Media, Consumerism and the Environment: The Relationship of Media and Consumptive Behavior of Urban Society to Environmental Damage

Mohtazul Farid, Dani Saputra
Universitas Trunojoyo Madura, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta
Email: mohtazul.farid@trunojoyo.ac.id, danirumi02@gmail.com

Abstract: In a few decades, the media has become the locomotive that controls the consumptive behavior of society, especially in urban areas. Massive media that aggressively offers easy access to meet all kinds of urban community needs encourages consumerism. The trend of consumerist urban lifestyle in the end must take consequences for environmental damage. As with Fast Food and Fashion which results in increased industrial production, the energy required for production is higher. At the same time, the energy used also comes from the exploitation of the earth. Scholars such as Jean Baudrillard suggest that people do not buy goods, but buy signs that ultimately symbolize themselves to confirm which group they belong to and belong to. To contribute to the existing studies, the study in this article aims to explore and analyze the relation of media to the consumptive behavior of urban society and its impact on environmental damage. By using the perspective of Jean Baudrillard, the media is the most significant contributor that encourages consumerism in urban communities so that it has an impact on environmental damage. The reality of the media has created a false consciousness so that consumer society only consumes signs, not goods and services. The emergence of visual waste impacts urban society's consumerism, resulting in the loss of public space and the strengthening of the greenhouse gas effect.
Keywords: *Consumerism, Media, Urban Society, Environment*

Abstrak: Dalam beberapa dekade, media menjadi lokomotif yang mengendalikan perilaku konsumtif masyarakat khususnya di kawasan perkotaan. Masifnya media yang gencar menawarkan akses kemudahan dalam memenuhi segala ragam kebutuhan masyarakat urban mendorong terjadinya konsumerisme. Tren gaya hidup masyarakat urban yang konsumeris pada akhirnya harus mengambil konsekuensi atas kerusakan lingkungan. Sepertihalnya *Fast Food and Fashion* yang berakibat pada meningkatnya produksi indrusti, sehingga energi yang dibutuhkan untuk produksi semakin tinggi, sedangkan energi yang digunakan juga berasal dari eksploitasi bumi. Para cendekia sebagaimana Jean Baudrillard mengisyaratkan bahwa masyarakat sebenarnya memang tidak membeli barang, akan tetapi membeli tanda yang pada akhirnya menyimbolkan diri, untuk menegaskan dari kelompok mana mereka berasal dan berada. Untuk berkontribusi atas kajian yang sudah ada, kajian dalam artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dan menganalisis relasi media dengan perilaku konsumtif masyarakat urban dan dampaknya terhadap kerusakan lingkungan. Dengan menggunakan perspektif Jean Baudrillard, media menjadi penyumbang terbesar yang mendorong konsumerisme masyarakat urban sehingga berdampak pada kerusakan lingkungan. Realitas media telah membentuk kesadaran palsu sehingga masyarakat konsumeris hanya mengkonsumsi tanda bukan barang dan jasa. Munculnya sampah-sampah visual menjadi imbas konsumerisme masyarakat urban yang mengakibatkan hilangnya ruang publik dan menguatnya efek gas rumah kaca.
Kata Kunci: Konsumerisme, Media, Masyarakat Urban, Lingkungan

Introduction

A person who consumes an item means that he aims to reduce or spend the item's usability, both in the form of services and objects to meet needs and immediate satisfaction. The word consumption has two meanings: the use of goods that directly meet the needs of human life, and the use of goods resulting from production. Based on this understanding, it can be concluded that consumers spend their income to obtain what is needed, both in consumer goods and services. However, what is unfortunate is that consumers buy goods or services not because of need, but desire to gradually create a consumptive lifestyle (Kushendrawati, 2010). This model society eventually behaves excessively (wasteful), because it no longer prioritizes needs but desires, loses the priority scale, and lives a luxurious life without considering the benefits.

