
‘Green Consumption’ beyond mainstream economy: A discourse analysis

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In contemporary society, green consumption is a popular concept. The life styles of people and consumption behaviors are moderated in accordance to the ‘green ideology’. The process of green consumption can be observed through social behaviors such as preference of bio foods, recycling, reusing, limiting the over consumption and using environmentally friendly transport systems. However, mainstream economic analyses on green consumption argued that consumer behaviors are due to the rational choice of individuality based on utility and self-preferences. The hypothesis of this paper on consumer behavior in green consumption is configured by discourses according to the discourse analysis.

Key words: Green Economy, Green consumption, Consumerism, mainstream economy, Discourse analysis, Hegemony

Introduction

Contemporary society has become more aware of environmental issues now more than ever. The multiform concern about the environment spreads to a range of activities and social practices. ‘Green consumption’ and ‘Green Economy’ emerged as novel themes in political economy. The green consumption is one major thematic area in the discourse of consumption. Consumers’ behaviors, attitudes, marketing strategies, productions methods and business ethics have been moderated in terms of the ‘green consumption’. In recent literatures, ‘green consumption’ is the vital topics of environmental governance and ecological economies. When observing the available literatures on green consumption, most of studies analyze the green consumption on the basis of rational

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consumption as in mainstream economy (Elkington 1994, Pedersen 2000, Alfredsson 2004, Smith 2010, Abaidoo 2010). However, some literatures refer to the critical approach to analyze the green consumption (Andrew et al, 2005, Connoly and Prothero 2008, Turner 2010, Mansvelt and Robinson. 2011).

Literatures which theoretically based on the mainstream economic argument focus the green consumption and consumer behavior in the glance of the rational choice theory. Consumers are identified in the mainstream economy as a rational individual based on the logic of consumption as rational decision making process. Milton Friedman (1957) explains that the consumption depends on the individuals' preferences and restrictions which are based on the assumption of individual every time achieving the best option from their selection (Friedman 1957:12-13). Reto Foellmi (2005) denotes that economic activities such as production and consumption, finally, decide on the individual needs and individual desires (Foellmi 2005:1-3). The rational choice theory presumes that choices of buyers and sellers in market are configured by particular assumptions: consumers aware with a set of alternative choices which can be easily moved between those preferences, consumers are independently without any exterior influence about their choices and responsive to utility function which refers the marginal utility that the marginal utility is gradually decreasing in order to consumption (Green 2002:6-8). Mark Irving Lichbach by examining in ontology of rational theory explains that social outcomes are the unintended consequences of intentional human action which are driven through invisible hand of rationality. Moreover, in the anatomization of institutions and formation in society or economy, rationalistic ontology is that patterns of individual behavior on rational choice design the institutions (Lichbach 2003:34-36). The ontology of rational choice theory is critically questioned in the discourse theory. The discourse analysis examine that consumption is also a social construction of identities by reflective discourse practices (Fairclough et al. 1997:360). The consumption is a divergence subject that is oriented in terms of the positional characteristics which are given by discourses. A rational person who is independence from the structure as in realist theory is refused by the structuralisms and post structuralism. Especially, the position of post structuralism argument is no coherent subject as well as no coherent structure (Wullweber and Scherrer 2010:6-7).

The purpose of the paper is to critically examine the base line argument in mainstream economic that is rational individual consumer in consumption process. This study is scrutinized the green consumption as the case study by applying discourse analysis. In that analysis, it will address the research questions: “how consumers can name into nomenclature as rational individual?”, “Is it green consumption a normative configuration of individual behavior?”. This paper is organized as follows: the first section is dedicated to briefly examining the existing literature on green consumption. Under the theoretical framework, the second section with three subsections will present the basis of the argument by illustrating main analytical tools and logics in discourse analysis, mainly on innovative contribution into discourse theory Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe. The discourse analysis of green consumption with critical examination of mainstream economic arguments is analyzed in the third section. The research paper concludes with a brief summary of the findings.

