

HABITUS OF SUSTAINABILITY: DAILY LIFE CONSUMPTION  
PRACTICES AMONG GREEN CONSUMERS IN TURKEY

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE HABITUS OF SUSTAINABILITY: DAILY LIFE CONSUMPTION PRACTICES AMONG GREEN CONSUMERS IN TURKEY**

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This thesis examines the influence of habitus of sustainability on consumption patterns and ecologically sustainable transitions of lifestyles of green consumers living in an urban environment in Turkey. This study uses the conceptual framework of the theories of practice by referring to Bourdieu's notions of field, habitus, and capital and to Giddens' notion of discursive consciousness. In addition, daily routines and habits are analyzed as part of sustainable consumer behavior through the relationship established between sustainable consumption and theories of practice by Warde.

The notions of environmental capital and habitus of sustainability are linked to the middle-class positions and green consumers in this study are considered as middle-class sustainable consumption practitioners. Habitus of sustainability is discussed through daily life practices, consumption patterns and lifestyles. Thus, weak and strong aspects of sustainable consumption practices are determined, and individual and collective dimensions of lifestyle transformation are emphasized. Within this scope, in-depth interviews were conducted with 17 participants living in Istanbul, Ankara, and Eskisehir. Besides, the workshops organized by grassroots initiatives in the area

of sustainable consumption were included into the study through use of the participant observation method.

**Keywords:** Habitus of Sustainability, Environmental Capital, Sustainable Consumption, Consumption Practices, Turkey

## ÖZ

### SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK HABİTUSU: TÜRKİYE’DE YEŞİL TÜKETİCİLERİN GÜNDELİK HAYAT TÜKETİM PRATİKLERİ

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Bu tez sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun tüketim modelleri ve Türkiye’de, şehir ortamında yaşayan yeşil tüketicilerin yaşam tarzlarının ekolojik olarak dönüşümü üzerindeki etkisini incelemektedir. Bu çalışma, Bourdieu’nun alan, habitus ve sermaye kavramlarına ve Giddens’in söylemsel bilinç kavramına değinerek pratik teorilerinin kavramsal çerçevesini kullanmıştır. Ayrıca, Warde’nin sürdürülebilir tüketim ve pratik teorileri arasında kurmuş olduğu ilişkiden yola çıkılarak gündelik hayat rutinleri ve alışkanlıkları sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışının bir parçası olarak analiz edilmiştir.

Çevresel sermaye ve sürdürülebilirlik habitusu kavramları orta sınıf pozisyonuyla ilişkilendirilmiş ve bu çalışma içerisindeki yeşil tüketiciler orta sınıf sürdürülebilir tüketim pratikleri uygulayıcıları olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Sürdürülebilirlik habitusu gündelik hayat pratikleri, tüketim modelleri ve yaşam tarzları üzerinden tartışılmıştır. Böylece, sürdürülebilir tüketim pratiklerinin zayıf ve güçlü yönleri belirlenmiş ve yaşam tarzı dönüşümünün bireysel ve kolektif boyutları vurgulanmıştır. Bu kapsamda, İstanbul, Ankara ve Eskişehir’de yaşayan 17 katılımcı ile derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, sürdürülebilir tüketim alanında faaliyet gösteren taban örgütleri



tarafından organize edilen atölyeler katılımcı gözlem tekniğinin kullanımı yoluyla çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilirlik habitusu, Çevresel Sermaye, Sürdürülebilir Tüketim, Tüketim Pratikleri, Türkiye

To my mother

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
DIY	Do-it-yourself
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
METU	Middle East Technical University
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
VBN	Value-belief-norm
NEP	New Environmental Paradigm
CSD	Communion on Sustainable Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assesment
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

By bringing sustainable consumption to the foreground, this thesis analyzes the radical transformation of unsustainable lifestyles to sustainable lifestyles following deliberate and purposeful changes in daily life consumption practices. Starting from the idea that our daily consumption practices are part of political engagement (Micheletti, 2003) this thesis deals with the transformative capacity of daily, routine practices at both individual and societal levels. The changes in the consumption practices of the green consumers are of significance with regard to the transformation it creates in their lifestyles and, in addition, with reference to creating alternatives that would challenge the conventional and unsustainable consumerism. Therefore, sustainable consumption is discussed considering its individual and collective aspects. While the individual aspect is analysed over the daily consumption practices of the individuals, the alternative consumer networks are paid regard to analyse the collective dimension.

The basic factors that drive individuals to change their consumption patterns are determined, and the motivations that cause individuals to change their consumption patterns and thus their lifestyles are revealed. Based upon the practice theory and especially upon the conceptual frameworks of Bourdieu, Giddens and Warde, it is discussed how individuals transformed their unsustainable practices into sustainable ones through habitus of sustainability, and how this transformation is maintained by support with collective activities.

In this study, the concept of sustainability is approached with regard to the literature on environment and ecology, with which it is related. Thusly, it was aimed to comprise a philosophical and theoretical background, drawing from the literature on green thought, for sustainable consumption. The concept of sustainable consumer behaviour, defined through a detailed analysis of the consumption practices of individuals,

considers the green consumers as a part of the green thought, beyond being a mere consumer group. Thus, the discussions on deep ecology, social ecology, permaculture, ecofeminism, and animal liberation are included while performing the analysis of the daily life sustainable consumption practices. The reason for the search for the roots of the concept of sustainability in these areas is to provide the ethical frameworks that influence sustainable consumption behavior. Thus, it is aimed that the relationship between the concepts of sustainability and consumption be established from more philosophical, ethical, and political points of view.

The theoretical framework developed for the analysis of sustainable consumer behavior is based on the framework of practice theory. By looking at the everyday, ordinary practices, sustainable consumption activity is conceptualized as a conscious activity, and the issue of how daily life practices could be changed via self-determination is analyzed through the habitus of sustainability.

The concept of habitus is considered directly related to the class position when it is used in the sense Bourdieu (2015) used it. In this study, too, the habitus of sustainability is employed as a part of a middle-class consumption culture. The cultural, social and economic capitals required for the habitus of sustainability and the environmental capital to emerge are related to the middle-class position. Environmental capital, evaluated as the primary motivation for the habitus of sustainability to emerge, is regarded as a hybrid form comprising of the combination of the cultural, social and economic capitals (Karol & Gale, 2004). It is possible to argue that the environmental consciousness, the driving factor behind the development of environmental capital, is developed in middle-class individuals via education, and the middle classes are more advantageous in realising practices such as using organic and ecological products with the support of their economic capitals.

Similarly, it is possible to assert that the consumption studies conducted in Turkey focus more on the consumption practices of the middle-class individuals (Akarçay, 2016; Karademir, 2014). This study, which discusses the sustainable consumption phenomenon from a sociological perspective, is especially interested in how this phenomenon would be approached in the sociology literature. While linking the terms of consumption and sustainability with one another, sociological theories of

consumption have also been included in the analysis. Thus, it is discussed how the concept of sustainable consumption can be examined sociologically. By referring to the theories of Marx, Weber, Veblen, Simmel, Baudrillard, and Bourdieu, the unique place of sustainable consumption as a newly emerging phenomenon is addressed. This thesis assumes that sustainable consumption can challenge the image of the passive consumer that dominates the literature of the sociology of consumption. This new phenomenon attempts to shift the understanding of consumers from manipulated masses to active agents.

Since sustainable consumption encourages less consumption and simple lifestyles (Jackson, 2005), it directs people to develop sustainable practices in everyday life to consume less. These practices are determinant in terms of consumption patterns. Warde (2005) claims that “an individual’s pattern of consumption is the sum of the moments of consumption which occur in the totality of his or her practices” (p. 144). Thus, routines, habits, and everyday ordinary acts become the major arena in which the sustainable transformation of lifestyles takes place. If we conceptualize consumption as a constant activity of daily life, we can claim that daily life is organized around consumption practices. Therefore, when individuals make a deliberate change in their consumption patterns, this will change not only their consumer behavior but also their lifestyle. Based on this assumption, this thesis will discuss how this change in lifestyles can be addressed through routinized practices. For this reason, the relationship between everyday life practices and sustainable consumption will be established through the concepts of the theories of practice.

By referring to the theories of Bourdieu, Giddens, and Warde, this thesis questions how green consumers are motivated to transform their everyday consumption practices to maintain the well-being of the planet and all living beings as opposed to the current environmental crises. This inquiry aims to reveal the transformative potentials of daily life consumption practices. This thesis approaches deliberate and purposeful changes in consumption practices that are taken with the aim of having more sustainable and greener lifestyles. In doing so, Bourdieu’s habitus and field concepts, and Giddens’ discursive consciousness concept are mentioned.

Basing upon the theoretical framework of practice theories enables us to scrutinize how the lifestyle transformation motivated by the habitus of sustainability is maintained. The continuity of the environmental problems, which are the motivation source for the behavioral change in green consumers, can be seen as a basic and continuous motivation for creating an ecologically sustainable society. The sustainable development approach, suggested in relation to these environmental crises, has brought forward the questions who are responsible for a sustainable social change and how should they act.

Unfortunately, human beings have produced new environmental problems that are specific to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. New concerns such as nuclear waste, species loss, and high technology warfare have been added to our earlier concerns about acid rain, the greenhouse effect, and ozone depletion (Wall, 1994, p. 1). Since most of these ecological crises are the result of the deterioration caused by the fetishism of growth, human beings are the perpetrators of the ecological crises. At the same time, humans are also victims of these crises because we are not able to combat the crises and we are directly affected by its negative consequences (Kovel, 2005, p. 43). Consequently, the idea of sustainability has been put forward in order to find a solution to these global-scale environmental problems. Therefore, sustainable consumption practices are considered as a response to current environmental problems. In other words, it is argued that these practices are motivated by the ecological concerns regarding the future of the planet.

Although it only began to be addressed in relation to environmental problems in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of sustainability is not new and the use of the term dates to the 18th century (Chappells and Trentmann, 2015, p. 52). Almost 200 years later, the concept of sustainability was again strongly emphasized to state that the resources of the world were limited and that urgent measures had to be taken at the level of social policy. The report, issued by the Club of Rome in 1972, addressed for the first time the limits of the enormous growth that had been accelerated by the Industrial Revolution (Meadows et al., 1972). Therefore, starting from the 1970s, the notions of sustainability and the limits to growth have been widely discussed (Kovel, 2005, p. 44). The notion of such a limit echoes the fact that the idea of development is unsustainable unless the well-being of future generations and the planet is taken into

consideration According to the report, in order to overcome the limits to growth, the precepts of sustainable development should be followed at a global scale (Meadows et al., 1972).

Sustainable development involves concerns regarding the development of industry, the continuation of economic growth, the future of the world's population, and the influences of industrial growth on the environment. The focal point that this concept emphasizes is the necessity of establishing a sustainable growth model including economic, social, and environmental aspects. In other words, in one sense it means providing balanced growth (Meadows et al., 1972). The Brundtland Report in 1987 defines sustainable development as follows: "Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987).

Since it contributes to the maintenance of the well-being of both human beings and nature, the concept of sustainable consumption can be considered a key subject in the issue of sustainable development (Hobson, 2002, p. 95). As Jackson (2006) points out, western societies are unsustainable in terms of their dependency on finite resources and they take advantage of material means while the poorest nations fail to satisfy their basic needs (p. 1). As different lifestyles lead to different ecological footprints, in developing and developed countries where consumption activities are intense, ecological footprints are particularly high compared to other regions (Humphreys, 2009, p. 173). From this emphasis on inequality, it is possible to say that people living in developed and developing countries, where consumption is concentrated, should develop sustainable consumption patterns.

