

## Sustainable consumption behaviour: A conceptual assessment<sup>1</sup>

### Sürdürülebilir tüketim davranışı: Kavramsal bir değerlendirme

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#### Abstract

Environmental problems caused by human activities are increasing day by day. Both the production and consumption of goods and services cause negative environmental impacts to a large extent. Governments, adopting the concept of sustainable development, develop strategies to promote sustainable consumer behaviour to eliminate these negativities. For these strategies to be effective, it is necessary to know how sustainable consumer behaviour occurs and what they are affected by. Sustainable consumption behaviour is defined as the actions consumers take not to endanger the needs of generations and to minimise waste damage on the life cycle. This study discusses sustainable consumption behaviour from a conceptual framework and includes recent studies. The study is expected to contribute to the marketing literature and guide marketing managers.

**Keywords:** Environmental Problems, Sustainability, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Marketing, Sustainable Consumption Behaviour

**Jel Codes:** M1, M3

#### Öz

İnsan faaliyetlerinden kaynaklanan çevre sorunları her geçen gün biraz daha artan bir sorun haline gelmiştir. Mal ve hizmetlerin hem üretimi hem de tüketimi büyük ölçüde olumsuz çevresel etkilere neden olmaktadır. Sürdürülebilir kalkınma kavramını benimseyen hükümetler, bu olumsuzlukları gidermek için sürdürülebilir tüketim davranışını teşvik edecek stratejiler geliştirmektedir. Bu stratejilerin etkili olabilmesi için sürdürülebilir tüketim davranışlarının nasıl oluştuğunu ve nelerden etkilendiğini bilmek gerekmektedir. Sürdürülebilir tüketim davranışı, nesillerin ihtiyaçlarını tehlikeye atmamak ve atıkların yaşam döngüsü üzerindeki zararlarını en aza indirmek amacıyla tüketicilerin aldığı önlemler olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmada, sürdürülebilir tüketim davranışı hem kavramsal bir çerçeveden ele alınmış hem de son dönemde konuya ilişkin yapılan çalışmalara yer verilmiştir. Çalışmanın pazarlama literatürüne katkı sağlaması ve pazarlama yöneticilerine yol göstermesi beklenmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Çevre Sorunları, Sürdürülebilirlik, Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma, Sürdürülebilir Pazarlama, Sürdürülebilir Tüketim Davranışı

**JEL Kodları:** M1, M3

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Submitted: 23/12/2022

Revised: 23/01/2023

Accepted: 31/01/2023

Online Published: 25/03/2023

**Citation:** Sargin, S., & Dursun, Y., Sustainable consumption behaviour: A conceptual assessment, *bmij* (2023) 11 (1): 400-412, doi: <https://doi.org/10.15295/bmij.v11i1.2184>

## Introduction

It is critical for the future of both individuals and societies to take sustainable actions in lifestyles and consumption behaviours. There are various methods for consumers' behaviours to be sustainable. Sustainable consumer behaviour includes using energy more wisely as people and households, consuming less energy, and choosing environmentally friendly products over those that could harm the environment. Minimizing household consumption does not mean a lower quality of life or poverty. When we look at the consumption habits of people and societies, it is possible to say that the current age is the age of consumption. Therefore, people's well-being and happiness are measured by the number of products they consume. What is important for people is the quantity of what is used rather than the qualitative value of what is consumed. This situation causes many problems, such as more energy use, increased waste, environmental pollution, unconscious use of resources, and more unnecessary consumption. Without reaching a certain level of awareness, preventing these problems and leaving a more liveable and sustainable future for the next generations is impossible.

Due to the enormous increase in productivity and subsequent increase in consumption, sustainability is up for discussion. In every industry, the process of globalization must include sustainability. The concept of sustainability covers social, economic, and environmental issues. Besides, conscious consumer behaviour is a major component of sustainable living. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect consumer behaviour is crucial for modifying current consumption patterns in the interest of sustainability. This will ensure resource efficiency and sustainable usage. The sustainability of consumption can be reached by using natural resources in the production process and making them accessible for consumption, ensuring that waste generated after consumption doesn't harm the environment.

When the theoretical studies on sustainable consumption behaviour in the Turkish literature are examined, it is seen that there is no conceptual article including current studies on the subject after 2011. Karalar and Kiraci's (2011) article discusses the idea of sustainable consumption with only its conceptual dimension. In this respect, the study is expected to contribute to the Turkish literature since it is a comprehensive theoretical examination of sustainable consumption behaviour containing current studies in the literature. Accordingly, in this study, a conceptual evaluation of sustainable consumer behaviour will be made by including the studies related to the subject conducted in recent years. Therefore, the study is expected to contribute to the literature and serve as a guide for marketing managers.