1.0 Green consumption and consumer behavior : mainstream economic argument

Green consumption has been defined with reference to the natural science phenomenon. E.C Alfredsson (2004) explains that green consumption relevance to the scientific indication which is energy usage and CO₂ emission. The green consumption spreads over the institutional arrangements to individual behavioral changes. Alfredsson identify four categories in the definition of green consumption. Travel, housing and food are considered the first three categories. In the fourth category called ‘green scenario’ is included above three categories (Alfredsson 2004:516). These categories illustrate the framework of environmental friendly behavior of consumer. For instance, the ‘green diet’ concept, one of key theme for CO₂ emission reduction, is promoted by Scandinavia countries as major policy implementation on national level for training environmental friendly consumers (Alfredsson 2004:516-517). The organic farm production and bio-food consumption, and CO₂ emission low energy usage are illustrious consumption patterns in ‘green consumption’ (Pedersen 2000:193).

Within the last thirty years, the concern on market and economy has dramatically changed. Ken Peattie and Martin Charter show the transformation of market outlook from 1970s to 1990s. In 1970s, there was the concern about environmental issues on the

emphasis as 'environmental problems on market' with focus of local problems such as pollution. Also, the connectivity between environment and business was negative effects. After 1990s, the paradigm was changed into 'green' with boarder systematical issues such as politics, economic and legal with focus on global scale. The interrelationship between the economy, society and the environment is designed market oriented patter in environmental protection through concept of 'green'. Moreover, Peattie and Charter allude that this transformation is a reason to change the key concepts in marketing concept with new products styles (bio products), sustainable market concept and eco-friendly auditing system (Peattie and Charter 1992: 728-729). Primarily based on the John Elkington and Julia Hailes's 'the Green Consumer Guide' (1988), the green consumerism is defined as follow:

[the].....use of individual consumer power to promote less environmentally damaging consumption, while still satisfying consumer wants and needs' (Charter et al. 2002:10).

In other words, this quotation indicates that green consumption rely on individual consumer behaviors' on the rational decision.

The existing literatures on green consumption and consumerism approximately signify the individual consumer and social value which indicate altruism on environment in the policy framework. To John Connolly and Andrea Prothero (2008), environmentally friendly normative characteristic as the momentums in the consumer culture impacts on the environmental and economic reform in the western societies and supra-national bodies such as European Union. The concept Consumer voluntary engagement in consumer practices is identified as the core of in marketing system adjustment, academic reorientation on green consumption and political decision making mechanism (Connolly and Prothero 2008:118). The main argument of the study traces out that green consumption as the continuation of green subjectivity which emphasizes the individual responsibility on environmental risk through individualization (Connolly and Prothero 2008:117). If Connolly and Prothero mention about the political, social and cultural condition which would be impact on 'green' consumer practices, based on the theories of reflective modernization, the conclusion of the argument underlines the importance of individual behavior and their norms of environmental protection and preservation which are inbuilt self consciousness (Connolly and Prothero 2008:128- 142). They assume that

individual responsibilities which are examined through case studies are the real for people.

Rexford Abaidoo (2010) on his study refers to the 'go green' and rational electric consumer that indicates the adoption of process describes that consumption pattern moderation is regarding on the environmental friendly energy usage (Abaidoo 2010:44). The main hypothesis is that consumers are always rational individuals who consume goods and services in order to fulfill their preferences (Abaidoo 2010:45-47). The 'green' electric energy consumers are willing to pay for green source energy on the rationality of transitive preferences and maximization of utility. The failure of the system which cannot participate in consumers into green consumption of electricity is the lacuna of government policies. The structural adjustment of the macro economy would proceed with respect to the rational individual consumer. Just as, in reference to the electric consumption, Lene H. Pedersen describes that the behavior of consumers in green consumption based on certain social norms on energy conservation (Pedersen 2000:207).

Andrew Glig et al. (2005) analyze the dichotomy of green consumption and sustainable consumption with a focus on a 'new life style' of consumers that adapt new purchasing styles. Especially, this analysis mentions the relation of language and social behavior of consumers in the transformation of 'green' to 'sustainability' (Andrew et al. 2005:503). In the analytical part, by using this finding, authors connect the characteristic of individual consumer behavior with green consumption.

