


## Chapter 7

# Sustainable Consumption Behaviour of Young Consumers: Gender-Based Approach From an Emerging Market

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### ABSTRACT

*The aim of this study was to examine whether there are similarities/differences between male and female consumers regarding sustainable consumption behavior and its dimensions. Data were obtained through an online survey of young consumers aged 18-29 in Türkiye, an emerging market. The main findings revealed some behavioral similarities and differences between males and females in terms of sustainable consumption. Gender-specific differences were found in the context of unneeded consumption and reuse behavior. The main findings underline the significance of examining sustainable consumption behavior with its sub-dimensions in order to understand more clearly and accurately whether consumers exhibit gender-specific behaviors in sustainable consumption. This study can be helpful to those interested in sustainability and consumption of young consumers in emerging markets by providing insight into design of marketing strategy. Findings are discussed on the basis of today's competitive marketing environment and suggestions are presented for future research and marketing strategy implications.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Marketing strategy is defined by Varadarajan (2015: 89) as “*an organization’s integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning marketing activities to perform and the manner of performance of these activities in the chosen markets and market segments, and the allocation of marketing resources among markets, market segments and marketing activities toward the creation, communication and delivery of a product that offers value to customers in exchanges with the organization and thereby enables the organization to achieve specific objectives*”. Based on theories of marketing strategy’s basic promises, a firm should apply market orientation strategy, marketing segment strategy, relationship marketing strategy, and brand equity strategy to gain competitive advantage. Market segmentation strategy entails targeting specific segments of the market and developing a marketing mix specific to the targeted market. Market orientation strategy requires obtaining information systematically about both current and potential customers and using this information strategically (Hunt, 2018).

Sustainable marketing is identified as one of the major trends and forces driving the marketing environment and challenging for marketing strategy (Kotler and Armstrong, 2021). Furthermore, delivering unique customer value is essential for building and sustaining competitive advantage (Eti & Mızrak, 2020). The design of marketing strategy is therefore based on a more responsive approach that involves identifying customer needs and developing offerings that outperform competitors (Sozuer et al., 2020). Customer value-oriented marketing strategy is recommended as one of the current core marketing principles (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021). Customer orientation is also recognized as a promising perspective, and value creation for the customer is put forward as a new and valueable research field in marketing strategy discipline. Thus, customers are also addressed as the focus of new research areas of marketing strategy (Sheth, 2021; Mızrak, & Cevher, 2023).

Emerging markets are also determined as a hot topic and a new area of research in marketing strategy (Sheth, 2021). These markets are seen as the most essential actors of responsible consumption and production in the field of sustainability, as well as being an important economic power in the near future (Mızrak, 2023). Although the consumers in these markets are claimed to be more interested in sustainable consumption, it is claimed that there are still many issues that need to be revealed about these consumers (Yarimoglu & Binboga, 2019; Dermondy et al., 2018). Research on sustainable consumption is mostly conducted in developed countries, whereas sustainable consumption patterns of emerging market consumers are different and understanding them is crucial for sustainability. Therefore, examining the behavior of these consumers is recommended as an important research agenda for future research (Sesini et al., 2020). Also, an important future research question in marketing strategy is suggested by Sozuer, Carpenter, Kopalle, McAlister and Lehmann (2020: 170) as “*How can marketers leverage their understanding of consumer behavior in emerging markets to increase brand awareness and sales?*”.

In recent years, many studies have focused on the sustainable consumption behavior (SCB) of young consumers in emerging markets (Barrera-Verdugo and Villarroel-Villarroel, 2022; Margaca et al., 2022; Anh et al., 2020; Oral, 2020). Differences are observed in the environmentally friendly behavior of young people in developed and emerging countries, and it is argued that these differences are caused by external factors such as culture, environmental infrastructure, and services (Vicente-Molina, et al., 2013). Moreover, population growth in these markets offers opportunities for sustainability, but research results regarding the relationships between sustainability and demographics are conflicting. Although demographic variables such as gender can be used effectively in market segmentation, consumer market segmentation is frequently compelling in these markets (Nyugen et al., 2019).

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