## Conceptual framework

### The concept of sustainability

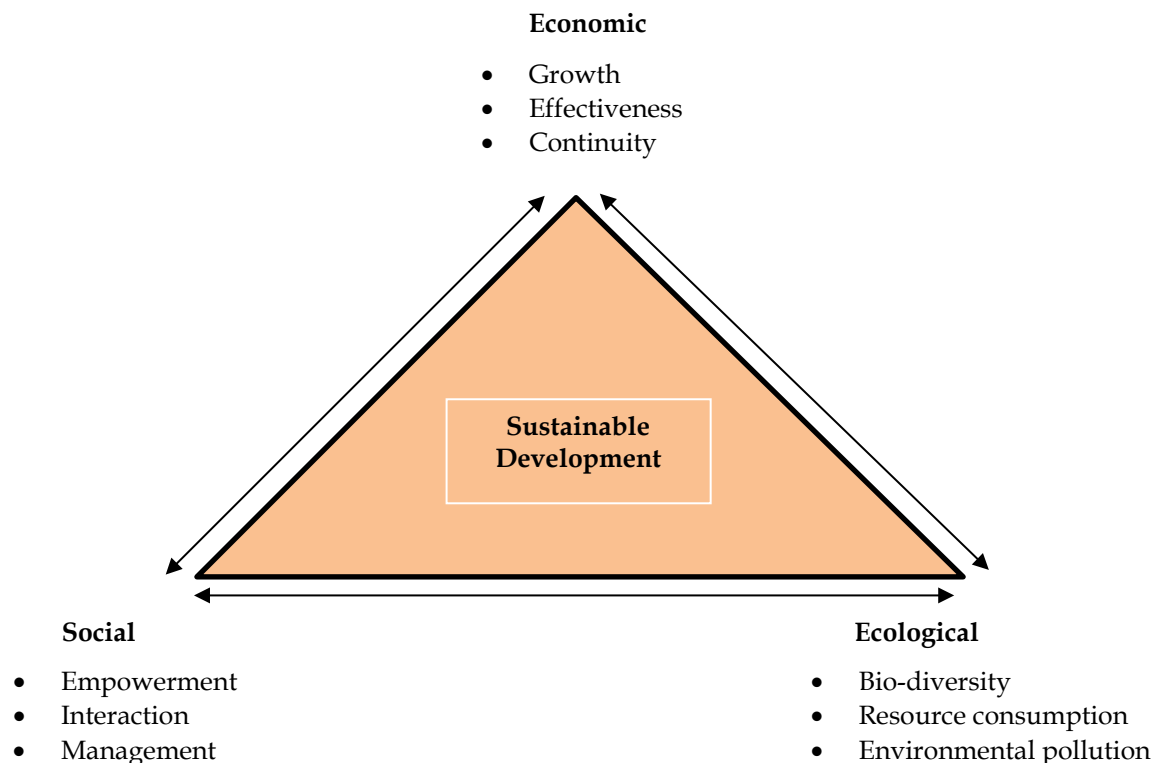
Sustainability is a concept that started to be mentioned in business and daily life after the Brundtland Report published by the United Nations Environment and Development Commission in 1987. In this report, sustainable development is expressed as not ignoring the needs of future generations while meeting the present needs of individuals (Brundtland Report, 1987). According to the Sustainable Enterprise Center (2010), sustainability is defined as "the state of making efforts to prevent any harm to our world and the living things on it during the realization of profitable actions" (Connelly, Ketchen & Slater, 2011: 86). Sustainability is defined as producing new elements and ensuring their continuity by preserving these elements (Dictionary of Turkish Language Institution). According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, sustainable development means consuming natural resources consciously, protecting the environment and ensuring the continuity of development (Brundtland/Our Common Future Report, 1987). From this point of view, sustainability is all about people's actions and covers more than one subject. Sustainability has been defined as the ability to maintain the environment and environmental systems with the same efficiency in the coming years (Chapin III, Torn & Tateno, 1996: 1017). Some definitions in the literature related to the concept of sustainability are given below:

While striving to protect the economy, sustainability also preserves the ecosystem and prevents the destruction of assets in the natural environment (Swaney, 1987). At the same time, sustainability has been expressed as protecting all living things and ensuring the continuity of natural resources for future generations while developing strategies and policies in line with the needs of companies (Starik & Rands, 1995; Dyllick & Hockerts, 2002). Shrivastava (1995) defined this concept as the development of societies by preventing the destruction of resources, saving energy, minimizing environmental pollution and ensuring that wastes are disposed of properly. Moreover, sustainability is a concept that protects from dangers such as the endangerment of living species, global warming, problems in water supply, and uncontrolled population growth (Gladwin, Kennelly & Krause, 1995). In other words,

sustainable systems have continuity and are prevented from destruction (Costanza & Patten, 1995). Examining the environmental dimension of sustainability, Callicott and Mumford (1998) defined sustainability as producing solutions to meet the needs without disturbing the ecological balance. Sikdar (2003) expressed this understanding as the balance between economic stability, ecological balance and social justice. According to McKenzie (2004), it is a philosophy that improves the living conditions of societies. Glavič and Lukman (2007) defined sustainability in terms of consumption and stated that if all society members fulfil their responsibilities, solutions to environmental problems can be found. From an institutional point of view, sustainability is the integration of all processes to achieve the company's long-term goals and to ensure the continuity of these goals (Carter & Rogers, 2008). Eltayeb, Zailani and Filho (2010) expressed sustainability as a company-based approach that minimizes energy consumption and guides the reuse of waste.

It is stated in the literature that the concept of sustainability has three dimensions (Wood et al., 2018: 70). While social sustainability focuses on the continuity of relationships, environmental sustainability focuses on preserving the ecosystem for future generations. On the other hand, financial sustainability is defined as a firm's ability to meet the needs of its partners and stakeholders continuously. From a different perspective, sustainability means that a company can carry out its activities in the short term without giving up on its long-term goals (Slawinski & Bansal, 2010). Similarly, Chabowski, Mena and Gonzalez-Padron (2011) express the concept of sustainability as not neglecting future generations while meeting the needs of the present. In another definition, sustainability is expressed as meeting the needs of individuals by considering the needs of future generations without harming the ecological balance (Morelli, 2011). Finally, Hassini, Surti and Searcy (2012) defined this concept as the performance shown to ensure the continuity of economic, ecological and social welfare.

The definitions of the concept of sustainability have been constantly updated from the past to the present, and the discussions on the concept and the proposed solutions have also changed. In the definitions made since 2000, it has been argued that it is wrong to evaluate the concept of sustainability only in terms of its economic dimensions and that it also affects the environment and social life. Therefore, today, the search has begun for solutions to problems that concern the environmental dimension of sustainability, such as global warming, pollution and industrialization. In summary, it would not be correct to consider the concept of sustainability in terms of one dimension. As mentioned above, the concept of sustainability is explained under three headings in the literature: economic, social and ecological. These dimensions are shown in Figure 1. Sustainable development, on the other hand, covers all these three dimensions (Munasinghe, 2007).



**Figure 1:** Sustainable Development Triangle

Source: Munasinghe, 2007: 49.

As a result of realising all these dimensions, it may be possible to talk about sustainable development in a country. For this reason, it is significant to explain all the dimensions of sustainability and identify the important points for realising these dimensions. (Harris, 2000: 7). However, dimensions of sustainability do not have the same importance in all societies. While less developed countries are mostly concerned with the economic dimension of the concept of sustainability, developed countries attach more importance to the environmental and social dimensions of sustainability (Montiel & Delgado Ceballos, 2014: 10). The key point to be emphasized is that all dimensions of sustainability interact with each other.

### **Sustainable consumption behaviour**

It is seen that the concept of sustainable consumption is generally related to the environmental aspect of sustainable development. Sustainable consumption is a form of consumption that recommends using natural resources within certain restrictions, considering future generations. This type of consumption is based on minimal environmental damage (Hayta, 2009: 145). There are two ways to adopt this form of consumption in our daily lives: conscious consumption to protect the environment and reduce consumption (Karalar & Kiracı, 2011). Similarly, in the study of Özgül (2010), it was determined that sustainable consumption behaviour consists of two dimensions "savings" and "ecological sensitivity".

Factors such as globalization, the production of poor quality and dangerous products, urbanization, the active role of women in business life, the increase in the quality of life, the rapid increase in the population, the more awareness of individuals towards ecological problems, the decrease in living species, the climate change and the decrease in natural resources (Karalar & Kiracı, 2011: 63) cause the importance of sustainable consumption to increase day by day.