2.0 Discourse and Discourse analysis: theoretical framework

Discourse analysis is considered as a prominent approach in post structuralism. Generally, discourse analysis is a frequent application in linguistic analyses which have been utilized to analyze the activities and subject matters in diverse linguistic disciplines such as sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic with different phases of discourse (Brown and Yule 1991: viii). Some scholars apply discourse analysis as a research tool in political, economic and sociological studies (Hastings 2000, Howarth, Norval and Stavrakakis 2000, Burgos 2000). In refereeing McDonnell, Sara Mills points out that the discourse is not homogenous term and its contextual meaning depends on the institutional and social

practices (Mills 1991:9). David Crystal describes discourse as a set of utterance which constitute recognizable speech event (Crystal 1980:141). Annette Hasting defines the discourse as single or group of utterances or texts that determined the social domain such as academic or medical discourse (Hasting 2000:131).

By examining the post structural readings of the role of discourse, Joscha Wullweber and Christoph Scherrer define that discourse is an agglomeration of all verbal and non-verbal articulations (Wullweber and Scherrer 2010:7). Michel Foucault, more in advance from linguistic definitions of discourse, describes discourse as the system of representation. Hence, discourse is about language and practices. Here, the term language refers to the “what ones says” and practices refers the “what ones does”. The language is the mean of production of knowledge (Hall 1997:72). In the Foucault’s renowned thesis “the History of Sexuality” (1976), discourse is illustrated as tactical elements or blocks operating in the field of power relations as it is source of power and conveys power (Foucault 1990:101). Furthermore, Foucault conceptualizes discourse as the way of thinking or the state of knowledge which are formulate through texts, forms of conducts and different institutional sites in society (Hall 1997:73).

Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe denote that discourse as the totality of linguistic and non-linguistic elements. As the quotation of their implication on discourse;

In a moment we will justify this denomination; but what must be clear from the start is that by discourse we do not mean a combination of speech and writing, but rather that speech and writing are themselves but internal components of discursive totalities (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:82).

It does not mean linguistics or extra linguistic elements. They combine social practices and linguistic formation (Laclau and Mouffe 1987:82). In the other words, discourse constructs the social meaning through relational structures within particular contexts. The social meaning is ephemeral in terms of the discourse (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:6). Laclau and Mouffe explain ‘every social configuration is meaningful’. The meaning of one object defines the relation with other objects. This systemic set of relations is called discourse. If the physical fact of an object is the same, the meaning of the object is socially constructed (Laclau and Mouffe 1987:82). Hence, objects have obtained meanings in discursive articulation (Laclau and Mouffe 1987:85). To explain this discursive configuration, for instance, poppy flowers which exist in nature is

considered as a drug source and as result of the social configuration and social relation. Also, the poppy flower considered as the symbol of Veterans' Day in the United States of America. Also, Laclau and Mouffe describe the subject position of the social agent articulate in a discourse through the social configuration or relation (Laclau and Mouffe 1987:82). For instance, the systemic relation is a weapon and a person could be defined that person as a militant. Thus, Laclau and Mouffe denote that 'every identity or discursive object is constituted in the context of an action (Laclau and Mouffe 1987:83). Moreover, the discursive facts include the natural facts. If the idea of nature or natural object exist independently its own formation, social construction constitutes another meaning on it by articulating in a field of discursive. The major assumption of discourse theory is all objects are meaningful. This meaning deliberates from certain historical specific system of rules (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000:3).

According to Foucault's reading, discourse as the system of meaningful practices which determine the identities of subjects and objects (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000; 5), the subject position is determined by discourses. The structure comprises the subject by itself (Foucault 1990:185). For Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory, the subject cannot exist completely within a structure or exterior to a structure. If subject is congenital to the structure, the structure is dislocated. Thus, there is no coherent structure, because of 'failed structural identity' (Wullweber and Scherrer 2010:9). On that point, the discourse theory presumes that discourses are contingent and historically constructs (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000; 5).