In this case, Marx emphasizes the urgency of the production process in the economy, which has two aspects: use value and exchange value (Marx, 1973). Use value or use value is nothing but the usefulness of an object in meeting particular needs. In contrast, exchange value focuses on the exchange rate related to the product's value in the market or other relevant object (Lechte, 2006). Baudrillard tries to see from a different perspective that an object involves use values and exchange values and involves symbolic values and sign values. This means humans no longer consume an object according to their needs and the required exchange value, but there are also symbolic and sign abstract values.

Furthermore, Baudrillard concludes that it is no longer production at the core of the economy, but consumption. Where this condition has taken over an important role in human life. Consumption invites humans to seek happiness no longer, not seek equality, and lose the intensity to homogenize. On the other hand, humans even enforce differentiation (objection) which is used in terms of lifestyle and values. Baudrillard calls this kind of society a consumerist society, whether recognized or not, has become a reality in our society (Baudrillard, 2016b).

Jean Baudrillard is a postmodern philosopher who focuses his discourse on consumer society which is closely related to the sign system. The sign here is an essential part of today's consumerist society. According to him, the current consumption has become part of the consumption of signs, where goods and services are no longer a priority for use, but instead on the fulfillment of signs and symbols inherent in these goods and services. People end up only consuming the images contained in the goods

and services themselves, so that people as consumers will lose their sense of satisfaction and trigger continuous consumption. The daily life of every human being is seen from the consumption activities of the desired goods and services based on the image given by a product (Baudrillard, 1994). This is what ultimately helps in determining a person's lifestyle.

Through television media, for example, the advertisements shown there, this wrong thing gets a place and then grows new realities which eventually creates a hyperreality. Borrowing Baudrillard, hyperreality is defined as the elimination of the difference between the imaginary and the real. A condition in which there is a falsehood and authenticity will blend into creating facts that merge with engineering. Categories such as truth, authenticity, falsehood, issues, and reality seem to no longer have a place in such a world (hyperreality), finally creating false self-awareness. where advertising has created a new reality that has absolutely nothing to do with actual conditions. However, because these advertisements are shown repeatedly, the fake reality is finally accepted as the fundamental reality (Baudrillard, 2016a).

As a result, the objective reality loses its power or is no longer considered reality. From here then simulacra gets space to regulate, even shape reality according to the desired interests. Baudrillard defines simulacra as the process of creating an accurate model through forms that are entirely unrelated to the original reality reference. This makes humans feel they are in a world of supernatural, illusion, fantasy, and fantasy that turns into reality. Simulacra in short can be interpreted as the relationship of various signs and codes without an apparent reference. Simulacra codes are essential, in the sense that the code allows us to eliminate reality. Simulacra is an image change process that is not related to reality, it has no reference, is a duplication which in the end, the boundary between the original and the duplicated becomes blurred (Baudrillard, 1994).

The most significant contributor in the formation of this simulcara paradigm is the media. Changes in the political system in a country will undoubtedly impact the mass media system, and affect the content of the media. However, in Indonesia, according to research conducted by LeSPI (Institute for Studies and Information) on the comparison of news content during the New Order and Reform Order eras, it is known that the content of the mass media has not entirely changed even though the political system has changed. This indication can be seen from the depiction of the contents of the mass

media related to specific fields and the use of the same latetive news sources. Issues related to the environment become a dominating daily discussion, both scientific and in the mass media. Starting from natural disasters caused by human activities, to uncontrolled climate change. This is not only because it is directly related to humans, but rather the increasing problems related to the environment (Fitryarini, 2014).

The government is not just silent about the issue of saving the environment, in this case the forest. Nevertheless, you need to know that saving the forest is not as easy as turning the palm, especially when it comes into conflict with the economy. The still massive deforestation and conversion of its functions are concrete evidence of how ineffective environmental communication in Indonesia is. Robert Cox formulated that environmental communication as a pragmatic and constitutive medium to understand the public regarding the environment, for example the relationship between humans and humans and nature (Cox, 2013). This is a medium to create a shared understanding in the community regarding environmental issues.