Alongside emphasizing the individual aspects of sustainable consumption, this thesis also refers to collective accounts of it. By referring to consumer networks and grassroots movements, this thesis claims that sustainable consumption carries the potential for creating social change through the collective activities of green consumers. Explaining in detail how these activities are organized and by whom, the impact of collective sharing on the sustainable transformation of lifestyles is discussed.

As the urban environment is a consumption intense area where a large population lives, it is desirable to understand how these areas, where consumption is widespread, affect

the everyday life experience of green consumers. Starting from this point, this thesis involves an empirical study with green consumers living in the urban environment. The main assumption of the study is that consumers produce new, alternative lifestyles since they engage with sustainable consumption practices as opposed to a conventional lifestyle characterized by unsustainable behaviors. Thus, the diffusion of a sustainable lifestyle can create change at the societal level. Based on this assumption, I claim that sustainable consumption can be regarded as individualized collective action (Micheletti, 2003) since it leads to both individual and collective accounts of consumption practices. It has been analyzed by explaining what these practices are and how they are implemented by sustainable consumers living in a city.

In fact, analyzing the practices of green consumers means defining sustainable consumer behavior. The identification of this behavior pattern shows us how green consumers act as active agents in the field of sustainable consumption. In this thesis, sustainable consumer behavior is assessed through the following main practices: domestic practices, shopping practices, eating practices, and mobility practices. The practices of green consumers in these areas have been evaluated and their weaknesses and strengths have been identified.

Modern consumer society can be regarded as an area in which social actors play roles as consumers (Sassatelli, 2007) and green consumers would eventually become the group that refuses to play this role. This sort of approach can explain the reason why green consumers should be treated as active agents. Sustainable consumers consciously determine their consumption habits with ethical and political concerns. They critically analyze their consumption practices and habits since they establish a relation between daily life consumption choices and wider environmental issues.

This thesis identifies the key motivations that drive green consumers to a more sustainable consumption pattern and lifestyle. The transition experienced by green consumers in their attempts at changing their lifestyles from unsustainable to sustainable is dealt with in three stages. First, the basic motivations that have led green consumers to develop sustainable consumption practices were identified. The changes in consumer behavior following the changes in consumption practices were then outlined. This phase of the process of transformation of lifestyle witnesses changes in



both the private and public spheres. Therefore, the difficult and easy aspects of this change were determined based on the narratives of respondents. Finally, respondents were asked about the changes that they anticipated for their lives in the near future for a more sustainable way of life. Thus, the aspects that green consumers regard as lacking in their sustainable lifestyle are discussed and their solutions to overcome these

This study is driven by the assumption that lifestyles are determined by consumption practices. However, this relationship can revolve around positive associations with the establishment of the concept of sustainability. This study discusses how lifestyles can be more sustainable through changes in daily life consumption practices, pointing out the weaknesses and strengths of sustainable practices by emphasizing individual and collective accounts of sustainable consumption. Therefore, based on data gathered from the empirical study, how green consumers living in urban environment experience sustainability-based lifestyle transformations through daily consumption practices are discussed, deficiencies are analyzed.

### **1.1. Advances in Sustainable Consumption in Turkey**

Global scale problems such as climate change, the spread of genetically modified products, food insecurity, environmental pollution, increasing population, overuse of natural resources have turned sustainability into a global concern. Turkey is one of the countries that include sustainability in its political agenda, and the concept of sustainability is included in its national action and development plans in accordance with international conventions.

It is possible to state that the interest in the environment in politics has started in Turkey in the 1970s. In the 2000s, the issue of environment, which has been left in the background, started to be given a more central role as part of the European Union harmonization programs. (Çokgezen, 2007, p. 106). The introduction of sustainability into national politics has been realized through the United Nations (UN) conventions. Turkey signed the UN Convention of Biological Diversity in 1992 at the Rio Summit. Being a part of this convention is significant, because, for the first time in history the concept of sustainable consumption was discussed in this convention via Agenda 21

(Seyfang, 2005, p. 292). Turkey, one of the countries that signed the UN Framework on Climate Change in 2004, and the Kyoto Protocol in 2009, thus enabled the concept of sustainability to become a part of its national political agenda (Binboğa, 2017, p. 208).

Through these protocols and conventions, to which Turkey is a part, it is aimed to take permanent steps about environmental problems at the international level. In this respect, it was declared that initially the popularisation of practices that would decrease carbon emission is targeted (Binboğa, 2017). These conventions and reports primarily aimed at changing state politics and the production systems of large corporations. However, on the other hand it is thought that consumers should also be targeted, and the changes attained in the consumption practices of the consumers would enable the long-term sustainability targets (OECD, 2008). Put it differently, due to the increase in environmental problems, and due to their negative impact becoming permanent, sustainable consumption has gained importance with regard to both politics and daily practices. Promoting sustainable consumption points to behavioural changes that could be practiced individually with regard to the aforementioned problems, and it should be supported with policies directly targeting consumers. The appearance of the concepts of sustainable development, sustainable production and sustainable consumption in politics, has brought up the lifestyle change, related to these concepts, into question. The consumers are acknowledged as the driving force behind sustainable development and it is emphasised that the consumers, too, have a responsibility in achieving long-term economic growth that does not harm the environment (ibid).

Achieving a sustainable living is represented as the urgent and one of the most striking global concerns. The reports issued by organizations such as United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)<sup>1</sup> and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)<sup>2</sup> underline the significance of the promotion of sustainable lifestyles to maintain the well-being of human beings, as well as the planet. Therefore,

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<sup>1</sup> UN determines Development Goals to ensure global sustainable development. Retrieved 10 September, 2018 from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

<sup>2</sup> As an important development in the area of sustainable consumption, OECD deals with a personal behavior change and works on the policies popularising greening household consumption. Retrieved 10 September, 2018 from <http://www.oecd.org/environment/>

the issue of sustainable consumption is confronted not only as a subject of academic inquiry but also a part of the development plans. Together with sustainable production, the notion of sustainable consumption is approached as the subsidiary part of sustainable development.

Engagement with sustainable consumption practices is encouraged by governments as a part of the development plans. Even though global sustainable development plans are regularly updated, the achievements gained through these plans are not that clear. There are many goals attained as a global aim such as Millennium Development Goals<sup>3</sup> and Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup>. When we look at the content of the goals it can be noticed on the first glance that these goals are attained without recognizing the specificities of each country. Certainly, these goals open a space for each government to develop own policies meeting the goals of these sustainable development plans. However, these global goals do not directly influence the everyday matters unless they are seriously taking as a source for environmental policymaking.

The goal 12 is among the Sustainable Development Goals and it targets responsible consumption and production. It involves concerns about the efficient use of natural resources and reducing the ecological footprint. In 2016, the Ministry of Development published a report representing “Turkey’s Initial Steps towards the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” In the report regarding the developments in goal 12, it is written that:

In order to support sustainable production and consumption, environment-friendly products will be encouraged in public procurement throughout the Plan. In order to foster innovation and green manufacturing capacities of domestic firms, public procurement is to be used as an effective tool. Practices towards improving environmental consciousness, especially protection of nature and support of sustainable consumption will be promoted between the years 2014-2018. Environmental sensitivity and life quality are planned to be improved with practices such as waste and emission reduction, energy, water and resource efficiency, recycling, prevention of noise and visual pollution, use of environment-friendly material in line with sustainable urban approaches.

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<sup>3</sup> Millenium development goals target eight global problems including environmental sustainability to ensure sustainable development through collaborations with NGOs and governments from all over the world. Retrieved 11 September, 2018 from <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

<sup>4</sup> UN sustainable development goals target achieving sustainable development in seventeen different issues including responsible production and consumption (Goal 12) by 2030. Retrieved 12 September, 2018 from <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

Developing greener production capacity via green technology and sustainable production are also aimed (Ministry of Development, 2016, p. 20).

As it is mentioned in the report above, Turkey is one of the countries that express that they have set the goal to popularise sustainable consumption. There are projects that are put into practice especially via the local administrations, and that promote sustainable consumption. The garbage collection and waste sorting bins in areas, where people have easy access, the cloth and shoe bins placed by the municipalities are among the most popular practices that promote sustainable consumption in the cities. Örtgen (2009), in a study conducted to investigate the effects of municipality services on the individual consumption habits, mentioned that the activities by the local administrations fell behind in promoting sustainable consumption. As an example, she stated that municipalities should inform the citizens via brochures and posters, place recycling bins, and develop comfortable public transportation systems and thus orient the citizens to more sustainable alternatives (ibid).

Sustainable consumption, being an internationally important political issue, is also a field of academic research. Sustainable consumption, as a field of research, studied mostly by business administration, marketing and psychology disciplines, has been a research topic as a part of consumer behavior and marketing surveys (Atrek & Madran, 2017; Ergen, 2016). Especially the green consumers, who adopt a lifestyle of voluntary simplicity understanding against conspicuous consumption, and who are the practitioners of this lifestyle, have become the main subject of these studies. In these studies, it is emphasized that the main reason for the consumers to prefer more sustainable and greener products were their concerns about the environment. The issues such as the overuse of natural resources, environmental pollution, and climate changes are considered in relation to sustainable consumption, and the positive change that would be created by the environmental consciousness was emphasized (Bener & Babaoğlu, 2008; Atrek & Madran, 2017).

The education of the consumers with the aim of raising environmental consciousness is one of the major research subjects the studies in the literature focus on (Karalar & Kiracı, 2011; Hayta, 2009). In fact, education of consumers about sustainability includes the informing of the consumers about alternative consumption systems

(Hayta, 2009: 144). Thus, the consumers are enabled to analyze their effect on the environment while fulfilling their needs.

In addition to the idea of educating the consumers to raise environmental consciousness, the concept of citizenship is emphasized, and it is considered significant to promote possible social policies in this respect, and to include businesses in social responsibility programs (Atrek & Madran, 2017, p. 4). The demand of the consumers for more sustainable and greener products increase is expected to have a transforming effect on the market. Thusly, it is possible to claim that a green marketing has emerged because of the demands of the green consumers (Boztepe, 2016).

The concept of citizenship is discussed as ecological citizenship in relation to sustainable consumption. Seyfang (2005) stated that ecological citizenship meant considering the effects of consumption activities of an individual to decrease the carbon footprint, as Dobson (2003) used the term. According to Seyfang, when individuals behave as ecological citizens, they would consider the effects of their consumption activities both on the environment and on other people (2005, p. 291). Seyfang, who claimed that a sustainable consumption perspective could be mentioned, basing on this assumption, asserted that this perspective includes the empowerment of smaller scale local economic relations, and creating food chains that would support local organic food production (ibid).

It is possible to state that an alternative sustainable consumption perspective, in the sense that Seyfang mentioned, has been developed in Turkey. It can be said that this perspective is realised not in the social politics domain, but mostly in grassroots movements and in the activity domains of non-governmental organisations. In other words, the infrastructural inefficacies experienced in the implementation of the present policies about sustainable consumption in Turkey has given rise to the activities of nongovernmental organisations and grassroots movements. Therefore, when considering the studies in sustainable consumption in Turkey, it is important to take account of nongovernmental organisations such as Buğday Association for Ecological

Living<sup>5</sup>, Yuva Association<sup>6</sup> and Yeryüzü Association<sup>7</sup>, the food communities mainly located in İstanbul, and the ecovillages and ecological farms, which aim at developing and popularising the ecological lifestyle and sustainable consumption perspective.