Discourse analysis is applied as an analytical tool in humanities, social sciences as well as in examining the natural sciences' phenomena. Barbara Johnstone explains why it is called discourse analysis rather than saying "discourseology" or "discourse criticism" or "discourseography". For clarifying this fundamental question, Johnstone ascribes the chemical analysis that highlights two important characteristics. Firstly, discourse analysis is a methodology that examines the explicit way. Secondly, discourse analysis based on inquiring a particular research question. Furthermore, in the explanation on different between linguistic and other discourse analysis, Johnstone points out that linguistic discourse analysis refers to the language structure, change and acquisitions. Critical Interdisciplinary research questions are the main methodology with questioning

the social roles and relations, communications, identity and power relations in other discourse analysis. (Johnstone 2002:3-4). David Howarth and Yannis Stavrakakis portray discourse analysis as the practice of analyzing empirical raw material and information as discursive forms. For this analysis, linguistic and non-linguistic elements are considered (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000; 6). Philip Macnaghten alludes that discourse analysis is the process of disentanglement of the discourses which is constituted the socially constructive or constructed nature of reality by discourses (Macnaghten 1993:54). In referring Laclau and Mouffe, discourse analysis is the mapping out the discourses through four basic analytical tools and logics of discourse theory.

2.1 Four basic analytical tools

In concept of identity of discourse analysis, Laclau and Mouffe's arguments are centered on four basic analytical tools. They are *elements*, *articulation*, *moments*, and *nodal points*. Laclau and Mouffe define *articulation* as any practice which constitutes a relation among elements. This *articulation* causes to modify the identity of elements (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:105). In other words, all identities are originated by the articulation or re articulation of signifying elements (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000: 11). On that rationality, discourse is defined as the structured totality of articulatory practices (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:105). The intention is to indicate that discourse is not a practice intrinsically. The practices consist in a discursive setting rather than determine detaching from discourses (Andersen 2003:50).

The *elements* are not discursively articulated. On the other hand, elements are called as floating signifiers which cannot articulate completely into discursive field (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:113). The different positions which articulated in discourse are named as *moments*. Here, all signs in a discourse are called as *moments* (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:105). The meanings of *moments* are dissimilar from one another in accordance to 'positional differences'. Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips argue that the meaning of signs as moments is decided upon the relation to other signs within discourse (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:26). In the articulated discursive totality, '*elements* has been reduced to a moments of that totality' (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:105). However, Laclau and Mouffe argue that the transformation of *elements* to *moments* is never

accomplished completely. They explained this incapability by applying the tool *nodal points* (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:113). In referring the Jacques Derrida's view, Niels Andersen explained that every discourse has a point of reference or center of discourse that originate the positional meaning for signs as moments. This center is constantly within discourse. Laclau and Mouffe explain Derrida's idea moreover through the idea of *nodal points*. The *nodal point* is contained in the practice of articulation (Andersen 2003:51). The nodal point is a privileged sign which other signs are ordered and gained meanings (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:26). The discourse is constituted thorough this partially fixed of meaning circumference to nodal points (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:112). The certain nodal point in particular discursive field is impact on conversion elements into internal moments of different context (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000: 11). These analytical tools of discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe assist to analyze discourses.

2.2 Logics of discourse analysis

Laclau and Mouffe have differentiated the 'discourse' and the 'field of discursivity'. As mentioned above, discourse indicates the partial fixation of meaning. The field of discursivity means the surplus of meaning of articulated practices which are exterior to the considered discourse. Simply, all potentialities of meaning of objects which are ejected out from discourse belong to the 'field of discursivity'. This exclusion from a particular discourse is concerning to construct a 'unified system of meaning' (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:27 & 56). For instance, the 'bus' as an object belongs to the field of discursivity in 'literacy discourse'. The term 'order of discourse' illustrates a social space that emerges when different discourses in same realm attempt to constitute or establish the meaning. This term refers the area of discursive conflict. Laclau and Mouffe's applications of '*hegemony*' and '*antagonism*' in the discourse theory represent this area of discursive conflict – 'order of discourse' (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:56). The '*hegemony*' refers in the discourse theory the closure of the conflict through a disarticulation of the frontiers between discourses. The term '*antagonism*' in Laclau and Mouffe's analysis denotes '*the open conflict between the different discourses in a particular order of discourse*' (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:56).

