

Business Ethics
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Lecture – 37
Sustainable consumption

In the last module, we have discussed about how the consumers can exercise their sovereignty and consumer citizenship in speaking about certain rights, which are fundamental rights as a citizen of that country which are may be beyond their own self-interest and thinking of others to see how their society to function like. And in their choices for the products that they have chosen and the power that it is exercises on the organisation through it is power of ethical consumption.

Mainly to like connected with the exercising of corporate citizenship by the organisation as we discussed in the last modules where the organisation becomes the mechanism of translating these consumer citizenships, whether exercising their political power through channelizing it and bringing in major social changes in terms of influencing the government to do some positive policies established certain regulations involving the civil society organisations also, to work for the purposes greater cause of the society. So, this is where the consumers are exercising their citizenship power and getting it linked to the role of the corporate also as corporate citizenship power. And together they are functioning for a greater social cause and upliftment of the standards and living conditions of the citizens at large.

So, from there from this with it is basic step, we will move forward to the discussion of sustainable consumption where we will be focusing on the triple bottom line of the economic the environmental and the social causes. And try to find out how it understands the concept of sustainable consumption and try to see it is impact on all those 3 pillars that it is there.

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So, when you are talking of sustainable consumption, the definition the use of goods and services that responds to the basic needs and bring a better quality of life. So, this is where we are taking care of the people issues, social issues while minimising the use of natural resources toxic materials. So, this is where we are again taking care of the economic perspective of it, because if there is a less wastage there is more saving and value addition. And the toxic materials and emission of waste and pollutants over the life cycle. So, that is how we are taking care of the environment and the depletion on and the pollution aspects of the environment and the resources and so, that not to jeopardise the needs of the future generation.

So, we have to keep a balance between what we are trying to demand as a part of our basic needs and better quality of life now. The use and goods and services for responding to these basic qualities of goods and services basic needs. And then also with a minimised use of natural resources and toxic materials and emission of waste and pollutants so, that the environment does not get affected by it and there is an economic side of implication of it also when you are talking of minimising of the waste and together. So, that when you are taking care of these concerns together we are also taking care like trying to reserve something save something for answering the needs of the future generation. So, that the cycle may continue like the future generation also may use the goods and services to respond to their basic needs and to live to bring a betterment in their quality of life.

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The challenge of sustainable consumption

Ethic	Imposes limits to	Promotes
Protestant ethic	Consumption	Investment in productive capacity
Consumerism ethic	Saving	Instant gratification and consumption
Environmental ethic	Consumption	Alternative meanings of growth and investment in the environment

Source: Jonathan Bushoff (1999)



So, the challenges of sustainable consumption are that, it imposes limit is to certain things and it promotes certain behaviour. So, if we are looking from the protestant ethic perspective. So, it imposes a limit to consumption, and then it like promotes investment in productive capacity. If you are looking from the consumerism ethics. So, it imposes limit to saving and it promotes like instant gratification and consumption. So, if you are looking from the environmental ethic perspective, then again it imposes limit to consumption and it promotes alternative meaning of growth and investment in the environment. So, when we are talking of the challenge of sustainable consumption.

So, we have to take care we have to understand which of these, which of these 3 ethical like may be parameters we have. Which is the one that we are getting giving more prominence to. So, and which is because like when you are talking of a protestant ethic and which it talks of like guided by the facts like it is limit to consumption, and it investment in productive capacity, but again when you are moving towards a world which is like moving towards more type of a secular type of world. So, is it like can we follow it and reducing the consumption is to what extent could be a question over here.

So, and like can we just expect someone to have reduced the consumption instantaneously and invest in more productive capacity. So, or again when the environmental ethic it talks of consumption limit is to consumption. So, is it actually is it possible in a day to do it, or it requires a like, it should be having more time to it and it

should be happening gradually. And then what we think like it gradual change which needs to happen, and then it is not something that it is a practice which needs to be nurtured, and that is why according to this concept we are more when you are talking of the environmental ethics part, this this theory this alternative gets more prominence when we are talking of sustainable consumption, because we are here focusing more on the alternative means of growth and investment, and in the environment and still remain profitable. So, this is where it is gaining more prominence and is the few which can be used for sustainable consumption.

