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Sustainable Consumption: Food Waste Practices

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ABSTRACT

Responsible Consumption and Production is included in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as part of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The declaration points out the fact that most of the world's population still have low levels of consumption to meet their basic needs (Goal 12 targets, UNDP, 2016). In this context, food resources and consumption of these resources have also a crucial role in attaining sustainability goals. Although the interest in achieving sustainability is often centered on production, the role of consumption activities also must not be ignored (Mylan, 2015). Additionally, the way how consumption defined is important as well. From a wider perspective, definition of consumption includes the phases of selection, purchase, use, maintenance, repair, disposal and recycling of products and services (Koskijoki, 1997'den aktaran Bhamra, Lilley & Tang, 2011). Hence disposal of food could be examined with regard to consumption activity. UNDP highlight that every year nearly one third of the food produced is discarded by final consumers and retailers or left to be spoiled during poor transportation and harvest conditions. In response to these unsustainable practices, consumers (by establishing non-profit initiatives) (Stop Wasting Food, 2008) and retailers (via regulating their operations and collaborating with various organizations) (Food Waste Case Studies - The Consumer Goods Forum, 2015) introduce creative solutions that base upon social innovation. Grounding on these developments, examining the consumption practices of final consumers and retailers within the context of food waste might reveal important insights to design a sustainable future. Particularly, finding out how food waste practices are affected by daily routines and habits with respect to the practice theory (Sahakian & Wilhite, 2014) could shed light on the possible solutions to reach "Responsible Production and Consumption" Goal.

KEYWORDS Sustainable Consumption; Practice Theory; Food Waste

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