The activities of the grassroots movements are of significance, especially in accessing organic and natural food. The alternative food systems, which bring together the producers living in the country and the consumers living in the cities, are provided with the activities of the grassroots movements. Thusly, foods, which are expensive and difficult to access in the cities, become more easily accessible for the middle-class consumers living in the city, who are motivated with concerns such as health and environmental protection. For instance, the 100% Ecological Markets, organised under the guidance of the Buğday Association, bring together the producers of organic products and the consumers. Buğday Association regularly conducts inspections in these markets and monitors the continuity of the production by tracking the producers.<sup>8</sup> For promoting the sustainable consumption in Turkey, ecological literacy programs are being organised for adults and children with the efforts of the nongovernmental organisations. Yuva Association is one of the institutions conducting pioneering studies in this field in Turkey, and within the scope of the Earth Citizenship Program, it organises ecological literacy programs on how we would live in harmony with the nature.<sup>9</sup> Yeryüzü Association, as another nongovernmental organisation operating in

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<sup>5</sup> In the website of Buğday it is written that “Buğday Association for Supporting Ecological Living is a non-profit, non-governmental organization registered under the Turkish law. The pioneering Buğday (Wheat) ecological movement started in the 1990s with a restaurant/wholesale store offering local and organic food, which also served as a space for like-minded, environmentally conscious people to meet, gather and share their ideas and visions about ecological living. Buğday movement evolved into an association which was officially founded in 2002, under the name of Buğday Association for Supporting Ecological Living” (Buğday, 2010). Buğday Association, (2010). “About us”. Retrieved 27 June, 2018 from [http://bugday.org/english/?page\\_id=2](http://bugday.org/english/?page_id=2)

<sup>6</sup> It is written at the website of YUVA, it was established in 2010 and now it has become a holistic learning and advocacy center that tackles ecology, human rights and the elimination of poverty (Retrieved 28 June, 2018 from <https://www.yuva.org.tr/biz-kimiz/>).

<sup>7</sup> Yeryüzü Association was founded in 2009 in İstanbul with the aim of supporting ecological living and encouraging the establishment of ecological communities. Retrieved 13 September, 2018 from <https://yeryuzudernegi.org/>

<sup>8</sup> Ekolojik pazarlar (n. d.) Retrieved 12 September, 2018 from <http://ekolojikpazarlar.org/>

<sup>9</sup> Dünya Vatandaşlığı Programı (n.d.) Retrieved 11 September, 2018 from <https://www.yuva.org.tr/cause/dunya-vatandasligi-programi/>

ecology field, organises seed exchange activities, permaculture trainings, and city gardens activities.<sup>10</sup> In addition to these, Ekoharita (Ecomap), another grassroots, run by mainly ecological voluntariness, should be mentioned. The interactive ecological map system, which was founded to announce the current activities on ecology, has provided a virtual ecological network.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to these activities, organised by the nongovernmental organisations and the grassroots movements, it is possible to state that some municipalities in Turkey conducted activities about sustainability. 15 cities in Turkey received the title Slow City (Citta Slow)<sup>12</sup> by providing the necessary conditions. The title Slow City can be achieved by providing 72 conditions determined in the categories slow life, sustainable development, city spirit and slow food. The perspective, in which locality is prominent and city planning organised for reducing harm given to the environment, can be characterised as slow cities, and therefore the slow city approach can be evaluated as a practice that promotes sustainable consumption and sustainable lifestyle.

## **1.2.Outline of the Study**

This thesis consists of six chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject of the thesis and provides detailed information about its content. The second chapter provides a detailed explanation of the preference of this thesis for applying the qualitative method. In this chapter, the research questions and sub-questions are given, and the characteristics of the respondents are emphasized.

The following chapter deals with the theoretical and conceptual framework of the thesis. This chapter address the objectives of 1) authentication the theoretical development of the notion of sustainability by giving reference to its ecological roots and its place in green thought; 2) locating the notion of sustainable consumption in sociological theories of consumption; 3) identifying sustainable consumers putting

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<sup>10</sup> Yeryüzü Association Events (n.d.) Retrieved 11 September, 2018 from <https://yeryuzudernegi.org/faaliyetler/>

<sup>11</sup> Eko-harita (n.d.) Retrieved 12 September, 2018 from <https://www.ekoharita.org/>

<sup>12</sup> Citta slow Turkey, (n.d.) Retrieved 08 September, 2018 from <http://cittaslowturkiye.org/>

forward sustainable consumer behavior and sustainable lifestyles; 4) identifying the perspectives that promote sustainable consumption for the benefit of the environment; and 5) explaining practice theory approaches for the analysis of sustainable consumption with reference to Bourdieu's concepts of 'habitus' and 'field', Giddens' theory of structuration with particular focus on the discursive consciousness debate, and Warde's analysis of the routinization of practices to come up with the assertion that applying everyday sustainable consumption practices makes the individual consumer as an active agent in the form of political participation through consumption practices.

The fourth chapter deals with the concepts introduced in the previous chapter. By delving into the application of theories of practices to the analysis of sustainable consumption, this chapter discusses the habitus of sustainability by relating it to 1) environmental capital and 2) weak and strong sustainable practices. It also emphasizes how sustainable consumption can be considered as a field. Furthermore, this chapter also refers to how green consumers operate at the level of discursive consciousness while engaging with sustainable consumption practices.

The fifth chapter focuses on the sustainable transformation of the lifestyles of green consumers. This chapter addresses the objectives of 1) habitus of sustainability and middle-class consumption culture; 2) individual and collective aspects of sustainable consumption; 3) the ways for greening household consumption behavior; 4) changing the meaning of the notion of "cleanliness"; 5) organization of household waste in the form of reusing, recycling, and upcycling; 6) changes in shopping practices; 7) Eating practices particular to organic and natural foods; 8) mobility practices. Lastly, this chapter refers to lifestyle scenarios of green consumers with particular focus on their values regarding urban living and rural living.

Specifically, the chapter five discusses simple living and voluntary simplicity as a lifestyle idealized by green consumers and it emphasizes vegan and vegetarian ethics. Additionally, it introduces the notion of the "prosumer" by making reference to the do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic. This chapter also addresses the objectives of 1) ecological citizenship, 2) consumer solidarity networks, 3) the spiritual orientations of green consumers, and 4) gendered aspects of sustainable consumption. Furthermore, this



chapter addresses the ways in which sustainable lifestyles are sustained in an urban environment with particular reference to control mechanisms established among green consumers. Finally, the sixth chapter summarizes the main topics of the thesis and emphasizes the implications of the study for future researchs in the same area.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. DATA AND METHODS

#### 2.1. Research Question and Objective of the Study

The aim of this thesis is to critically evaluate sustainable consumption practices and sustainable lifestyles of consumers living in an urban environment by referring to experiences of respondents from Eskişehir, Ankara, and İstanbul. Given that everyday ordinary practices have a capacity to create an alternative way of living the question may be thusly: *How do daily life consumption practices create the field of sustainable consumption and transform lifestyles?* Drawing upon this question, this thesis aims to offer an exploratory inquiry of the politics of everyday consumption practices and sustainable lifestyles. Centered on mundane and ordinary activities like routines and habits this thesis questions the process of change in the lifestyles following the cultivation of ecologically sustainable living practices. In relation to this research question, this thesis will search for an answer to the following sub-questions: *How do people define their sustainable and unsustainable practices? How can sustainable consumption be formalized as a “field”? How can sustainability be conceptualized as “habitus”? How do everyday practices determine the lifestyles?*

By giving reference to the theories of practice, particularly those of Bourdieu and Giddens, I will question whether sustainable consumers can be regarded as active agents through their deliberate consumption practices. Furthermore, with reference to structure and agency discussion, I will argue in which ways sustainability as a habitus affects and is affected by everyday consumption practices. On the other hand, I will question the reactions of respondents to their own lifestyle choices and preferences by referring to the “meaning” of this deliberate lifestyle transformation for those who experience this change. In this regard, I will refer to obstacles that they have

encountered during the process of deliberate lifestyle change with particular reference to their experience of sustainable living in the above-mentioned cities.

This study focuses on the process of change in everyday practices following the constitution of ecological awareness. This thesis asserts that when people possess the habitus of sustainability they tend to behave as a ‘perpetrator’ or even as a ‘solution partner’, not only as a ‘victim’ of the environmental problems. This actually refers to the process of transformation from ordinary consumers to agents. In other words, when people engage in sustainable practices they then become agents of the sustainable social change through their everyday sustainable consumption patterns.

Micheletti (2003) refers to individualized collective action to define how consumption activities can be considered as political collective actions. By referring to Micheletti, Holzer (2010) claims that the power of individual consumers is limited in terms of affecting the market structure, however, the power behind political consumerism is “the power of agencies that command enough credibility to influence many people’s decisions and thus to transform individual choices into a collective statement...” (p. 65). Therefore, in the case of sustainable consumption grassroots organizations have the power to challenge current systems of consumption through the establishment of alternative networks among consumers. Green consumers organize workshops and trainings to make people learn the basics of sustainable living in the city, such as self-producing cleaning products, growing their own food, becoming a member of food communities, using alternative ways of transportation, and practicing waste management in the form of recycling, reusing, and composting. This list can be made longer depending upon the experiences of the green consumers living in the city. Therefore, in the following chapters what sort of sustainable consumption practices is preferred by green consumers will be discussed.

Even though becoming eco-aware cannot be the primary value in fostering a sustainable lifestyle, ecological awareness is important in terms of bringing an ‘eco-sensitive’ approach into everyday life’s ordinary practices. Becoming eco-aware affects the way people define themselves, as well as the way they prefer to live. Ecological, environmentally sensitive, or sustainable ways of living also echo the concept of “ecological citizenship” developed by Dobson (2003). By using this

concept, Dobson claims that the risks of ecological hazards should be shared by everyone regardless of where they live in. Furthermore, Dobson (1998) aims to abolish the distinction between private and public spheres in the case of ecological citizenship by criticizing the opposition of active public citizenship and private passive citizenship (p. 3). Therefore, green consumers' household practices can also be considered as part of ecologically sensitive activities that are motivated through the feeling of responsibility towards nature. Thus, every day practices, routines, and habits become the area of ecological citizenship and display as well the political participation of consumers as active agents. Based on this understanding, it will be possible to comment on the process of transformation of lifestyles through routines, habits and ordinary practices. This thesis assumes that as a result of the development of eco-sensitive approaches, green consumers are motivated to transform their practices and behaviors to establish eco-sensitive lifestyle which this author terms as 'ecologically sustainable lifestyle'. Thus, in the scope of this thesis, basic thinking and value sources that motivate individuals into taking responsibility for transforming their unsustainable consumption practices in their everyday lives will be uncovered.

