into new products through recycling.

When inorganic waste is disposed of without sorting, its impacts tend to become more apparent over the long term because these materials do not quickly disappear from the environment. Burning plastic is also not an appropriate solution because it can release harmful smoke and substances into the air. A more appropriate approach is to consistently apply the 3R principles: reducing the use of single-use products (reduce), reusing containers or packaging that are still suitable for use (reuse), and sending recyclable waste to waste collectors or waste banks (recycle). Through these practices, the amount of waste sent to final disposal sites can be reduced.

Waste Management

In general, waste management consists of a series of interconnected stages, beginning with efforts to reduce waste generation at its source, followed by sorting, collection, transportation, processing, and the safe management of residual waste. Among these stages, sorting at the household level is often underestimated, even though it is a crucial step. Once organic and inorganic waste are separated from the beginning, subsequent processing becomes considerably easier and more efficient, as also emphasized in regulations governing household waste management.

Environmental Cleanliness

Environmental cleanliness does not simply mean being free from visible piles of waste. It also involves aspects that are sometimes overlooked, such as unpleasant odors, stagnant dirty

water, and dust or smoke resulting from waste burning. Environmental conditions are generally not created by chance but are shaped by clean and healthy living habits practiced consistently by community members.

When environmental cleanliness is maintained, its benefits can be felt directly. Residents are less likely to experience health problems, their surroundings become more comfortable, and the village appears more organized and pleasant. This also applies to rural areas such as Kosar Village.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach because its purpose was not to measure numerical data but to gain an in-depth understanding of how residents of Kosar Village perceive and practice waste management in their daily lives. Data and field experiences were obtained during the implementation of the Community Service Program (KKNM) of Universitas Subang in Kosar Village, Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency.

The informants consisted of local residents, village officials, and environmental cadres who were familiar with waste-related issues in the area. Data were collected through three complementary methods: direct observation of residential areas, in-depth discussions with key informants, and examination of supporting documents from the village office. The study was also supported by a direct environmental clean-up activity conducted together with local residents as part of the KKNM work program.

All collected data were subsequently summarized, filtered to identify relevant information, and organized into a comprehensive description before conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Waste Management Conditions in Kosar Village

Field observations revealed that very few households routinely separate kitchen waste from plastic packaging and used cans. The more common practice is to mix all types of waste in a single container and then burn it in the yard or dispose of it in vacant land or nearby waterways once the container becomes full. The lack of separate waste-sorting bins, combined with waste collection services that have not yet reached all areas of the village, has allowed these long-standing practices to continue with little change.

Level of Community Awareness

Interestingly, discussions with residents indicated that most of them actually have a fairly good understanding of which types of waste are organic and which are inorganic. However, this understanding often remains at the level of knowledge and is rarely translated into the daily practice of waste sorting. This gap between “knowing” and “doing” is one of the reasons why community awareness of waste management can be considered moderate to low.

Several factors appear to widen this gap, including the limited frequency of environmental education reaching neighborhood-level communities, long-standing habits of disposing of and burning mixed waste, and the relatively limited involvement of environmental cadres and village officials in actively encouraging residents to take collective action.

Efforts to Increase Awareness and Environmental Cleanliness

Considering these conditions, the most urgent step is not merely to install more warning signs, but to provide environmental education that directly relates to residents' daily lives. This can be conducted through neighborhood meetings, announcements at local mosques, or practical examples from village officials and community leaders who first implement waste sorting in their own households.

In addition, providing separate waste-sorting bins and strengthening the role of environmental cadres—for example, through the establishment of a waste bank or community-based composting activities—could serve as more tangible drivers of change. Through these efforts, environmental cleanliness in Kosar Village can be maintained not because residents are forced to do so, but because proper waste management gradually becomes a shared community habit.

CONCLUSION

The residents of Kosar Village, Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency, generally have a sufficient understanding of the differences between organic and inorganic waste. However, this knowledge has not yet been widely translated into the daily practice of sorting waste. The gap between understanding and implementation is primarily influenced by limited environmental education that directly reaches residents, inadequate waste-sorting facilities, and long-standing habits of disposing of and burning mixed waste.

Therefore, a more realistic approach is to provide continuous environmental education that directly addresses residents' daily lives, improve the availability of adequate waste-sorting facilities, and strengthen the active involvement of environmental cadres and village government. These efforts are expected to help maintain environmental cleanliness in Kosar Village not merely as a temporary project, but as a sustainable community habit.

Activity Documentatio

The following section presents documentation of an environmental clean-up activity carried out together with residents of Kosar Village, Cipeundeuy Subdistrict, Subang Regency. The activity was conducted as part of efforts to increase community awareness of waste management and promote environmental cleanliness.

Figure 1. Distribution of trash bins to each hamlet, with the bins stored at the Kosar village hall

Figure 2. School children, residents, and KKNM students cleaning the open field

Figure 3. Neighborhood cleanup activity in RW 2, Kosar Village

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