

Sustainable Consumption Decisions in Dilemma Situations: An Interdisciplinary Investigation of Moral Judgment in Consumption

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Abstract

Many studies concerning ethical consumer behavior show that consumers do have an awareness of sustainable consumption, but are unable or unwilling to translate it into everyday behavior. However, research regarding the attitude-behavior gap could be contained by applying the Defining-Issues-Test (DIT), a method based on Kohlberg's stages of moral development which allows empirical statements about individuals' moral judgment. This article describes the approach of the DIT and shows that a transfer of the method, which has so far mainly been used in psychology and educational science, to business research has great potential. The study follows the call for research on factors influencing consumers' understanding of complex moral propositions in dilemmas and contributes to literature by adding the normative judgment scores P- and N2 score to consumer research. There are positive influences of age, education, need for cognition and sustainability attitude on the ethical judgment ability.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Decision-Making*

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