Consumeristic life that occurs in humans cannot stand alone. Massive model of life like this must take the consequences of the destruction of nature. For example, Fast Fashion which results in increased industrial production, in other words, the energy needed for production is higher, while the energy used also comes from the exploitation of the earth. On the other hand, the media provides space for such advertisements to continue to impact the audience which they slowly attract to follow the wishes of the production.

In unraveling the problems above, in this study the author formulates the problem as follows: How is forming a consumerist society and what are its impacts on the environment? How is the development of technology and advertising media in accommodating consumers?

Research Method

Researchers use qualitative research with literature to obtain data sources related to the research theme, which can be in the form of journal articles, books, documents, scientific works, and other library sources (Bungin, 2017). The information that has been collected is then reduced with data reduction techniques to sort out the data sources found; this aims to prevent the accumulation of the same data. The steps taken are summarizing, sorting and more centered on important information. Content

analysis describes this or the information contained in the data source (Gunawan, 2013). The data collection technique consists of steps: 1) collecting literature / library data related to the theme and research objectives, 2) grouping data sources, 3) citing the data needed.

Result and Discussion

Consumerism as a Lifestyle

People's lives today have changed following changes in consumption habits and consumptive life behavior. This model society builds great values with consumer goods and uses consumption as the core of life activities (Amir, 2003). Electronic goods, fast food, clothing brands, and others, seem to have become necessities that are increasingly difficult to abandon. People no longer buy products according to the priority needs of usability and needs, but based on prestige, prestige and just style (Pawanti, 2013). This is a reality that occurs in Indonesian society which tends to become a consumer society. If we observe that the style of dress, smartphone, food consumed, and vehicle used have become determinants for presenting a person's social status. When we visit shopping centers, phenomena like this will be expected.

Meanwhile, the lifestyle is nothing but a manifestation of the consumerist culture. Lifestyle is often associated with social class status, because it reflects the existence of someone who lives in it. This is due to how people exist in their chosen lifestyle. This is a severe concern for every individual who still wants to exist following these developments. The following lifestyle is patterned ways of investing certain parts in the value of everyday life with social or symbolic values, in other words that this is a lifestyle that is used to play with identity (Amin, 2007). For example, clothing whose primary function is to protect and cover the body has now changed, clothing is no longer a basic need, but is also used as fashion and fashion that contains messages and lifestyles from communities that live in that part of social life. Fashion has become an expression for a specific identity, where individuals will position themselves apart from others, until then it develops into an identity in a particular group (Jati, 2015). The reason for the individual in determining this model's lifestyle cannot be seen that he is independent. However, advertising also plays a significant role, as well as the clothes that are branded, are being used, and are often worn by celebrities.

Furthermore, Chaney said that lifestyle has become a "characteristic" in the modern world, so people will use lifestyle to express their actions and those involved. He also interprets that lifestyle is part of the patterns of Action to be used as a differentiator from others. One of these actions is a hedonic lifestyle whose activity patterns aim to seek pleasure, such as spending too much time playing, likes to buy expensive things, and wants himself to be the center of attention because of the luxury he has (Chaney, 2002).

Meanwhile, according to Lury, the process of creating a lifestyle that occurs in today's consumerist society is driven by several aspects, including:

1. Sufficiency of various types of goods in large quantities and constantly increasing.

2. The tendency for more massive human interactions and exchanges made possible through the market.

3. There is an increase in various shopping activities, ranging from ordering by post, malls to selling on cars and second-hand goods stores. In addition, in today's modern era, internet technology has also contributed to providing convenience in shopping offered through the online system, for example, the price is cheaper.

4. The growth of shopping centers and recreational complexes and recreational lifestyles, ranging from certain cafes to Disneyworld buildings.

5. The growing importance of packaging and promotion in the manufacture, display and purchase of consumer goods.

6. The rise of advertisements in the media, especially television, offers several products to the public.

7. Increased emphasis on style, design and appearance of goods.

8. The use of credit cards when shopping makes it easier for individuals not to have to carry large amounts of money.

9. The impossibility of avoiding the choice of consumer goods and the gratification that follows in self-transformation through lifestyle promotion (Clarke, 2013).

