


Chapter 13

Redefining Consumer Behaviour in a Circular Economy: Strategies for Sustainable Living

Mukesh Sehrawat

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-7928-1568>

IAMR Group of Institutions, India

Anand Nandwani

Management Education and Research Institute, India

Meenakshi Rohila

IAMR Group of Institutions, India

Anu Jain

Dronacharya Group of Institutions, India

ABSTRACT

The circular economy is a central solution for addressing resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and unsustainable consumption. The chapter investigates consumer behavior's impact on the practices of the circular economy. It presents fundamental circular economy principles: reduction, reuse, recycling and compares them with the disadvantages of the conventional linear approach. It discusses the ways in which consumer behavior leads to unsustainability and identifies potential for change through circular business models such as product-as-a-service, shared platforms, and circular supply chains. The chapter discusses government policies that lead to circular activities, as well as economic, cultural and infrastructural challenges and the strategies necessary to tackle them. Recommendations involve

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consumer education, use of technologies such as blockchain and IoT and promoting stakeholder collaboration. Emerging trends like circular design thinking, and bio-plastics are examined for their ability to disseminate sustainable practices across the world.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behaviour in a circular economy is complex as it seeks to understand the interaction of individuals with sustainability practice and circular business models. Changeover to a circular economy requires consumers to adopt behaviours of sustainability-first buying- that is, purchasing durable, repairable, and recyclable products. However, even though there is growing awareness, some of the continuing challenges such as intention-behaviour gaps and infrastructural barriers still require multi-sector collaboration for enlightened consumption (Abulkhair, 2025).

1.1 Overview of Consumer Behaviour And Its Impact On Sustainability

The consumer behaviour affects sustainability since these are the factors that determine the environmental implications of their purchasing decisions. In fact, with consumers realizing what their purchases mean for the environment, there is an increase in the demand for eco-products. Among the factors driving up the demand for eco-products are environmental awareness, social norms, and economic considerations because these three factors will affect what the consumer desires or how it behaves. It is logical for businesses to adopt sustainable marketing as an attempt to catch up with the emerging demands of consumers. There exist complex relationships between consumer behaviour and sustainability determination, including many factors inducing consumers on what to buy and how effective sustainable marketing will be.

Environmental Awareness and Education

Consumer literacy indeed proves to be an important practice in enhancing sustainability in consumption by informing consumers about the environmental implications of their consumption habits and inducing sober behaviour (Erjavšek et al., 2024). The Sustainable Consumption Behaviour module was established to further the education of students in Higher Education in sustainability, allowing collaboration and creative problem-solving (Erjavšek et al., 2024).

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