It is indispensable for consumers to acquire environmentally conscious consumption habits, both individually and socially. Recently, consumption patterns such as voluntary simplicity have been adopted in this direction (Fuchs & Lorek, 2004: 19). However, while consumers adopt a sustainable consumption style, they also experience a dilemma between their wishes, the welfare of society and the environment (Paavola, 2001). At this point, the consumer's wishes can prevent exhibiting environmentally sensitive behaviours. One of the most crucial factors causing this is the understanding of "we exist as we consume" imposed on people by the consumption culture. Individuals think that they only adapt to the existing system by consuming (Bauman, 2006). Therefore, people consume much more than they need. However, Marcuse (1986) stated that excessive consumption causes individuals to lose their moral and intellectual values. Moreover, excessive consumption causes an increase in production. Therefore, it creates many problems, such as child labour with low wages, unconscious consumption of natural resources, and increased greenhouse gas emissions (Rey & Ritzer, 2012).

Companies also have some responsibilities to direct consumers to sustainable consumption behaviour. In addition to producing green products, businesses should adopt environmentally friendly policies in all supply chain processes and share their sustainable policies with the consumers through marketing activities to encourage sustainable consumption behaviour. In this respect, businesses need to know the reasons that push consumers to sustainable consumption behaviour for promoting sustainable consumption. For this reason, some studies in the literature on sustainable consumption behaviour are mentioned below.

According to some studies in the literature, the factors affecting sustainable consumption behaviour are; environmentalism and security (Karalar & Kiracı, 2010), personality traits (Luchs & Mooradian, 2012), environmental orientation and sustainability innovation (Hamid, Khan, Kiani, Shah & Kiani, 2014), total household income (Aksu & Gelibolu, 2015), election architecture (Theotokis & Manganari, 2015), environmental knowledge (Castaneda, Martinez, Marte & Roxas, 2015), spirituality level (Lee, Bahl, Black, Duber-Smith & Vowles, 2016), emotional motives and demographic characteristics (Karaca, 2018), cognitive effects and product characteristics (Trudel, 2019), attitudes (Castaneda et al., 2015; Hamşioğlu, 2020; Hameed, Khan, Waris & Zainab, 2021), ecological intelligence (Hettiarachchi, 2020), love of nature (Dong, Liu, Li, Yang, Liang & Deng, 2020), environmental values (Elhoushy & Lanzini, 2021), environmental and social effects (Trudel, 2019; Hosta & Zabkar, 2021), motivation (Khan & Hameed, 2019; Soyer & Dittrich, 2021), ability (Soyer & Dittrich, 2021), subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Hameed et al., 2021), culture and educational degree (Boca, 2021), emotional closeness to nature (Taufique, 2022), self (Trudel, 2019), feared self (Rasool, Cerchione, Centobelli & Oropallo, 2022) and social interaction (Cui, Lissillour, Chebeñ, Lančarič & Duan, 2022).

Some studies have focused on the concepts related to sustainable consumption behaviour. These concepts are social norms and perceived consumer effectiveness (Korkmaz & Sertoğlu, 2013), lifestyle (Karaca, 2018), hedonistic consumption and utilitarian consumption (Türkdemir, 2019), religiosity

(Özdemir, 2021), environmental ethics awareness (Tekiroğlu & Hayır-Kanat, 2021), mindfulness (Joseph, Arinaitwe & Muwaga, 2022), environmental attitudes (Korkmaz & Sertoğlu, 2013; Nekmahmud, Ramkissoon & Fekete-Farkas, 2022), environmental knowledge, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, conditional value and emotional value (Nekmahmud et al., 2022).

A group of studies focused on the dimensions of sustainable consumption behaviour, classified consumers in line with this behaviour, and tried to determine at which stages consumers exhibit environmentally friendly behaviours. In this context, Umut, Topuz and Velioglu (2015) emphasized that consumers are not aware of the negative consequences of their behaviours when their awareness level is low and that the level of awareness is important for sustainable consumption behaviour. Doğan, Bulut and Çımrın (2015) revealed that sustainable consumption behaviour consists of dimensions such as "environmental awareness, unnecessary purchasing, savings and reusability". Bulut, Özkaya, Karabulut and Atağan (2019), in their study, grouped consumers into three groups "indifferent, intentional and pioneers" in line with their sustainable behaviours. On the other hand, Frank and Stanzus (2019) classified sustainable consumers as "learners by self-inquiry and learners by self-experimentation". Sarı and Topçuoğlu (2019) found that future-oriented individuals are more inclined to sustainable consumption behaviour through saving. Polat, Akoğlu, Konak and Güçlü (2019), on the other hand, suggested that physically active individuals are more prone to sustainable consumption behaviour. Calderon-Monge, Pastor-Sanz and Garcia (2020) emphasized that consumers are more willing to exhibit sustainable consumption when they think their behaviours impact society. Marcon, Ribeiro, Dangelico, de Medeiros, and Marcon (2022) found that consumers pay more attention to the environmental friendliness of products during the usage phase compared to the pre-purchase and post-purchase phases.