Consumerism and the Impact of Environmental Damage

Sometimes we do not realize that some of our habits, and maybe we take for granted, can also worsen the climate crisis. For example, with our consumptive lifestyle.

Recently, the term "fast fashion" began to emerge, a culture of human consumption increasing and resulting in more and more demands for industrial production. With the increase in industrial production, the energy needed for production is also getting higher. Meanwhile, the energy used also comes from the exploitation of the earth, which also produces greenhouse gases (Sull & Turconi, 2008).

Based on a report from the European Union, the average collection offered by Fashion Brands in the 2000s was only two. Then in 2011 there was an increase in the number of Fashion Brands reaching five. Even some Fashion Brands offer 12-24 collections every year. When there are many collection choices, it unconsciously shifts our perspective, which considers clothes to be disposable items. Especially if a cheap price accompanies it. McKinsey also reports that from 2000 to 2014 clothing production more than doubled. Meanwhile, clothing consumption per year increased by 60 percent with each garment being worn only seven to eight times (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010).

Departing from one side, namely clothing or Fast Fashion which turned out to be quite influential in environmental damage. This starts from the material for making clothes, most of which come from cotton, which is taken from nature or plantations that require a large area of land. Then to produce one pair of jeans, cotton is needed which consumes 20,000 liters of water. Meanwhile, to produce one cotton t-shirt requires 2,700 liters of water. This is equal to a person's drinking water needs for two and a half years. Cotton farming for the textile industry requires a large area of land, which is about three percent of the world's arable land. Although only three percent of the world's arable land is arable, it consumes 11% of pesticides and 24% of insecticides. The content of chemicals with such a large percentage will also damage the composition of the world's fertile soil more quickly. Not to mention the distribution process of clothes, which requires more energy materials for transportation than energy materials for the combined aircraft and shipping industries (according to the United Nations). Moreover, if the clothes are produced in sweatshops located far from consumers, it will require even more energy (Davis, 2005).

Today's fast fashion culture cannot be separated from the role of the media. The media has now shifted its function to become a determinant of truth, facts and beauty (Bruce & Daly, 2006). Although he could not be separated from the snare of simulacra in substance. How not, the media that should represent reality is now a reality that we must follow. What was initially been representative and imaginative, the problem seems

to be authentic and must be followed. For Jean Baudrillard, the social world that was initially chaotic will eventually give birth to simulacra, creating saturation. People will yearn for or reminisce on an orderly past (Baudrillard, 1994, 2016b).

First, if our surroundings end up being hyper-reality (simulacra), then what happens is that we no longer consume the function of needs, but instead consume symbols or lifestyles. Clothing is no longer interpreted as an object that functions to cover the genitals until finally its usefulness is no longer critical (Bruce & Daly, 2006).

Second, the birth of shops that provide everything we need. When we go inside, we automatically become objects. They aim to make us buy the products in the store. An example of this is the birth of supermarkets, hypermarkets and others. The logic used is no longer about value (use), but the logic of the market, the behavior and the unsold are ultimately the goal (Featherstone, 2007).

Third, the birth of visual waste in the form of banners, banners, and others on the road side contributes to the distortion of our subconscious who sees it. We will measure existence based on the visual garbage, even though it is not reality (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010).

Fourth, there is a distinction or social distance. The definition of social distance here is our distinction from others based on social tastes. The taste was born because of the consumption of different symbols. From this, social status is no longer between the rich and the poor, but is measured by these tastes. It is taste that ultimately determines and a consumption value determines social status. The main characteristic of this shallowness is that people only believe in what they see, and are reluctant to go deeper (Sassatelli, 2007).