Searching for daily life sustainable consumption solutions in the urban sphere directs individuals to the same sources such as websites, academic and popular journals and most importantly to NGOs and grassroots organizations as well as governments' institutions. For this reason, when people are in search of a sustainable living, they somehow come across and develop a relationship. Consumer networks can make individuals' practices more sustainable by creating new areas to practice sustainable living. Staying in touch with people who share similar lifestyles can contribute to the development and continuation of sustainable practices. In the case of urban green consumers, local grassroots organizations and collectives can also contribute to the mobilization of lifestyles through events organized for introducing a sustainable way of living in the cities. Through eco-festivals, workshops, seminars, and establishment of food communities, the link between consumers can be established. Based on this, we can claim a direct relationship between individuals' everyday sustainable consumption practices and the activities of grassroots initiatives working to promote sustainable consumption. Given that collective acts are significant for the development of sustainable practices and the transformation of lifestyles, the following questions

should be posed: *How does collective activity give rise to the continuation of sustainable lifestyles in the cities? What kind of activities are performed by grassroots communities to promote ecologically sustainable lifestyles? Can the efforts of grassroots communities provide an alternative way of living in the cities?*

This thesis aims to focus on individual and collective efforts in terms of promoting sustainable consumption in the urban environment. Therefore, the individual motivations and collective commitments regarding sustainable living will be important aspects of the discussion of sustainable lifestyles. Green consumers' motivations for performing sustainable living could be diverse, therefore, the analysis of practices, as well as their motivations for applying those practices will be the analysis of their *modus operandi*.

The most important features of everyday practices can be formulated as routinization and repetitiveness, therefore, the ways in which individuals enhance their sustainable practices are significant for the purpose of defining the process of transformation of lifestyles. In relation to that, this thesis discusses the ways in which these sustainable consumption practices are developed, enhanced and sustained in the urban sphere. These points will be clarified under the light of the data gathered through the in-depth interviews that have been conducted with seventeen participants who live in an urban sphere and implement sustainable consumption practices in their everyday lives.

Firstly, this chapter will explain the reasons why a qualitative method has been adopted for this study. Then, the sampling techniques applied in the study will be explained. Later, information regarding the research cities, grassroots groups and interviewees will be provided. Finally, as a transformative response, the limitations of the study will be discussed.

## **2.2.The Qualitative Research Design and Sampling Techniques**

Since this thesis focuses on the individuals' daily lives through the examination of habits, routines, and practices, it is designed as a qualitative study. This study aims to emphasize individuals' own experiences regarding their sustainable practices and lifestyles; therefore, it is aimed at making far-reaching analysis with the

implementation of the qualitative approach. For this reason, the main sources of information in this study are based on interviews, participant observation, small group discussions, and field notes. Thus, while studying sustainable consumption practices and ecologically sustainable lifestyles, it is possible to refer to the hidden aspects of everyday practices through the implementation of a qualitative research technique.

As Gomm (2008) points out, most qualitative researchers are primarily interested in how people experience and make sense of the world (p. 7). The qualitative analysis provides us with a sense of how individuals experience phenomena to produce new meanings based on the phenomenon that is studied (Fontana and Frey, 2000). Furthermore, Creswell (2007) underlines the efficiency of qualitative research in terms of showing the multiple realities of individuals based upon the actual word of individuals through the usage of quotes that present different viewpoints. In addition to that, drawing upon the qualitative analysis ensures discussing the diverse aspects of individuals' consumption practices and lifestyles on the basis of first-person narrative.

Grounding my thesis on a qualitative research design enabled me to implement the process of coding the themes. The constant comparative method provides "generating theory more systematically through the use of explicit coding and analytic procedures" (Glaser, 1965, p. 437). As Boeije (2002) asserts through comparison, the researcher is able "to describe and conceptualize the variety that exists within the subject under study. Variation or range exists by the grace of comparison and looking for commonalities and differences in behavior, reasons, attitudes, perspectives and so on" (p. 393). Categories arising from the analysis of this study are derived from the narratives of participants. Besides, I was involved in the data gathering process, as a researcher, therefore, through my observations and field notes, I also identify some categories that I regarded as significant to focus on.

As stated in the research questions, the primary aim of the study is reaching green consumers living in the cities. For this reason, as a non-probability selecting technique, this thesis uses purposeful sampling. This sampling method is widely used in qualitative research and it involves the process of intentional selection that researchers select individuals who are experienced with the studied phenomenon (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 173). The use of purposeful sampling technique enables this

thesis to select respondents who are actively engaged in sustainable consumption practices, therefore, the respondents were chosen from Eskişehir, Ankara, and Istanbul through the networks of grassroots communities. Primarily, I reached the respondents by attending the ateliers and workshops organized for promoting sustainable consumption practices in the cities. Subsequently, participants were interviewed via snowball technique which involves reaching respondents through the guidance of other respondents. In the process of data gathering, face-to-face interviews with a total of seventeen respondents were conducted.

In this study, education background and the level of income are considered as the main indicators for emphasizing middle-class characters of the respondents. Even though there are slight changes in their income levels, they are all university graduates. Green consumers in this study are acknowledged as middle-class sustainable consumption practitioners.

**Table 1. Profile of Interviewees**

Interviewee	Age	City	Gender	Income	Occupation	Living Arrangements	Grassroots activities
Respondent 1	31	Eskişehir	F	2500	Works at Tepebaşı Municipality	Lives at a Dormitory	Organizer / Volunteer at Eskişehir Ecological Living Community
Respondent 2	31	Eskişehir	F	5000	Research Assistant	Lives with her boyfriend	Participant
Respondent 3	40	Eskişehir	M	1000-3000*	Bookseller	Lives with his girlfriend	Participant
Respondent 4	27	Ankara	F	3500	Teacher	Lives with her boyfriend	Organizer / Organizer of Ecological Living Experiences Workshops
Respondent 5	25	Eskişehir	M	1000	Student	Lives with his brother	Organizer / Volunteer at Eskişehir Ecological Living Community

Respondent 6	26	Eskişehir	F	1500	Student	Lives with her sister	Organizer / Volunteer at Eskişehir Ecological Living Community
Respondent 7	34	Ankara	F	2500	Teacher	Lives with her mother	Participant
Respondent 8	30	İstanbul	F	4000	Environmental Engineer	Lives with her husband	Participant
Respondent 9	26	İstanbul	F	2600	Research Assistant	Lives with her mother and father	Participant
Respondent 10	24	İstanbul	F	2000	Organizes events at Kokopelli Şehirde	Lives with her mother and father	Organizer / Kokopelli Şehirde
Respondent 11	34	İstanbul	F	3000	Organizes Events at Kokopelli Şehirde	Lives with her husband and child	Organizer / Kokopelli Şehirde
Respondent 12	34	İstanbul	F	3000	Organizes Events at Kokopelli Şehirde	Lives with her husband and children	Organizer / Kokopelli Şehirde
Respondent 13	27	Ankara	F	500-700*	Unemployed	Lives with her mother	Participant
Respondent 14	29	Ankara	F	5000	Research Assistant	Lives with her mother	Participant
Respondent 15	29	İstanbul	F	3500	Works at Yuva Association	Lives with friends	Organizer
Respondent 16	31	İstanbul	F	3000	Organizes events at Collectif Danışmanlık	Lives with friends	Organizer / Organizer of Urban Ecological Practices Workshop
Respondent 17	27	Ankara	F	1000-1500*	Student	Lives with friends	Organizer / 100. Yıl Food Community

\* The respondents mentioned that they have no regular income.

Participants were interviewed in the data gathering process and their practices were grouped thematically so that the similarities and differences of these practices were determined. Primarily, it was planned that the qualitative research will be done only in Eskişehir with the members of Eskişehir Ecological Living Community. The pilot study done in December 2017 in Eskişehir, revealed that Istanbul and Ankara are the centers that urban-based sustainable consumption grassroots movements get into the act. Therefore, the decision of these three cities as major research sites is meant to



underline the importance of consumer networks that are organized in these three cities. In relation with the research sites, it must be noted that the aim of this thesis is not analyzing the infrastructures and the facilities of the cities but instead the focus will be on how respondents evaluate the city they live in based on their sustainable living practices.

### **2.2.1. The Process of Data Gathering**

The interviews were conducted in phases from April-August 2018 with seventeen green consumers from Eskisehir, Ankara, and Istanbul. I have conducted fifteen in-depth interviews, two small group discussions, and I have attended the workshops organized by some of the respondents. Twelve of the interviews were made with individuals who are actively involved in organizing sustainable consumption events in the cities. The other five interviews were conducted with the participants of the activities organized by other respondents. In the study, there are seven respondents from Istanbul and five respondents from each of Ankara and Eskisehir.

An open-ended question technique was used when the interview questions were determined for in-depth interviews. Interview questions are organized into four sections. In the first section personal background information were asked to the interviewees. In the second section, questions were asked about the ecologically sustainable lifestyles and everyday consumption practices. The following section includes questions on individual practices and grassroots' activities. In the last part, based on the notions of sustainability and regeneration, the interviews attempted to discover how interviewees perceive their everyday consumption practices and lifestyles in relation to other environmental and ecological movements.

The most challenging and significant part of the field research of this study was gaining access to the workshops as a researcher. The process of reaching out to the interviewees took place in two different ways. First, I reached some of the respondents through the workshops organized by sustainable consumer grassroots groups. Alternatively, I communicated directly with the consumer grassroots groups via social media. To be able to communicate with the interviewees through the workshop or training, I first had to communicate with the organizers and introduce myself and the

subject that the thesis deals with. I joined the workshops for three months, during the months of April, May, and June. After the regular participation in the workshops, I received the approval of the workshop executives. To overcome the interviewer effect, I used participant observation method that I applied by attending the weekly meetings. In this way, interviewees could understand that I was not only there as a researcher, but I was also there because of my personal interest as well as an academic interest in sustainability and ecology. In the workshops, I found a chance to explain that my own motivation for writing this thesis that comes from the questioning of my own consumption pattern. Since the participants of the workshops share the same concerns with me, they voluntarily contributed to my study as a respondent. Since I was also a participant in the workshops I was able to apply the participant observation technique and incorporated my observations through field notes.

Some of the interviewees are active members of the grassroots communities such as food community, consumer co-operatives, and collectives namely Ecological Living Community in Eskisehir, Kokopelli Şehirde in Istanbul and 100. Yıl Food Community in Ankara. As mentioned before, the most significant reason for the selections of Eskisehir, Ankara, and Istanbul as the fields of the thesis is the active presence of grassroots organizations in all three cities. Moreover, these three cities are recognized by the respondents as centers for sustainable consumption workshops concerning urban ecological living experience.

As Gomm (2008) stated when participant observation and interviewing techniques are applied together, observation allows the researcher to understand what people are doing while interview disambiguates the actual meaning of what researcher observed for those who practice it (p. 12). Thus, by taking part in the workshops I had a chance to experience what kind of activities are taking place in ecological practices workshops. Additionally, through interviewing, I was able to ask the interviewees' opinion about the collective practices that are developed through those workshops by posing direct questions regarding the content of the workshops.

### 2.2.2. Different Fields: Eskişehir, Ankara, and İstanbul

A pilot study in December 2017 in Eskişehir with the Eskişehir Ecological Living Community enabled me to reformulate the interview questions. I conducted in-depth interviews with five respondents of the total in Eskişehir. The three respondents in Eskişehir are active members of Eskişehir Ecological Living Community<sup>13</sup> and two of the respondents are participants in the activities organized by the community. Therefore, it was favorable to reach respondents through the snowball technique. Though the community in Eskişehir is not extensive, they have coordinated plenty of activities that are organized with the support of the Eskişehir Tepebaşı Municipality. Permaculture training, street festivals, and the establishment of a community garden are the few of those activities that have been organized by the Ecological Living Community in Eskişehir.