According to Antonio Gramsci, hegemony is the process of establishing the existence of predominance by the social class through expanding their political, intellectual,

economic control and moral view through ‘culture’ and ‘common sense’ over whole society (Jacobitti 1980:66). Laclau and Mouffe advance the Gramsci’s concept of hegemony by deconstructing the essentialist assumptions such as class based analysis towards dynamic of articulation (Sutherland 2005:195). Laclau and Mouffe critically examine the Gramscian implication ‘*historic bloc*’ through *historico-discursive formation* and the capability of entire articulation through widening hegemony in a field of discursivity (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:114). Laclau and Mouffe define the ‘historic bloc’ as the hegemonic formation which indicates ‘a social and political space relatively unified through nodal points and *tendentially* relational identities’ (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:136). Wullweber and Scherrer explain that hegemony is a social relationship and also, an expanding discourse by excluding of competing discursive elements (Wullweber and Scherrer 2010:11). Laclau and Mouffe applied the concept of hegemony to figure out the political constitution of the social. The ontological assumption of their discourse theory is that the obtaining meanings are only within a specific discourse thorough articulation of elements into moments. Thus, the acquiring of a hegemonic position in the course of the articulation is the purpose of the discourses (Beverungen 2006:5). Thus, Laclau and Mouffe analyze the hegemonic practice in the general field of *articulatory* practices. The hegemonic articulation should achieve a considerable *articulatory* moment thorough confronting the antagonistic *articulatory* practices. Hence, the hegemonic articulation confronts antagonisms which presume the phenomena of equivalence and effect of frontiers that divide antagonistic forces. Thus, Laclau and Mouffe identify the occurrence of antagonistic forces and instability of the frontiers as two conditions for hegemonic articulation (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:135-136). These two areas explain the hegemonic practices in the logic of hegemony (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000: 11).

The subjects have different identities in the same social domain whereas those are not opposite each other (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:56). Jørgensen and Phillips argues that when it happen antagonism of identities, individual discourses excluded each of them for partially fixity of meaning as the position of contingency noticeable (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:48). Moreover, in refereeing to Laclau and Mouffe, ‘*hegemonic intervention*’ as the process that befall in antagonistic terrain articulate the uncertainty of meaning through applying forces, antagonism will absorb (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:136).

Under those circumstances, it is clearly explained that hegemonic intervention captures the fixation of elements in moments by break up antagonistic relations. However, if discourse and hegemony is equal in terms of the fixation of elements of moments, noticeably, the different between discourse and hegemony is optimal, because the fixation of meaning constitutes across discourses by colliding antagonistic relations. However, it is considered that to be successful hegemonic intervention, one discourse would dominate though dissolving antagonism (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002:48). In reference to Laclau and Mouffe's example myths and social imaginaries, Howarth, and Stavrakakis show that myths are regarded as structural dislocations which construct new spaces of representation through the hegemonic re-articulation of dislocated elements. Thereafter, myths transferred into the social imaginary, in Laclau and Mouffe's term, 'horizon', when it is neutralizing social dislocations and the social demands (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000: 11). Laclau applied this discourse analysis in his thesis 'Beyond Emancipation' (1992), to examine the concepts of universality which is propagated in Christian eschatology and particularity. The 'universal' has no its own content meaning as a signifier. Thus, its meaning is constructed conversely to the content of '*particular*' in terms of antagonistic relation or hegemonic operation. This is an *empty signifier* (Laclau 1992:134). The logic of discursive structuration is advanced through moderating the 'concept of empty signifier' by Laclau. Laclau defines an *empty signifier* as 'a signifier without a signified' (Laclau 1996:36). Furthermore, by advancing Saussure's idea of language as system of signifiers, he describes that the empty signifier as absence of totality which is unreachable because of the systemic effects of the unstable compromise between equivalence and differences (Laclau 1996:39). Therefore, the meaning of empty signifiers would depend on self interpretation or self understanding of the context, because of the plurality of significations as result of variability, non-existence or no specific. Thus, the articulation of a discourse should have to occur around an empty signifier as the nodal point. Accordingly, the emptiness of a nodal point is fundamental factor for its 'hegemonic success' (Howarth, and Stavrakakis 2000: 13).