The studies above mention the antecedents of sustainable consumption behaviour, the concepts related to this type of behaviour, and how consumers are grouped according to their sustainability levels. The following headings explain what kind of sustainable consumption behaviours individuals adopt. Sustainable consumption behaviour is gathered under two main headings: natural resource use and product consumption. This type of consumption has many stages, such as conscious consumption of natural resources, choosing and using environmentally friendly products, reducing consumption, reusing, and recycling wastes appropriately (Black & Cherrier, 2010: 452).

### **Sustainable consumption behaviour in natural resource use**

Undoubtedly, the most necessary natural resource in our lives is water. Unfortunately, about 2.5 billion people cannot access enough clean water (The Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2020). While the need for water is increasing day by day, accessible clean water resources continue to decrease day by day due to pollution. Due to the mentioned problems, sustainability and conscious natural resource consumption have become crucial globally in recent years, and research on the topic has increased. With the changes in technology, applications related to wastewater reuse have also started to become widespread. Turkey is not rich in water resources. When the annual amount of water per individual is analysed, it is seen that Turkey is a country experiencing water scarcity. Our country has approximately 1.6 m<sup>3</sup> of water per person per year. In light of the estimations, the population of Turkey will be 100 million in 2030, and the water potential will decrease to 1 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year. In this direction, it is possible to experience water scarcity in Turkey, and precautions should be taken urgently by both government and individuals (The Republic of Turkey, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, 2020). When it is predicted that the total individual water usage in 2000 will reach four times by 2030 (Karakaya & Gönenc, 2004: 26), it is seen that measures should be taken in terms of individual water consumption.

Another type of natural resource consumption that should be mentioned is fossil fuels. Fossil fuels consist of oil, natural gas and coal. The carbon in these fuels combines with the oxygen in the atmosphere and causes the release of carbon dioxide gas. Beyond that, fossil fuels contain materials such as lead and sulphur. When these substances come together with oxygen at a certain temperature, they become dangerous at a level that will adversely affect human health. In addition, gases released into the atmosphere continue to accumulate there. Considering the possibility of depletion of oil and natural gas resources in approximately 50-60 years, the conscious consumption of these resources is gaining more importance day by day (Turkish Petroleum, 2020: 8). Although coal is found to last for another 119 years, it should be consumed more consciously because it is the most damaging and polluting type of fuel to the environment (Chamber of Mining Engineers of Turkey, 2020: 14). To pay attention to the consumption of oil resources within sustainable limits and to reduce the environmental problems that occur, it is fundamental to prefer public vehicles or bicycles instead of using individual vehicles, to walk close distances, and to use electric vehicles if possible. Some of the measures that can

be taken to consume natural gas resources with an understanding of sustainability are as follows (Karalar & Kiracı, 2009: 102):

- When not being at home for a long time, the temperature setting should be reduced.
- Likewise, the employees' temperature setting should be reduced during the off-hours.
- The temperature settings of the rooms that are empty and not in active use should be lowered.
- Before adjusting the temperature setting of the house, people should dress thickly, and the temperature should be set as low as possible.
- Windows should not be left open too much to avoid heat loss.
- If possible, the temperature should not exceed 21 °C to avoid energy consumption.
- The better the house's insulation is, the less heat loss will be.
- Energy-saving heaters should be preferred.

Another issue that needs to be addressed regarding the sustainable consumption of natural resources by individuals is energy consumption. It is stated that the amount of global energy consumption in 2050 will be twice that in 2006. Worldwide energy consumption is expected to reach 22 gigatons per year by 2050. According to the report published by the European Commission, this figure was ten gigatons for 2006 (European Commission, 2006). Statistics published by British Petroleum in 2021 show that per capita energy consumption in Turkey has increased by % 225 in the period from 1980 to 2017. With this increase in energy consumption, the share of fossil fuels in world energy consumption is %85, according to the World Bank (2021) report (Kardaslar, 2022: 386). Turkey's energy consumption is predicted to quadruple in 2025 compared to 2000 (Ocak, Ocak, Bilgen, Keleş & Kaygusuz, 2004: 846). This situation is undoubtedly related to the energy demand arising from economic growth.