Fifth, the loss of public space. The existence of the "ecstasy" of communication makes us drunk now. This makes one's privacy lost and eventually the inner world (private) and the public (public) become confused and unclear. Modernization has influenced the public's view of fashion itself. It is easy for people to see the appearance of the style of dress displayed by advertisements, causing them to feel the need to follow it, so that later they get a claim as a modern society. They are willing to spend much money just to be considered fashionable. They buy these products as a means of self-existence or to show their social status in society. Fashion trends that change rapidly have resulted in people competing to buy new goods (Shinta, 2018).

Reporting from www.fastcompany.com, the clothing industry is the second industry that harms the environment. 10% of the damage is caused by coloring and processing. Based on these data, the fashion industry provides employment, at least one sixth of the world's population. For example, this fashion industry requires water on a larger scale than other industries, in addition to the farming industry, which emits toxic chemical waste. It uses much energy, resulting in an impact on the environment. Furthermore, they make a significant contribution to global warming. Society and the environment eventually become victims of these impacts, the earth receives carbon emissions that result in extreme weather changes (Bhardwaj & Fairhurst, 2010).

The Development of Technology and Advertising Media towards Consumerism

Lately, technological developments are increasingly getting a proper place, starting from the development of internet information technology such as mobile and cellular phones which the makers of these products heavily market. The development of mobile phone technology, for example, has created various brands and features that make people feel left behind if they do not use the latest model. Conditions like this ultimately drive people to become more consumptive, until finally they are trapped in a consumerist lifestyle (Lury, 1996).

The rise of technology products such as smartphones cannot be separated from advertising itself, the two are interrelated sides of the coin. Any product manufacturer can promote their products through all forms of media, whether television, internet, radio, YouTube, and others. As Baudrillard said that a consumer in a consumerist society no longer consumes commodities, but rather a sign of a product, the sign is in the form of images and messages displayed by advertisements. Advertisements with all forms of publication in the mass media have an essential role to set signs to the public who are consumers. On the other hand, advertising also functions to remove the use-value of an object. People who consume a product no longer pay attention to its usefulness value, but based on the image of the product displayed by the advertisement (Davis, 2005).

Baudrillard further said that what is displayed by the media is a simulacra, including by advertising. The language used to seduce consumers is persuasive and leads consumers to be willing to buy the product by making the product look attractive (Baudrillard, 2016b). In other words, advertising aims to lead consumers to use the advertised products to gain recognition for a certain social status.

An attractive appearance can also be found when entering a shopping center, where it is not only advertisements do this. Electronic goods are deliberately placed in front of the entrance, because the supermarket knows that consumers who come to the store to buy basic needs such as food must first look at the arrangement of electronic goods or others, so that consumers will be tempted to buy them even though they are goods. it is not needed. This is what causes people to become consumers, who are always tempted to use and consume them (Miatun & Santoso, 2020).

Inadvertently, the community is formed and lived by consumption. It makes it the center of life's activities with the desire to continually use it without stopping because of needs that must always be made (Kushendrawati, 2010). Each individual's life is finally no longer accessible because it will always be dictated by goods, where he must always obey his desire to get something that is the current trend.

The advertisements displayed will eventually create new realities, until finally a hyperreality is created, eliminating the boundary between the real and the unreal (Baudrillard, 2020). For example, advertisements about body care, such as cosmetics, soaps, shampoos, perfumes, and others, it is common knowledge that what is shown in these advertisements are beautiful women who have gone through the selection stages to suit what they want. The woman must have a slim body, white skin, long black hair, so that images like that eventually form new realities that women can be called beautiful and perfect if they have these characteristics (Featherstone, 2007).

Conclusion

Fashion trends that continue to emerge from time to time eventually cause damage to the environment. Baudrillard suggests that we do not buy things, but buy signs that ultimately symbolize ourselves, to confirm which group we belong to and

belong to us. Therefore, as humans who grow and live, we should choose consumption according to our needs wisely. We consume goods not to increase prestige, being consumed by advertising persuasion, and so on. However, we buy these things because we need them. We can prioritize according to needs and not be carried away by the promises offered by advertisements.

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