The logic of equivalence and difference is an explanation of the impact on antagonistic relations to the discursive system. The purpose of the logic equivalence is that construct 'equal identities' which stand against a particular a discursive system (Howarth, and

Stavarakakis 2000: 16). Andersen describes that there is positive correlation between the potentiality of compatibility of elements and the articulation of equivalence between elements (Andersen 2003:60). Laclau and Mouffe explain that relation of equivalence avert the closure that mean ‘specificity of each position should be dissolved’. Hence, logic of equivalence undermines the disparity of moments by obtaining ‘the floating character of an elements’. The context is given a ‘second meaning’ through logic of equivalence (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:127). If it has differential identities for elements, the hegemonic articulation could equalize the positive determinations. The process of equivalence is constructed within a particular discourse. However, Laclau and Mouffe mention the captivating of all positive determination against a specific discursive system not a construction of a ‘system of positive differential position’ in terms of negative relation (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:128).

On contrary to logic of equivalence which is construct the ‘antagonistic poles’, the logic of difference explains the process which enervate the ‘antagonistic polarity’. In other words, logic of differences expand the system of differences by integrating the ‘disarticulated elements into an expanding order’ (Howarth, and Stavarakakis 2000: 16). Laclau and Mouffe allude that in logic of difference means the ‘breaking the system of equivalence’ through transforming objective differences by relocating the antagonism in the system (Laclau and Mouffe 1985:128).

3.0 The discourse analysis on ‘Green consumption’

The significance of the term ‘green’ is determined by the particular social context which creates and uses it. Stavarakakis argues that the ‘Green ideology is the certain political project which origin in the Western politics. In reference to R. Eckersly (1992), Stavarakakis reports that the ‘Green’ symbolizes the new political force which opposes technocratic environmentalism that is the reliance on technology alone to address environmental degradation (Stavarakakis 1997: 260). John Dryzek (1997) demonstrates the environmental discourses as the deliberation of environmental policies and politics (Dryzek 1997:20). Since 1970s, environmental activists turned more towards the radical sides of the environmental movements. The foundation of the ‘Greenpeace movements’ in 1971 was the anti-nuclear policy of the USA which was formed by a small group of

activist (Greenpeace 2011). In the context, it is clear that the ‘green’ is a socially constructed meaning rather than a neutral signification.

The term ‘green’ can also be analyzed as an empty signifier. The absence of totality in the discourse is due the equivalences and differences causing a systemic effect of uncertainty. Therefore, because of the lack of clarity and the widespread use of the term, the given meanings for ‘green’ are different from context to context. For example, political parties bestow the ‘green’ as title to the party names such as ‘green party’ (many countries in the Europe) or ‘green democrats (Hungary). With reference to the Carolyn Merchant study on the Green Politics (1992), Stavrakakis explains clearly that Green Parties agendas and manifestations are concerned more with grassroots democracy, social justice, non-violence, decentralization, community based economies than actual environmental topics (Stavrakakis 1997: 268).

There was ‘order of discourse’ before 1980s that refers to the social space between the green discourse and the discourse of consumption. These different discourses in the same realm attempt to constitute or establish the meaning in late 1980s. An important factor is the merging of the two discourses; green discourse and discourse of consumption. Rita Turner notes ‘green’ as the as the components of the discourse of consumption (Turner 2010:2279). In late 1980s, it was observed, in the ideology of green converts as the ‘*privileged empty signifier*’ or the *nodal point* of the discourse of consumption. Sandy Irvine (1989) indicates that if habits of buying green foods have been a long term tradition, the green consumption was popularized after the British company ‘the Body Shop’ won the award as ‘Company of the year 1987’(Irvine 1989: 88). This commercial attention on the unpopular social practice was the triggering point of the start of green consumption.

The ideology of ‘green’ could also be a hegemonic intervention in (the discourse of consumption). As mentioned previously, the ideology of ‘green’ as a political slogan, which was utilized by radical environmentalists and political parties, have transformed it into market and business discourses. Here, the ‘green’ was in the *field of discursivity* in relation to the discourse of consumption. If there were groups practicing green consumption, they were not noted as green consumers, nor were they considered to be as

significant as the actual green consumers in the discourse, because discourse of consumption was not a response to the 'green' ideology.