In Ankara, I attended the Ecological Life Experiments<sup>14</sup> workshops which were organized by one of the respondents on weekly basis. In the workshops, the number of respondents varied between 5 and 10. Based on the descriptions in the book, titled as *Zehirsiz Ev*<sup>15</sup>, we practiced making our own cleaning products without using hazardous chemicals. During three hours of workshops in each week we made many different products such as toothpaste and laundry detergent. We ordered the main ingredients together that were necessary to formulate those products. The ingredients of the detergents and the way they are ordered are important instances of the solidarity networks established through these workshops. These points will be clarified in detail in the chapter regarding the respondents' narratives on household chemicals. I conducted in-depth interviews with the organizer of Ecological Life Experiments Workshops and also with one of the respondents that regularly attended the workshop.

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<sup>13</sup> This community has been active in Eskişehir for three years. It is carrying out joint activities with Tepebaşı Municipality. This community is the ecological branch of Şenlikli Toplum Organization which includes several grassroots in Eskişehir from diverse areas such as: education, ecology, arts etc.. The respondents from this community work on a volunteer basis in the projects of Şenlikli Toplum.

<sup>14</sup> This workshop is organized by respondent 4 with the aim of introducing the basics of self-producing cleaning and cosmetics products.

<sup>15</sup> Uluengin, M. (2016). *Zehirsiz Ev: Yasaminizdan Zararli Kimyasallari Eksiltmenin Basit Yollari*. İstanbul: Modus Kitap.

I conducted in-depth interviews in Ankara from 100. Yıl Food Community<sup>16</sup>. 100. Yıl Food Community was established with the aim of providing an alternative food system which favors the local producers that are implementing organic and ecological methods. Alongside promoting relations with local producers from different regions of Turkey with the consumers living in Ankara, through the method of bulk buying this community also aims to reduce the carbon footprint of consumers in the network. In addition, the respondent 4, who organizes Ecological Life Experiments Workshop is also one of the consumers who is purchasing food by way of 100. Yıl Food Community. As a result, in the scope of the research, I included the experiences of two individuals who are registered ‘consumers’ in 100. Yıl Food Community.

Some of the respondents in the study actively take part in food production and they are experienced with growing foods. One of the respondents is active in a rural-based collective namely Kır Çocukları<sup>17</sup> in Ankara from time to time and she is experienced with ecological living in a rural area. Since the living conditions in ecovillages and in urban spheres differ significantly from one other, some respondents claimed that they are not able to perform the same practices in the urban sphere. Therefore, based on their narratives, the differences between the experiences of ecological living in rural areas and urban areas would be highlighted in the thesis. The last respondent from Ankara is a member of ODTÜ Bostanı<sup>18</sup> which is a community that works to set up an operating community garden within the territories of METU.

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<sup>16</sup> This is a second food community in Ankara, but the first in 100. Yıl neighborhood. The members are mostly residents of the 100. Yıl neighborhood. This community involves students from Middle East Technical University (METU) and residents living in 100. Yıl, Ankara. This food community is part of the 100. Yıl İnsiyatifi established right after the period of the Gezi Movement by residents of 100. Yıl. Within the scope of 100. Yıl Mahalle Atölyesi, one of the respondents in the study claimed that as a 100. Yıl İnsiyatifi, they have organized events like swap markets, ecological living training, and community gardening.

<sup>17</sup> Kır Çocukları defines themselves as “a small group of people who try to implement and disseminate ways of living and producing in harmony with nature. We live in the Tahtacıörencik village, near Ankara. We want to create sustainable and replicable models in such areas as small-scale family farming, natural farming, permaculture, nature conservation, community-supported agriculture, non-violent communication, and gift economy” (Kır Çocukları, (n.d.) Retrieved 16 July, 2018 from <https://kircocuklari.wordpress.com/>).

<sup>18</sup> ODTÜ Bostanı is an ecological urban horticulture project realized with the cooperation of Buğday Association on METU campus since 2014.

In Istanbul, I attended the ecological living workshop titled “Urban Ecological Practices Workshops”<sup>19</sup> organized by one of the respondents. Through the application of the snowball technique, I had an opportunity to reach other respondents in İstanbul. Additionally, by way of social media, I reached Kokopelli Şehirde<sup>20</sup>, working to support an ecological way of living in the city through workshops and training that are organized implementing permaculture principles. During the Kadıköy Environmental Festival, I arranged a small group discussion with the Kokopelli Şehirde group, which involves three enthusiastic women. I did not have a chance to visit them in their own place where they organize workshops and training, yet, through their social media accounts, I had an opportunity to observe the physical facilities that they established through their own efforts and the garden they created based on permaculture principles.

In June 2018, the Kadıköy Environmental Festival<sup>21</sup> was organized and it provided me an efficient atmosphere to gather data for this thesis. I attended several panels about current environmental issues facing Turkey. Even though it was an İstanbul-based festival, there were many participants coming from different regions of Turkey. The festival was divided into three areas where major events took place. There was a workshop area arranged for events like cloth bag designing and the techniques of plant breeding. There were also several platforms allowing speeches by NGOs and activists regarding the issues of climate change, environmental pollution, and sustainability.

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<sup>19</sup> The organizer of the workshop took part as a respondent in the research. She organizes different sorts of workshops both for institutions and individuals through the collaboration with other grassroots in İstanbul. The workshop focused on self-producing household products. As described in the publicity of workshop, the following questions were asked: “What are the reasons for the ecological crisis in the world? What can we do if we do not want to be the only consumer in the confusion of city life? In what ways can we access healthy and nutritious food? Are cleaning materials really clean? Or do they pollute? What can we do as a practical alternative to not use the products on our bodies or to clean our homes with the products that are potentially harmful, even from the smell?”

<sup>20</sup> They define Kokopelli Şehirde as “a sustainable living and ecology focused area for learning and experiencing.” They mention that the name of Kokopelli comes from a native American narratives and it symbolizes the coming of Spring (Kokopelli Şehirde, (n.d.) Retrieved 15 July, 2018 from <https://kokopellisehirde.business.site/>).

<sup>21</sup> The festival is organized by Kadıköy Municipality in İstanbul between 31 May - 3 June 2018. It is written in the website of the festival that “the festival welcomed all the grassroots, NGOs, and initiatives which are taking part the protection of the nature. The festival, which aimed to reduce waste production, included a number of activities such as workshops, interviews, theater, film shows, exhibitions and concerts” (Kadikoy Cevre Festivali, (n.d.) Retrieved 27 June, 2018 from <http://cevefestivali.kadikoy.bel.tr/#festival-hakkinda>).

Furthermore, there was a booth area that hosts mostly İstanbul based collectives, grassroots, and NGOs working on various environmental issues. In this area, I had a chance to make quick conversations with some of the participants of the festival. Later, I conducted in depth-interviews with two of the people I met at the festival. One of my respondents that I met at the festival is a volunteer at the Buğday Association. We met in the booth of Buğday Association and after a quick conversation, we arranged a meeting day for an in-depth interview. The other respondent whom I met at the festival is working as an employee in Yuva Association. Similarly, we arranged a day for an in-depth interview and conducted the interview in the following month.

### **2.3.The Process of Reflexivity and Research Limitations**

As this study is based on a limited number of interviewees, the results of the study cannot be generalized. When we evaluate the study in terms of the reflexivity process I should state that since my personal interest lead me to study everyday sustainable consumption, my practices are akin to respondents in the study. Thus, the similarities between my consumption practices and the those of respondents inevitably affected the research process. Since I share similar interests with the respondents, in the workshops, they asked me lots of questions regarding the theoretical approach that I present in my thesis. They were also interested in the research process and in each step of my research they encouraged me to include more subjects, regularly updating me when they tried to develop new practices in their everyday lives. In this way, I applied what has been referred to as the “member check” (Creswell, 2003, p. 196) technique to increase the validity of the study. As I mentioned previously, attending these workshops provided me with a great opportunity in terms of participant observation. While doing a qualitative research we can reference our own observations and experiences to make meaningful inferences about the narratives of respondents. Thus, the process of reflexivity reminds us that the study reflects not only the voice of the respondents but also the researcher.

I observed that the interview questions made sense to respondents and they made suggestions to better develop discussion ground. This interplay between me as a researcher and the respondents may be considered as the best indicator of the validity

of the research. Some of my respondents asked me to share the results of the study with them after the research is completed. I am eager to share the findings of my research with the respondents whose contribution and efforts are quite significant to the study. I believe after they read the thesis, we will find out new discussion topics and this research will continue to affect my future academic studies even after it is completed. As Oakley mentioned, developing a non-hierarchical relation between the researcher and the respondents is significant:

In most cases, the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship (Oakley, 1981, p. 41).

As the research took place in three different cities the data gathering process lasted almost five months. Even though the length of the data gathering extended the period of the completion of the study, it diversified the experiences of sustainable living in the city represented in the scope of the study. During the five-month process of data gathering, the changes in the lives of the respondents were observed and involved in the study.

Organization of the interview days and hours was quite challenging since the respondents live far from each other. Most individual interviews took approximately 1,5 hours. I also had a chance to come together with some of the respondents after in-depth interviewing and catch up with them regarding the changes in their lives in terms of their sustainable living. It was their suggestion to involve those changes in the study since they regard those changes as significant to their lives.

As the respondents were quite enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the topic of the study they made huge contributions regarding the reference sources too. They suggested me readings, documentaries, and websites which they regard as reliable sources. These sources not only helped me in developing the references of the thesis but also broadened my horizon to think about the possible studies that can be made on the same topic.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **3.1. Sustainability, Ecologism, and Environmentalism**

Sustainability as a concept of worldwide concern was introduced at the United Nations conference in Stockholm in 1972. The first chapter of the Declaration of The United Nations Conference on The Human Environment states that the meeting was held in Stockholm due the necessity of providing common principles regarding the future of the environment. The report emphasized “the need for a common outlook and for common principles to inspire and guide the peoples of the world in the preservation and enhancement of the human environment” (UN, 1972, p. 3). As Tekeli and Atöv (2017) state, this conference initiated the development of the understanding that environmental problems are political concerns. Following this, as a part of the action plans decided there, the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) was established and the 5th of June was declared as World Environment Day (Tekeli & Atöv, 2007, p. 5). In this manner, the report emphasized that the action plans emerging from the conference were human-centered and the focal point was obviously about economic development. Viewing environmental problems by way of a human-centered approach would be an international trend in the 1970s. However, in the 1980s following the discussions on ecologism and ethics, new perspectives were developed as an alternative to the human-centered view (Cantzen, 2000, p. 221). Instead of focusing solely on economic development, the effects of environmental problems on diverse groups were underlined in this epoch. The Environmental Justice Movement in the 1980s illustrates this point clearly since it connected environmental hazards with poverty claiming that the cost of environmental disruption should not only be paid by vulnerable people (Tekeli & Atöv, 2017, p. 6).