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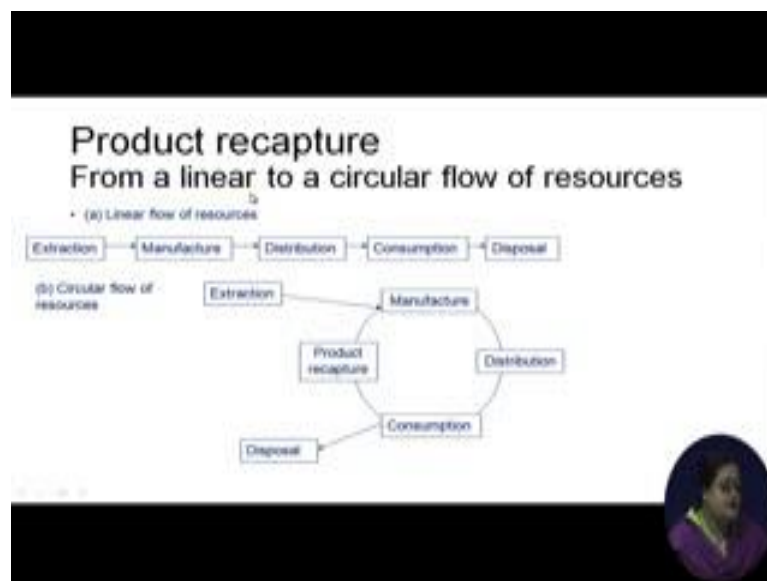
So, what could be the steps towards sustainable consumption is that producing environmentally responsible products like less of using less of toxic materials or producing less wastages. So, because we are guided more by this concept of like environmental ethic which is guiding our alternative means of growth and investment. So, when you are talking of sustainable consumptions, the first point we are talking of is producing environmentally responsible products which is taking care of reducing the waste less of depletion of the resources and less of pollution.

We are talking of product recapture. So, which will explain in the next slide. So, the maybe the like what you get is may be waste of one and for becomes the input for the other firm also. Service replacement for products like selling mobility rather than cars or leasing of photocopiers. So, instead of selling the product you are selling the services and

that is how there is less of introduction of like more waste into the environment. Product sharing car sharing washing machine pooling all these type of things which are going to save energy reduce waste and more like toxic materials waste. So, and take care of the environment these type of things are being promoted.

Reducing demand, like sort of forcing people to reduce the demand like reduction or ban on free plastic bags or polluter pays principle to ensure financial incentive for lower consumption. So, different ways of thinking. So, that the it is your demands and needs and made also, and it is not that you are curbing your consumption, but you are consuming in a responsible way taking care of the environment and the as a result it is because you are taking care of the environment and you are saving on the wastages and resources then maybe you are economically it is you are adding value also, and that is how you remain sustainable.

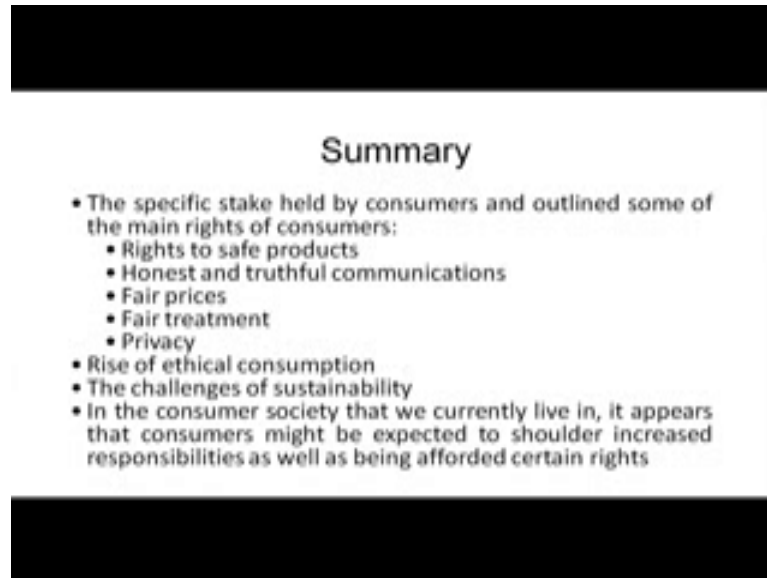
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So, when you are talking of product recapture, we are actually moving from a linear to a circular flow of resources. The linear flow is like extraction, then it is manufacture then it is distribution then consumption and then may be disposal. When you are talking of a circular view of resources. So, it is extraction then manufacture is distribution consumption and then may be disposal, but these products again gets recaptured by the manufacturer. So, and then it gets again distributed across this like this this cycle then moves on. So, this has become a major part of now concern and also major part of