When we hear the concept of energy consumption, the first source that comes to mind is electrical energy. The measures that can be taken for the conscious consumption of electrical energy in line with the understanding of sustainability are listed below:

- Energy-saving bulbs should be preferred.
- Household appliances that prevent energy consumption should be consumed.
- Unnecessary energy consumption should not be made by operating non-essential household appliances (humidifiers, air cleaners, tumble dryers).
- Washing machines should be operated at low temperatures.
- Unnecessary lights should not be kept on.
- Electronic devices in the house should be turned off or put into sleep mode if they are not in use.

### **Sustainable consumption behaviour in product consumption**

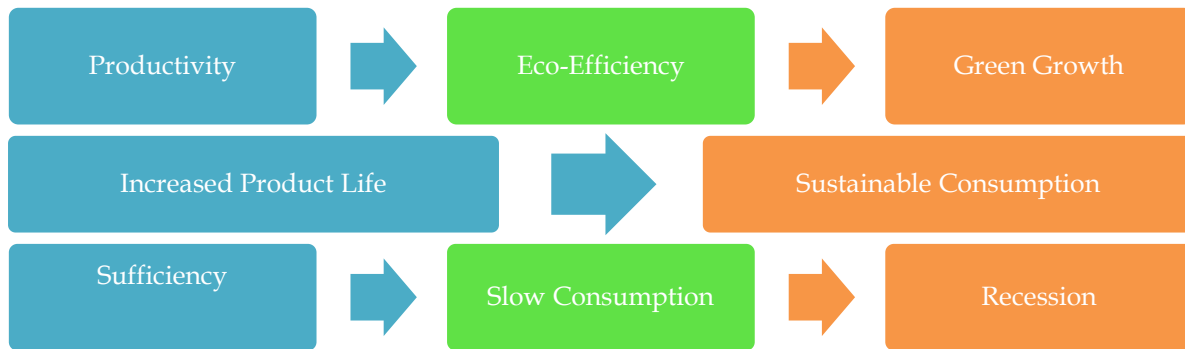
Product consumption is one of the issues consumers adopt the sustainability concept. Along with using natural resources, individuals must act within sustainable limits in purchasing decisions. In this context, consumers can take actions such as green product preference, recycling activities, product sharing, product rental and voluntary simplicity. These five behavioural patterns are discussed in detail below.

Within the scope of sustainable consumption behaviour, consumers buy organic, long-lasting, eco-labelled, domestic and, if possible, second-hand products. The organic product is a concept that expresses products produced by completely natural methods, in which no artificial substances or additives are used in the production phase (İnal, Akın, Çiçek & Toksarı, 2008: 195). When it comes to organic products, the first thing that comes to mind is undoubtedly food products. Individuals, who consume organic food, have healthier lives since they are exposed to much fewer chemical and drug residues (Halweil & Nierenberg, 2004: 88). Accordingly, firms produce organic products with natural methods. Their packages and labels are also produced in line with sustainable goals. While packaging and labels are being prepared, recyclable materials are used, and the amount of material used is kept at a minimum level, thus reducing the amount of waste that harms the environment.

It is necessary to pay attention to the lifetime of the products and choose environmentally friendly products. Due to the increasing variety of new products and developments in R&D activities, product life cycles are getting shorter daily (Reisch, 2001: 371). Therefore, environmental problems can be prevented by choosing long-lasting and durable products (Varol, 2021: 52). However, brands introduce new products almost every month, creating a great environmental danger. Because every new product



causes an increase in the resource consumption rate (Cooper, 2002: 11). Especially in industrialized countries, it is important to produce long-lasting products and reduce the frequency of consumption within the scope of sustainability. Consumption of long-lasting products is called “slow consumption” in the literature (Cooper, 2005: 54). The slow consumption model is shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Slow Consumption Model

Source: Cooper, 2005: 55.

According to the model, sustainable consumption is a concept that develops by combining the concepts of efficiency and sufficiency. As seen in the model, eco-efficiency affects green growth. What is meant by efficiency is the production of longer-lasting, more robust, repairable and reusable products by companies. However, besides the companies producing environmentally friendly products, consumers should consume these products, and demand should be created in this direction. Otherwise, producing durable and environmentally friendly products will lose its meaning regarding sustainability. For this reason, consumers need to prefer products they can use longer, adopt a slow consumption approach, and enter a recession period in terms of consumption habits. Cooper (2005) stated that sustainable consumption targets could be achieved in his model if producers and consumers act together.

