

Recycling motivations and barriers in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

Abstract

Waste projection is increasing and most landfills in Malaysia are running out of space. Due to that, waste management is now becoming a major challenge. The most sustainable solution is by practicing sustainable practices such as recycling. Since 1993 the government has launched several recycling campaigns and implemented the National Recycling Policy. However, public participation is still very low. Only 10.5% of solid waste was recycled up to now which is far below than of in developed countries. Nevertheless the government is optimistic that the target of 22% recycling by 2020 will be achieved if there is a positive flow pattern in sustainable practices in particular recycling behavior among Malaysian. Understanding public motivations towards recycling domestic waste are important to improve current recycling rate. Thus this study attempts to identify what are the possible motivations and hindrances for the public to recycle. Open-ended questions format were administered to 484 people in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Two specific questions we asked to explore their general determinants and barriers in practicing recycling: "What motivates you to recycle?" and "What are the barriers you encountered in doing recycling activities?" Thematic analysis was conducted on the open-ended questions in which themes were created with the raw comments. It was found that the underlying recycling motivations are awareness' towards the environment, benefits to the society and individual, and social influence. Non participations are influence by attitudes,commitment, facilities, knowledge, inconvenience, and enforcement.