activity of how to recapture the products and so, and it can be recycled again to manufacture this and distribute consumption and recapture and how to take care of proper disposal.

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The slide is titled "Summary" and contains a bulleted list of points. The first point is "The specific stake held by consumers and outlined some of the main rights of consumers:", followed by a sub-list of five rights: "Rights to safe products", "Honest and truthful communications", "Fair prices", "Fair treatment", and "Privacy". The second main point is "Rise of ethical consumption". The third main point is "The challenges of sustainability". The final point is "In the consumer society that we currently live in, it appears that consumers might be expected to shoulder increased responsibilities as well as being afforded certain rights".

So, these have become like important focus of for the manufacturers now. And these are challenges which you call off like back supply chain which starts from, how you collect the products from the consumers. Or how you like move it back to the warehouses and then get it like recycled in a proper way. Or dispose in a proper way is again a challenge and this has this has taken up and it is given rise to again a new way of looking at the problem. So, that it is leading to a sustainable consumption and disposal management waste management recycled products goods and services.

So, this has become again a business opportunity in itself. So, these if you are looking into the sustainable consumption. This when you are talking of this, when you are talking of this circular way of flow of resources, this part like after this consumption may be the disposal and product recapture, it has given birth to a new industry in itself. And new innovative way of marketing and may be extraction manufacture distribution were and consumption, where from the waste itself from the recycled products itself how you can use them again for developing certain may be things of aesthetic values, which has it is own value economic value and it gets again cycled as an in the production cycled through the flow of resources. So, this has become another way another given an impetus

for the development of a whole new industry, which takes care of these issues and in a joint effort followed together and following this whole chain it leads to a sustainable consumption and in terms of sustainable business practices and sustainable consumption in maintaining a balance between these all these 3 triple bottom line phenomena.

So, this together will help in the it talks of like a joint responsibility also, between again the use of the product in a like responsible way disposing of the products also in a responsible way. And the it depends on the manufacturers responsibility also, to think of how to use this in a better way. So, it requires lot of innovation creative thinking to think of how it can be reused and how this can be taken care of in a certain way. So, there is minimisation of the waste and the harm and the resaving of the like resources if together this is done it will lead to a sustainable consumption.

So, in summary in this discussion what we have discussed about like the some of the specific rights of the consumers. So, rights of safe products honest and truthful communication of fair prices fair treatment privacy. And we have also focused towards the rise of ethical consumption and we have focused to the challenges of sustainability. And we can summarise that in the consumer society that we currently live in it appears like the consumers should are responsible also not only for exercising certain of the rights, but they are responsible also for shouldering more and more responsibility. So, that there is a mutual responsibility shared rights and rights and duties shared mutual rights and duties shared by the consumers and the manufacturers or the sellers and together they look forward towards the sustainability and the sustainable consumption and together they survive and keep some surviving the and lead to the fulfilment of their needs which the firms reduces for themselves to them, while also thinking of the needs of the future generation and keeping something in reserve for them. So, that the future generation are not deprived of these products and services or the resources they to get the products and services done as per their needs and expectations, which the future generation may think like.

Thank you.