All products are in a state of energy; the farther they are transported, the more energy they are loaded. For example, as the distance travelled by the foodstuffs increases, the total energy consumed increases simultaneously. Because on the one hand, the amount of fuel consumed during transportation increases, and the additives used to prevent the food from spoiling while being transported over long distances increase. Beyond these, it is necessary to spend extra energy on cooling and packaging. (Sawin, 2004: 40). For example, the use of some products imported from abroad, such as tropical fruits, beverage types, and clothes, causes excessive energy consumption and creates negative effects on the environment. For this reason, it is very significant for people to carry out their actions with a sustainable understanding, consume less of the mentioned products, and consume more domestic products.

By choosing second-hand products rather than purchasing new products, consumers can take a big step towards protecting natural resources and significantly support the reduction of environmental pollution. Because, in the production processes of all products, certain amounts of natural resources and energy are used. The resources and energy used cause more waste and pollution. According to the understanding of sustainable consumption, second-hand products are important for our world, rather than evaluating used products as garbage. However, some consumers believe that second-hand products are consumed only by low-income people. Even if the income level is high, consumers should act with an understanding of sustainability and awareness, considering the resource needs of future generations. Some websites allow individuals to sell and buy second-hand products both in Turkey and abroad: LetGO, Dolap, eBay, Tutumlu Anne, Nadir Kitap, Wardrobes, and Etsy.

In the understanding of sustainable consumption, activities related to recycling are also of great importance. Consumers can exhibit three different recycling behaviours: consuming products produced from raw materials obtained from recycling, consuming products whose wastes are mostly recyclable, and sending the wastes generated because of consumption to recycling. It is supported to reduce natural resource consumption by preferring products produced due to recycling activities, expressed as reusing products and wastes through different stages after use. For example, paper is produced again by recycling paper after use. In this way, trees do not need to be cut down, and the energy needed to produce paper from trees is also significantly reduced. Therefore, people can support sustainable consumption by using recycled paper. Furthermore, consumers can significantly reduce their natural resource consumption by choosing products produced from raw materials that have passed through the recycling process. Moreover, purchasing recycled products encourages companies to make more efforts towards recycling activities and helps to save natural resources in the country at the macro level. For this reason, the fact that companies give due importance to recycling activities sets a positive

example for individuals regarding their sustainable consumption behaviours. For example, Starbucks serves napkins made from recycled materials, thus helping its customers to be sensitive to environmental issues. One of the behaviours of individuals regarding recycling is to pay attention to the fact that the wastes generated after use are recyclable. For example, the brand "Worn Again" states that the materials they use in their shoes are largely recyclable (<https://wornagain.co.uk/>). Consumers also contribute to achieving national and global sustainability goals by purchasing products made from recyclable materials. Finally, individuals have a responsibility to send the resulting waste for recycling. It is one of the main obligations of consumers towards the environment to separate wastes of different categories, such as used glass, metal, plastic, battery and paper and throw them into the appropriate recycling bins. Undoubtedly, at this point, the necessary infrastructure works should be carried out by the states.

Rather than purchasing different products for each consumer's personal use, sharing the products among the groups is another key point in sustainable consumption behaviour. However, the product-sharing behaviour mentioned here refers to an action carried out with environmental concerns, not economic concerns. An example of this behaviour can be buying a common broadcast for the apartment and watching it together instead of buying a separate television broadcast for each individual. With the understanding of sustainability, the use of a common lawnmower by the residents living on the same site or the commuting of the passengers going in the same direction with a single vehicle are some of the main examples of product-sharing behaviour. Likewise, there are common washing machines in apartments in some countries, and the residents of the apartments wash their clothes in these machines on certain days. A new concept that has recently come to the fore regarding product-sharing behaviour is journey sharing. The BlaBlaCar website is an initiative with 35 million members in 22 countries. The website brings together members who will travel in the same direction and prevents using different vehicles. BlaBlaCar also prevents a security vulnerability that may arise during the journey-sharing experience by individually passing the members through the evaluation process. As a result, millions of passengers travel together and prevent the destruction that may occur in the environment because of excessive vehicle use (<https://www.blablacar.com.tr/>).