The notion of sustainability has been developed from the accumulation of environmental and ecological concerns that send warnings regarding the future of the planet earth. Yet, sustainability concern has entered the literature of ecologism as a newly emerging subject. Following the concerns on sustainability, we have been confronted with the emergence of new apprehension as “regeneration” which echoes the inability of measures to propose sustainability. The notion of regeneration points out the limits of the sustainability movement in terms of rescuing nature and demands radical changes to heal the earth. The notion of regeneration is frequently referenced in relation with agriculture and from it came the concept of regenerative agriculture. Permaculture and regenerative agriculture aim to heal and feed the soil while offering food and materials (Rhodes, 2012, p. 101). Even though this thesis does not analyze the forms of different agriculture systems, permaculture and regenerative approaches are mentioned due to their close relation with the notion of sustainability. Therefore, the notion of regeneration will be evaluated in its relation to the sustainable lifestyle by emphasizing the concerns of green consumers regarding industrial agriculture systems. I will approach regenerative approaches by emphasizing their antagonistic character to unsustainable agricultural production. Therefore, in this chapter, first I will introduce the notion of sustainability, focusing on the philosophical foundations of ecologism and environmentalism as the ideas that constitute the conceptual base of sustainability.

### **3.1.1. Ecological Roots of Sustainability**

Some of the connotations of ecology, such as 'caring for the earth', are fairly new, but the idea of ecology goes a long way back. The word itself originates from the Greek term *oikos* meaning home, ecology, and economics. In 1658 the naturalist Sir Kenelm Digby used the term to discuss the 'oeconomy of nature' (Wall, 1994, p. 5), and in 1886 the term *oecologie* was coined by Ernst Haeckel. In the following years, primarily the 1890's plant ecology, animal ecology, limnology, and marine biology each emerged in due course (Egerton, 2012: xi).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> If one desires to discover prehistory of the term ecology Egerton's book named as *Roots of Ecology: Antiquity to Haeckel* must be a reference guide. This book covers the period from Ancient Greece to

Egerton (2012), while talking about the origins of ecology, gives detailed information about developments in the area of ecology with reference to diverse regions including the Middle East and Islamic societies of that time. One of the important conclusions of this book regarding studies on ecology is the fact that the first studies done in this field aimed to identify and group animals and plants as well as to analyze environmental change (ibid). This outcome is important in terms of proving the justification for the assumption that the notions of sustainability and regeneration are 'modern' concerns. In fact, they are the concerns fed by green movements and they address the so-called modern risks as nuclear waste, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, ozone deplete etc. (Wall, 1994, p. 1). However, the worldwide interest in the environment with a scientific or philosophical inquiry is not an entirely new trend, as it can be traced back to Ancient Greece.

Ancient Greece is generally accepted as the period in which the philosophical foundations of ecology were first taken into consideration. Plato's creation myths and Herodotus's natural history are prominent examples of this kind of views (Egerton, 2012, p. 4). According to Egerton, Plato's *Timaeos* dialogue was the source of "the superorganismic balance of the nature concept and the microcosm-macrocosm concept" (ibid). In this manner, Egerton argues that "the first concept (microcosm) asserts that the living beings are organs of a superb being which is nature, and the second (macrocosm) asserts that the parts of the body correspond to different parts of the cosmos" (ibid: 3).

In Plato's dialogue *Timaeos*, *Timaeos* builds a narrative about the emergence of the universe. Plato assumes that the universe was created in the most beautiful way among every possibility. While speaking of the creation of universe Plato writes that:

For that comprehends and contains in itself all ideal animals, even as this universe contains us and all other creatures that have been formed to be visible. For since God desired to liken it most nearly to what is fairest of the objects of reason and in all respects perfect, he made it a single visible living being, containing within itself all animals that are by nature akin to it (Plato in R. D. Archer-Hind Eds., 1888: 95).

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Haecel and by the way of this book, it is possible to trace the views of philosophers, politicians, and scientists that can be regarded as bases of ecology.

This can be likened to the idea of Gaia, which would eventually come out of deep ecology. Gaia treats the world as a living organism. According to Lovelock's 1979 study, living things and especially microorganisms evolved together with inanimate environments, making the conditions in the world suitable for life. According to this assumption, superorganisms can find human beings guilty due to the harm they cause to the nature (Kışlalıoğlu & Berkes, 2012, pp. 62-65). In Lovelock's terminology, Gaia means "the superorganism composed of all life tightly coupled with the air, the oceans, and the surface rocks" (as cited in Katinić, 2013, p. 8). Therefore, the idea of Gaia or the composition of superorganisms assumes the planet as a living being which can take care of itself (Pigliucci, 2014, p. 117). Mukherjee unintentionally summarizes the idea of Gaia well by writing that

Nature does not need us to rule over it, but runs itself very well and better without humans. We are the parasites on the food chain of life, consuming more and more, and putting too little back to restore and maintain the life system that supports us (Mukherjee, 2013, p. 1).

As Pigliucci (2014) emphasized the hypothesis of Gaia is not scientific at all, however, it affected the area of ecologism in a spiritual way (p. 118). While discussing the spiritual aspect of the sustainability and sustainable consumption we will refer to the hypothesis of Gaia since it underlines the significance of the idea of holism in the study of nature. When we emphasize the idea of holism, we should again refer to Plato to understand how the idea of holism was developed.

Plato stated that while creating the universe, the creator "fashioned it as one whole, with each of its parts a whole in itself, so as to be perfect and free from age and sickness. And he assigned to it its proper and natural shape" (Plato in R. D. Archer-Hind Eds., 1888, p. 101). Looking at the assumptions of Plato from today's world, it does not seem so easy to repeat the same judgment especially when we apply what Plato thought on a universal scale to the scale of the planet earth. With all the environmental catastrophes and nuclear threats faced by the planet, the current situation of the world is quite distinct from the picture depicted by Plato. Even though we cannot claim that the universe or as an immanent part of the universe, the earth "is perfect and free from age and sickness" (Plato in R. D. Archer-Hind Eds., 1888), we

should reward Plato for his influence on green thinking by introducing the ideas of holism and balance of nature.

Most thinkers claim that the root source of environmental problems is the instrumentalization of nature by human beings (Dobson, 2016). Perhaps approaching nature with 'instrumental' concerns is as old as human beings themselves. However, in the late 19th century, resulting from industrialization, the damage caused to nature by humans increased to a level that had never occurred in previous periods. Starting from this period on, we witnessed the instrumentalization of the earth and its resources. According to Des Jardins (2006), "instrumental value is a function of utility. An object possesses an instrumental value since it is used to reach another value" (p. 260). For this reason, ecological studies are very important in terms of reminding human beings about their mutual relationship with nature. Looking through the historical development of the term ecology, it is possible to assert that the early studies on ecology were interested in human beings as a subject of focus, however, they also understand nature by giving reference to human-nature relations.

It is important to keep in mind that the idea of ecologism, though related, is something different from the idea of environmentalism. In order to understand this difference, first, we should differentiate the ecology from ecologism. Kışlalıoğlu and Berkes (2012), present rather a simple definition, they define the concept of contemporary ecology as: "...a science that delves into the relations of living things with each other and with their environment. It's basically a subdivision of biology" (p. 18). What is to be emphasized by the concept of "contemporary ecology" is that today, ecology, beyond being a subdivision of biology, forms the basis of a subdivision called "human ecology" or "environmental science" (ibid, p. 19). Starting from this definition, we can claim that ecology as a concept emerged in relation to biological sciences, but has been developed through social, cultural, economic, and political concerns. Therefore, it became a widely encompassing concept that goes beyond the limits of a merely anthropocentric understanding. Based on this understanding different forms of 'ecologies' emerged. These different ecologies will be covered in the next section under the development of 'green thought' debate.

Unlike Kışlalıoğlu and Berkes, Dobson (2016) analyzes concept of ecologism by viewing it not as a scientific study but as a political ideology. He provides a rather detailed definition of ecologism with reference to its distinction from environmentalism. According to Dobson, problems such as climate change, deforestation, and pesticide pollution have come into existence quite recently and their emergence as global concerns was rather sudden 30 years ago it probably could not be imagined that a political movement related to these problems would be organized (ibid, p. 19). While analyzing the political discourses and movements developed around these environmental issues, Dobson argues that there must be a distinction between ecology and environmentalism. According to Dobson, these two concepts, although they are closely related, are actually quite distinct. He claims that environmentalism advocates a managerial approach to environmental problems. The environmentalist approach asserts that these problems can be solved without major transformations in the current values or patterns of production and consumption. On the other hand, ecologism claims that in order to provide sustainable and satisfying existence, as a precondition it is necessary to make changes in the relation between human beings and the non-human natural world as well as in our social and political life (ibid, p. 22).

In a similar vein, Wall (1994) defines environmentalism as “(it) has been used as a term to describe a conservative philosophy that saw individuals and societies as strictly conditioned by environmental conditions (...)" (p. 7). Both Wall’s and Dobson’s definitions emphasize environmentalism as a sort of solution which does not aim to transform existing production-consumption relationships. As Wall emphasized the environmentalist approach does not account for the importance of social change (ibid). Therefore, this thesis refers to ecologism as a concept that includes environmental tendencies but goes beyond the limits of environmentalism by addressing the social change.

Approaching sustainability through ecologism brings the ecological concerns first. Sustainability is a controversial topic and is addressed by several approaches with diverse concerns. In Western societies, we can observe a tendency that sustainability is paired with “development”. Herein, it is inevitable to comment on the hidden connotations that this pairing contains. Even though it is not easy to observe at first glance, as long as sustainability is paired with development, the other connotations of

the concept such as social and environmental issues, would be ignored. As a result of this contextualization, sustainability as a concept would only be interpreted by giving reference to its economic connotations. This reductionist approach is dangerous because it would lead to the ‘unsustainability of sustainability’.

Therefore, it is important to avoid addressing only ‘development’ as a pair term of sustainability. In order to enlarge the scope of the concept, we should address the political and social dimensions of the term to refer the roots of the notion of sustainability which nurture the term philosophically. For this reason, in the next section, sustainability will be discussed in the development of green thought in reference to basic approaches.

### **3.1.2. Development of ‘Green Thought’**

Green thought in its essence is an approach that aims to protect the earth with all living things on it. By considering the environmental problems of today's, it is possible to say that the emergence of a green thought is actually a necessity. The limited resources of the world will not survive as long as human beings continue to damage nature. Therefore, uneven distribution of the benefits and the risks caused by industrialism and limited natural resources have been the subject of green thought and a particular concern to green thinkers.

Şahin (2017a) speaks of the 50-year history of green thought in a manner that we refer today. According to Şahin, even though they have not developed rather different ideas from contemporary green thinkers, early green thinkers such as John Muir, Gustav Landauer, Aldo Leopold and Paul Roben should be named as 'prehistoric thinkers' by comparing them with a so-called contemporary version of green thought (ibid, p. 32). For instance, Aldo Leopold, one of the “prehistoric thinkers” as Şahin named him, is famous for his ‘conservation’ approach that aims to protect nature. In this vein, he was also the first person to a systematic understanding of environmental ethics in his development of the land ethic (Callicott and Frodeman, 2009, p. XXXIV).