These practices could capture the new positional meaning of the social context through *hegemonic intervention* by applying market strategies and media propagation. According to the discourse analysis, the nodal point 'green' explains internal elements as internal moments in the discourse of consumption. This articulation determines meanings for the pre-existing and currently existing elements in market and economic context. The market strategies such as product, price, promotion, and distribution (Encyclopedia of Business 2011) obtained new meaning by being applied with the *nodal point* 'green'. As the discourse theory argues, the society is never complete and the meaning of institutions, relations and subjects tend to be change. Accordingly, the consumption as the process of the identity formation and subjectivity, the human relation with commodities is restructured based on the new nodal point of that particular moments (Mansvelt and Robbins. 2011; ix). This is can be identified as the partly fixation of meaning.

The green consumption configured as dominant material representation of a linguistic sign (Turner 2010:2286). Moreover, Turner argues that the term 'life style' for green consumption defines through market and political propagation. The social practices such as buying "green" products and how to be a "Green Shopper" are the new trends of the green discourse (Turner 2010:2291). The material representation is determined through labeling the products as a green and shops using the color 'green' to identify products and attract 'green' customers. These trends are evident in many of German supermarkets and 'bio-food' is growing in popularity amongst German consumers which is represented clearly high demand for such products. Organic foods are classified as merit foods, which refers to the quality of production rather than the aggregate demand in market (Mann 2003: 463). The conceptualization of green-foods in a society, such as Germany is changing the *common sense* about consumption of the society.

The position of the consumer is directly related to green consumption. Lowering consumption, recycling, reusing, and consuming green foods are all examples of this form (Mansvelt and Robbins. 2011; x), and could divide and label consumers as either an environmentally friendly or not. These divisions could indirectly moderate consumer

practices or consumption patterns of people who are not involved in green consumption. In the discourse of consumption, people are acquiring meaning as consumers. Though, these consumers are not homogenous groups, because of cultural practices, historical tradition and social behaviors. However, these different identities are integrated by the weakening of their internal differences, and transform into green consumers. According to the logic equivalence, this process requires hegemonic intervention. As Maarten Hajer mention, there would be discourse coalition which consist of '*the story line*' that produces another narration and actors who reveal this to resist the existing hegemonic discourse (Bøgelund 2007: 81::Hajer 1995: 62-65). The mass media, social and market agents which stand for green consumption as the actor of this hegemonic intervention use media propagation and advertisements as the technology to produce the 'story line' and therefore provide the intervention which leads to change.

Conclusion

According to this discourse analysis, it can be argued that rational individuals cannot be observed in the discourse of consumption. The consumers' preferences are moderated by the hegemonic discourse. If mainstream economic literatures analyzed the rational choice theory, consumers' transitive preferences and maximization of utility do not exist outside of the discourses. The external truth cannot be existed; all meanings are acquiring meanings within the discourse. However, social agents are not stationary, nor can they be permanently fixed. The meanings of social agents are the origin of discourses. Thus, a green consumer in one discourse can be a harmful practitioner against environment in another. These internal paradoxes can be observed in green consumption through the discourse analysis. Also, voluntary engagements of consumers in consumer practices cannot be occur. In contrast, the consumer's behaviors are controlled by the hegemonic discourse. The tastes, preferences, perceptions are the socially constructed. The consumer culture, consumer ethics, and consumer values within green consumerism is configured by the discourse. In brief, the rational individual consumer, according to mainstream economic studies, does not exist in the discourse analysis and there is no normative configuration of individual behavior in green consumption.

Acknowledgment

First of all, I would like to thank the Federation of German Scientists (Vereinigung Deutscher Wissenschaftler) and the project -*The Future of Food* (Zukunft der Ernährung) for the opportunity to publish this article. I am grateful to Dr. Joscha Wullweber and Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Angelika Ploeger for giving valuable comments. Also, I extend my humble gratitude to Laura Dubin, Damien Frettsome and Siyat Gaye for their feedback.

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