Another type of sustainable consumption behaviour regarding product consumption is that people prefer to rent some products rather than buy them. For example, using a laundry service instead of a washing machine, using the services offered by car rental companies instead of buying a car, and purchasing a rental service instead of a book are examples of product rental behaviour. However, in today's consumer society, purchased products and services are not consumed only because of their physiological benefits. Furthermore, since people also express their identities through the products they consume, it may take some time for the consumers to adopt the positive behaviours that the rental behaviour will create in the environment and to become aware of this issue.

One of the behaviours that can change today's consumption habits is the concept of "voluntary simplicity". Voluntary simplicity is an understanding and lifestyle that emerged to discover our priorities in life rather than an understanding that focuses only on consumption (Kıymıoğlu, 2008: 149). However, it should be noted that voluntary simplicity is not necessarily the same as living simply for economic reasons. The concept of voluntary simplicity means that individuals avoid unnecessary consumption by their own choices, even if their income level is enough. This concept, against immediate consumption behaviour, requires adopting a simple, plain and environmentally friendly lifestyle (Muslu & Aktı, 2022). This understanding considered an extension of the minimalism movement, is expressed as not giving up on simplicity even when the income level increases. Although consumption behaviour is expected to increase with income, consumers who adopt this understanding continue their simple lives through their sensitive and environmentalist behaviours (Ülker, 2021). In the study conducted by Özgül (2010), it has been proven that there is a statistically significant relationship between voluntary simplicity and sustainable consumer behaviour. Consumers who exhibit voluntary simplicity behaviour mostly know the value of what they possess and try to use their products as long as possible instead of buying new ones. The concept of voluntary simplicity is a reactive behaviour that opposes today's pretentious consumption society. Moreover, it is thought that voluntary simplicity has created a new culture (Dopierała, 2017; Taş, 2020). In this direction, personal satisfaction can only be achieved with spiritual values (Özdemir, 2020).

## Conclusion and evaluation

To develop and spread the concept of sustainable consumption, both companies, governments and consumers have some responsibilities. Governments must introduce environmental regulations and encourage companies and consumers to act sustainably. It is also important for companies to produce environmentally friendly products, to follow sustainable policies throughout the entire supply chain



management process, and to guide consumers to exhibit environmentally friendly behaviours with a corporate social responsibility understanding. In this context, understanding the factors that push consumers towards sustainable consumption behaviour is necessary for companies to develop sustainable policies and plan their marketing activities accordingly. In this study, sustainable consumption behaviour is discussed from a theoretical framework and supported by current studies in the literature.

The national and international literature studies show that sustainable consumption behaviour is mainly investigated regarding demographic characteristics, education, emotions, motivation, attitudes, awareness, environmental knowledge level, self-concept, and social and subjective norms. In this context, organising governmental sustainability trainings may help to inform consumers, raise awareness and increase environmental knowledge levels. In fact, by adding sustainability courses to the curricula in secondary education institutions, young people can be raised consciously. Furthermore, by increasing the number of non-governmental organizations, the awareness level of society on the environment can be increased with the studies to be carried out. Both companies and the government can carry out promotion activities and social responsibility projects to change consumers' attitudes and motivation levels. In addition, it is seen that personality, self-concept, subjective norms, culture and demographic characteristics are also effective in consumers' sustainable behaviours. Marketing managers of companies can segment the market through these variables and select their target segment accordingly.

When the studies in the literature are examined, no study has been found that examines the relationship between sustainable consumption behaviour and price. However, the prices of environmentally friendly products can often affect consumers' decisions. In this context, the effect of pricing on sustainable consumption behaviour can be researched in future studies. In addition, the relations between ethics, morality and sustainable consumer behaviour can be examined. For example, it can be investigated whether moral maturity influences sustainable consumer behaviour. Moreover, a more comprehensive literature review can improve this study by including the books, book chapters and theses.

The most important limitation of the study is that it only approaches the subject from a conceptual framework. Moreover, since the study is in an article format, it does not cover all the dimensions of sustainable consumption behaviour. Therefore, it is thought that considering the subject as a book or chapter will be beneficial in evaluating it from a wider perspective.

#### **Peer-review:**

Externally peer-reviewed

#### **Conflict of interests:**

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

#### **Grant Support:**

The authors declared that this study had received no financial support.

#### **Author Contributions:**

Idea/Concept/Design: S.S., Y.D. Literature Review: S.S., Y.D. Writing the Article: S.S., Y.D. Critical Review: S.S., Y.D. Approval: S.S., Y.D.

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