Leopold developed his approach of conservation with emphasis on the idea of the harmony between human beings and nature. Leopold suggests instead of working to dominate nature for short-lived economic benefits, human beings should consider

themselves as a part of the biotic system and must strive to protect the land in order to contribute to the existence of a healthy ecosystem. Similarly, Leopold's famous phrase "think like a mountain" echoes his approach of conversation (Callicott and Frodeman, 2009, p. 22). Leopold endeavored to combine ecology with ethics and as a result, he developed his understanding of "the land ethic" which emphasizes that natural systems have an intrinsic value (Des Jardins, 2006, p. 354).

Des Jardins (2006) defines environmental ethics as "the systematic examination of the moral relations between human beings and their natural surroundings" (p. 46). Drawing upon this definition, environmental ethics represents to whom and how human beings bear responsibility. For example, the environmental ethic which favors the well-being of future generations is 'anthropocentric' ethical perspective (ibid). The relationship between human beings and the natural environment can be basically addressed by three different ethical approaches: the anthropocentric approach, the bio-centric approach, and the eco-centric approach. Due to the raw material shortage and environmental problems that human beings encountered in the '70s, human-nature relations have begun to be questioned in an unprecedented manner. Yet, this situation has also contributed to the development of the new philosophical field called "ecological ethics". This understanding has evoked the idea that rather a comprehensive approach, involving the nonhuman field, should be developed to overcome the limitations of the reductionist approach of the traditional anthropocentric understanding. That kind of inclusive approach is also crucial to the development of an understanding favoring social and political ecology, as well as the development of the idea that nature has an intrinsic value (Cantzen, 2000, p. 221).

Stating that green thought has a 50-year history, Şahin (2017a) claims that mass production became widespread in this period. Furthermore, he underlines the significance of the oil usage in terms of affecting the historical development of green thought. Şahin asserts that the industrial transformation of agriculture known as the "green revolution" also took place within this period. The global threats posed by nuclear weapons and energies are other important factors that characterize this period. According to Şahin, "pollution and destruction became globalized and they threatened the human species, even the existence of the planet. This qualitative change that took place within a hundred years has created the specific conditions in which green thought

emerged (ibid, pp. 32-33). Besides leading to earth-scale environmental problems, this period has also enriched the philosophical and intellectual field. Based on this, Şahin justifies the reason he emphasizes the 50-year history of green thought by writing that "this period witnessed with the most important turning point in the transformation from nature conservationism to environmentalism and from there to green thought" (ibid: 33).

The 1960s, as mentioned also by Şahin (2017a) were quite significant periods in terms of green thought. During these periods we have seen the emergence of diverse environmental movements as well as the international institutional response to environmental issues. In 1968 The Club of Rome was established and in 1972 they published the influential book, *The Limits to Growth*. In this book, Meadows et al. pose the following question "What will be needed to sustain world economic and population growth until, and perhaps even beyond, the year 2000?" (1972, p. 45). As an answer to this question, they mentioned that if we would not establish a balanced growth, we won't be able to provide sustainable development due to population increase, industrialization, pollution, food production and resource consumption (ibid). In the case that sustainable growth cannot be provided, they predict that there will be detriments on a global scale and some regions of the world would be more negatively affected by this kind of development (ibid). According to Şahin, we can name this report as the symbolic turning point that echoes the transformation of the environmental movement to green movement (Şahin, 2017a, p. 43).

It is obvious that green thought opposes the detriments and the destructive effects of industrialization. Besides, among some perspectives that can be contextualized as green thought there is a shared feeling of reverence towards lifestyles and the cultures of the pre-modern times. This can be interpreted as the rebirth of Romanticism in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Şahin, 2017a, pp. 28-30). Similarly, Bute (2004) writes that the defining feature of Romanticism is "the quest to overcome alienation and fragmentation. The singular self-seeks to achieve unity by communing with nature or joining an authentic community" (p. 255). In order to discuss how Romanticism has affected the green thought, we should again echoe the idea of holism that green thought asserted against reductionism.





sources have enriched the roots of green thought. Based on these, it is possible to define the basic political and social principles that green ideology has originated. For instance, Wall speaks of Gandhi as an example to the source of green thought by stating that "Gandhi, with his non-violent strategy, integration of Hindu spirituality with politics, advocacy of grass-roots 'village socialism' and vegetarian respect for non-human life, may be described as a practitioner of an ecological politics" (ibid, p. 8). Like this example of Wall, we can assert that the discussion on sustainable consumption must rely on diverse perspectives, but particularly we should mention: deep ecology, social ecology, permaculture, ecofeminism, and animal liberation. Before elaborating on each approach, it is worthwhile to refresh the commonalities of these perspectives:

Greens strongly oppose capitalism and the Greens by most forms of assessment are firmly on the left. Yet, clearly, the Green movement measures its philosophy with additional yardsticks: holism versus reductionism, animal liberation versus anthropocentrism, decentralism versus centralism etc. (Wall, 1994, p. 8).

In order to discuss how sustainability has evolved in a philosophical way, first, I will describe deep ecology perspective. Deep ecology can be acknowledged as one of the important sources contributing to the development of the notion of sustainability. Arne Naess is credited as the first person to use the concept of deep ecology. In 1972, Naess gave a speech on the distinction between “deep ecology” and “shallow ecology”. In this speech, Naess defined the basic features of deep ecology. By giving reference to this distinction that Naess made, Dobson claims that while environmentalists are satisfied with the “shallow” efforts, ecologists will need “deep” responses (2016, p. 67). In his own words, Naess (1973) describes how the understanding of deep ecology has evolved: “Ecological knowledge and the life-style of the ecological field-worker have suggested, inspired, and fortified the perspectives of the Deep Ecology movement” (p. 98). Starting from this point, Naess distinguishes the concept of deep ecology from shallow ecology and lists basic principles so that we can define deep ecology.

According to Naess (1973), the shallow ecology movement could be described as follows: “Fight against pollution and resource depletion. Central objective: the health

and affluence of people in the developed countries” (p. 95). At the same time, he gives the basic principles of the deep ecology movement as:

- (1) Rejection of the man-in-environment image in favour of the relational, total-field image, (2) Biospherical egalitarianism — in principle, (3) Principles of diversity and of symbiosis, (4) Anti-class posture, (5) Fight against pollution and resource depletion, (6) Complexity, not complication, (7) Local autonomy and decentralization (Naess, 1973, pp. 95-98).

Based on the principles that Naess mentioned we can claim that deep ecology perspective challenges the anthropocentric understanding within green thought. Deep ecology advocates "partnership with other forms of life" (Naess, 1973, p. 96) on the basis of egalitarianism. At the same time, it advocates the abolition of any sort of group conflicts and favors richness of life forms, for the foreseeable future. For Naess, the principle of complexity not complication favors “division of labor, not fragmentation of labor. It favors integrated actions in which the whole person is active, not mere reactions. It favors complex economies, an integrated variety of means of living” (ibid: 97). Besides, due to the emphasis on localization, the deep ecology perspective implies that non-hierarchical local self-governments should be strengthened (ibid).

Deep ecology also aims to preserve the nature as “wild and free” by limiting the human impact on it (Barry, 1999, p. 17). Regarding this claim, Barry develops three captions as he calls ‘deep ecology proposals’: “(a) wilderness preservation, (b) human population control and (c) simple living” (ibid). Based on these proposals Barry claims that deep ecology as a solution to ecological crises suggests re-enchantment with nature (ibid: 17). According to Barry re-enchantment is possible as in the form of a virtue-based account which necessitates the moral relations between human beings and the environment (ibid: 32). Barry agrees with Dobson in terms of his distinction between environmentalism and ecologism. According to Barry ecologism also favors the eco-anarchist critique and he emphasizes this point as follows:

Ecologism is held to be marked by its radicalism which is made up of, inter alia, an acceptance of the 'limits to growth' hypothesis, an eco-anarchist critique of present political and economic arrangements, a particular vision of the future 'sustainable society', a moral critique of anthropocentrism and an endorsement of ecocentrism (Barry, 1999, p. 4).

Based on this definition we can claim that ecology in its deep ecology form is close to the main assumptions of anarchism. Cantzen (2000) also underlines this close relationship in his work. Cantzen advocates that even though there are saviors who favor the authoritarian society as an imperative to prevent ongoing disasters, there are also libertarian saviors who favor free society instead (ibid: 220). These saviors that Cantzen referred can be found in Murray Bookchin's "social ecology" which brings together ecological theory and anarchism. Bookchin argues that social transformation as an urgent need from an ecological point of view must be realized. According to Bookchin, after a thousand years of social evolution, we must go back into natural evolution. We need to do this not only to survive during ecological catastrophes but also to regain our own productivity in the world of life (2013, p. 429). Bookchin's thoughts have been particularly influential to the Green Movement, the Anti-Capitalist Movement and recent anarchist theory and practice (Parker et al., 2007, p. 29).

Bookchin (2013) states that it is not necessary to develop a primitive lifestyle or rural passivity image to create an ecological society; rather, it should begin with a belief that "society and nature are not inherently opposed to each other" (p. 459). Bookchin approaches the problems of modern urban life and argues that decisions in the cities must be made through participatory democracy through local municipality managed by local citizen's assemblies (Parker et al., 2007, pp. 29-30). According to Bookchin, when we aim to establish an ecological society, cities can be transformed into a decentralized structure no matter how centralized they are (Bookchin, 2013, p. 464).

Besides deep ecology and social ecology accounts, sustainability has been evolved also around the approaches that deal with the issues of agriculture and food production. In that sense permaculture is the most influential approach favoring the evolution of the idea of sustainability in the area of agriculture. With the contributions of David Holmgren, Bill Mollison developed the concept of permaculture, making him something of a pioneer in the understanding of ecological life experience in green thought (Şahin, 2017a, p. 36). The notion of permaculture is developed through the combination of the terms permanent and agriculture. In his own words, Mollison (1979) defines permaculture as "a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless

labour; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating any area as a single-product system” (p. 1). Mollison not only emphasized the philosophical direction of the concept but also offered practical information regarding permaculture practices. Yet, this information has been developed mainly for farming applications in rural areas and larger scales.

Permaculture is also related to some other methods in agriculture and food production such as agroecology. Hathaway claims that industrial agriculture has led diverse environmental problems since it uses 85% of freshwaters supplies and emits greenhouse gases (Hathaway, 2015). Industrial farming systems use high technology production methods and have been relied on to bring about economic efficiency through large-scale production (Ikerd, 1993, p. 108). Therefore, agroecology came into existence as a sustainable alternative to industrial agriculture system. Basically, agroecology can be defined as follows:

Agroecology presents an alternative paradigm of production based on ecological principles such as recycling wastes, minimizing energy and water use, maximizing genetic diversity, regenerating soil and increasing its carbon content, integrating livestock and crops into a holistic system, and promoting other beneficial biological synergies (Hathaway, 2015, p. 239).

It should be noted that agroecology cannot be reduced to organic farming. It is much more appropriate to regard agroecology as a food system which is ecologically sensitive, economically applicable, and socially just. Therefore, sustainable agricultural systems can be defined as “conserve resources, protect the environment, produce efficiently, compete commercially, and enhance the quality of life for farmers and society overall” (Ikerd, 1993, p. 151). Both for permaculture and agroecology we can claim that they are aiming at making changes in industrial food system which is highly desired by sustainable consumers. They not only contribute to the development the concept of sustainability theoretically, but at the same time, they produce practical solutions to unsustainable consumption systems.

As another philosophy that feeds the idea of sustainability we can refer to ecofeminism. Ecofeminist philosophy aims to draw attention to domination and oppression of women and nature by patriarchal values (Cuomo, 2002). Ecofeminism integrates ecology and feminism and underlines the relationships between femininity

and nature by taking women and nature to be connected (ibid: 7). According to Gaard (1993), basic premise of ecofeminism can be defined as follows; “Ecofeminism calls for an end to all oppressions, arguing that no attempt to liberate women (or any other oppressed group) will be successful without an equal attempt to liberate nature” (p. 1).

According to Gates (1996), “ecofeminism involves activism as well as ideology” (p. 7). D’Eubonne’s works in 1970s were credited as the pioneering works in the field. D’Eubonne defended that the roots of the link between women and the earth is based on the past however its effect can be seen in the present as in the nuclear power protests that women lead (as cited in Gates 1996, p. 10). Similarly, Warren and Cheney approach ecological feminism as an attempt to unite women’s movement and ecological movement (1991, p. 179). This philosophy stands between the precepts of ecology and feminism (Tong, 1989). Therefore, according to Cuomo (2002) the issues like “ecological degradation, exploitation of workers, racism, and women’s oppression” (p. 1) are crucially significant for ecofeminist agenda. Thus, Ecofeminism’s political focus explains that both financial and environmental crisis are gendered (Mies and Shiva, 1993). Additionally, ecofeminist perspective claims that male-driven urbanized, technological society and its detriments reduced the world’s fertility (Gates, 1996, p. 9).

Warren claims that western culture and the arrogance of men towards nature has perpetuated the patriarchy (Warren, 1987). Therefore, according to Warren, any feminist perspective should oppose the domination of women, as well as nature. With respect to this understanding, she produces three main principals which all feminists should rely on. Warren claims that feminists should challenge the value-hierarchical thinking which aggrandizes the values of men and humiliates the values of women and nature. Moreover, feminists must object to any kind of dualisms since they produce new ways of oppression both for women and nature. Lastly, she claims that feminists must struggle against the logic of domination which favors male dominance. Warren asserts that ecofeminism contains these general claims:

- 1) There are important connections between the oppression of women and the oppression of nature.
- 2) Understanding the nature of these connections is necessary to any adequate understanding of the oppression of women and the oppression of nature.
- 3) Feminist theory and practice must include an ecological

perspective. 4) Solutions to ecological problems must include a feminist perspective (Warren, 1987, p. 4).

In the same manner, Vandana Shiva (1990) acknowledges the relationship between women and nature by emphasizing the economic aspect of the exploitation of women. Shiva states that the ideology of development is about bringing the all resources of nature to the market economy. The diversion of resources to the market generates ecological instability and creates new forms of poverty for women (ibid).

Without the inclusion of ecofeminist perspectives, the discussion regarding the roots of sustainability would be incomplete. Ecofeminism underlines another source of the notion of sustainability by putting forward human-nature dualism, as well as women's subordination. Therefore, ecofeminism-based ethics favors the reciprocity, interconnectedness, and non-hierarchical relations between humans and nature. In addition, the inclusion of a feminist perspective in the discussion of environmentalism was also important in terms of eliminating the traditional distinction between private and public space through an emphasis on the politics of personal (Seyfang, 2005, p. 291).

Ecofeminism also considers the issue of animal welfare. Eating meat or using animals in favor of human needs is contradictory to the approach of ecofeminists which equally cares about the wellbeing of women and nature. According to Warren, some feminists favor moral vegetarianism as a necessary condition of any feminist perspective (Warren, 2000). In a similar vein, Carol Adams (2010) asserts that meat eating is an integral part of male dominance; vegetarianism, in this sense, resists to patriarchal culture. In her sensational and provocative book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist Vegetarian Critical Theory*, Adams examines the meat culture from diverse perspectives focusing on the issues of gender and race, and class with the aim of revealing the links between the practice of eating animals and the maintenance of male dominance (ibid).

The points that Adams emphasized conceive animal liberation as another significant issue in terms of addressing the discussion on sustainability. In the book, *Animal Liberation*, Peter Singer (2005) claims that liberation movements have always countered against the discrimination, but the discrimination against animals

overlooked. Based upon the notion of equality Singer writes that the principle of human equality is not a representation of the actual state, but a guide to how we should treat people (ibid, p. 41). Based on this conceptualization, in accordance with the principle of equality if a living being is suffering, regardless of the nature of its existence, it must be treated as equally as with the suffering of any other living being (ibid, p. 46). Singer claims that there are many things that can be done, including protests, to fight against the suffering of animals and speciesism, and at the same time, he advises against meat eating to make a transformation in our own lives. For Singer, it is inconsistent for a person who empathizes with the suffering of animals to continue to eat meat (ibid, p. 225).

To sum up, the notion of sustainability has been enriched from diverse sources and this thesis particularly considers the following perspectives as the main sources: deep ecology, social ecology, permaculture, ecofeminism, and animal welfare. It is claimed that based on these sources, sustainability underlines the importance of the interconnectedness between human and nature by reminding the responsibility of humans towards nature. Therefore, the next section will discuss the ways that the notion of sustainability has reacted to the ecological crisis.

### **3.1.3. Specific Features of Sustainability**

Sustainability as a response to the ecological crisis was developed through the contributions of diverse green thoughts and is based on the understanding and anxiety that there is a limit to growth. The concept refers to the idea that due to large-scale interventions to nature and treating nature as a limitless resource for development, the current economic system cannot be sustained. Furthermore, this understanding of unceasing development will negatively affect the planet as a whole. The existence of all living things on the planet is now in jeopardy (Şahin, 2017a, p. 41).

Sustainability emphasizes the survival of current living beings and it takes into account the survival of nature and the well-being of future generations. With the notion of sustainability, it is particularly emphasized that we are responsible to future generations and we must ‘sustain’ the existence of human beings on the earth. According to Des Jardins (2006), an economic, ethical and ecologically sustainable



future which uses the three pillars of sustainability, must be established. While establishing a sustainable future, environmental degradation should be addressed in much broader dimensions, especially as social ecologists and ecofeminists have pointed out. Thus, social and political planning in this context is essential for sustainability (ibid, pp. 518-521).

This approach pointed out by Des Jardins expounds the concept of "responsibility". We are responsible for other living beings and future generations, but our main aim must be providing for the well being and the continued existence of planet Earth. Otherwise, it is not possible for any creature to sustain its existence. That is to say, we can talk about the well-being of future generations when we heal the world through sustainability. Therefore, remembering the intrinsic value of nature as deep ecology has asserted is a necessary measure in establishing the non-hierarchical relation between humans and nature. Changing hierarchical thinking and acting responsibly would benefit the well-being of women, as well as that of animals. Furthermore, instead of insisting on industrial forms of agriculture, applying permaculture and agroecology principles would contribute to the development of a sustainable form of agricultural practices.

At this point, it is claimed that to ensure the permanence of sustainability as a world-view it is important to transform consumption practices and lifestyles. Therefore, the next section will discuss how the concept of sustainable consumption was developed and what is the contribution of sociological perspectives in the development of the concept.

### **3.2. Locating the Notion of Sustainable Consumption in Sociological Theories of Consumption**

As discussed in the previous section, sustainable consumption is not only a consumption model but also a concept that has ecological roots, as evidenced by the term of sustainability which is traditionally paired with development. Since the limits to growth thesis relies on sustainability, according to Dobson (2016) this thesis is significant for the analysis of radical green thought. Dobson describes the current

situation of the world by stating that technological solutions won't necessarily lead to sustainable society as long as industrialized and industrializing societies continue to promote the fetishism of growth (ibid, p. 102).

Consumption has been on the research agenda of a diverse array of subject areas such as sociology marketing, psychology, feminist scholarship, media, and cultural studies. Thus, it is not possible to define a single analytic frame for the study of consumption. Even though they differ in terms of their focal point in the analysis of consumption what they share is the idea that consumption is carried out by the masses. Considering consumption, it is possible to assert that regardless of its quantity and quality, it is a constant activity of everyday life. In each day, every one of us engages with some kind of consumption activities including energy use but, what we are really consuming is the resources of the earth that we should be shared with other living beings, not simply appropriated by humans. Therefore, ecologically responsible consumption, or in other words, sustainable consumption, inherits the potential of challenging this conventional understanding of consumption. Before delving into the discussion of what sustainable consumption is and how it is framed theoretically, we will first focus on the classical theories of consumption to underline how sociology approaches the notion of consumption and consuming agents.

In the research area of consumption, the most dominant perspective undoubtedly comes from marketing studies. Therefore, it is necessary to ask: Why do we need a sociological analysis of consumption? Social and cultural aspects of consumption, often overlooked by marketing research, should be tackled along with economic and psychological aspects. Market researchers share a tendency to reduce the position of the consumer as passive buyers, but a proper sociological analysis of consumption can challenge this point of view by putting forward the consumer as an agent. Furthermore, the sociology of consumption refers to the symbolic meanings that direct the act of buying instead of considering consumption as merely an act of economic relation.

The field of consumption is also largely controlled by the media and advertising. Marketing researchers conduct field studies to determine the consumer profile and product scales. Through the surveys applied to consumers, they aim to designate consumption habits and preferences. As Zukin and Maguire stated, these studies also

aim to reveal the emotions attached to particular brands and products by consumers (Zukin & Maguire, 2004, p. 184).

On the other hand, as a sociological response to consumption studies, we can refer to Miles' theory which suggests differentiating consumption from consumerism (1998, p. 3). Miles criticizes the traditional definition of consumption that equates consumption only with the act of buying a product. Instead, Miles claims that in the definition of consumption, there must be mention of the "experiences of both the product and the consumer before and after such a purchase" (ibid, p. 4). Thus, Miles asserts that consumption cannot be understood as a mere economic phenomenon, its cultural dimensions cannot be overlooked (ibid). It is possible to claim that sociology made a huge contribution to the study of consumption. Warde writes that:

Economics no doubt concentrates almost exclusively on the acquisition, and cultural studies are especially concerned with appreciation, but psychology and sociology address aspects of all three. Indeed, sociology has made significant contributions to each and offers some promise of drawing them together (Warde, 2017, p. 20).

In this following section, first, classical approaches on sociology of consumption will be discussed. Then, the notion of sustainable consumption will be addressed in relation to the sociological theories of consumption. It is aimed to underline the importance of sustainable consumption as a newly emerged perspective within current consumption theories by putting forward to the idea of the consumer as a political agent.

### **3.2.1. Classical Theories of Consumption**

When analyzing the concept of consumption or problematizing this concept, the notions of need and desire must be emphasized. The reasons why we consume and how we consume have become subjects that need to be examined from a sociological point of view. The common definition of consumption can be formalized as "social, cultural, and economic process of choosing goods" (Zukin & Maguire, 2004, p. 173). This simple definition emphasizes the 'process' to underline that consumption cannot be reduced to the activity of buying. However, since this definition also focuses on 'choosing goods', it fails to notice the consumption of things other than material goods. Douglas and Isherwood extend the framework drawn by Zukin and Maguire,

expressing that consumption conventionally is conceptualized as follows: “at present in the professional literature on consumption, there is a tendency to suppose that people buy goods for two or three restricted purposes: material welfare, psychic welfare, and display” (Douglas and Isherwood, 2002, p. vii).

According to Miles, as it addresses the social change, economic change and globalization, the study of consumerism is significant for sociology (1998, p. 11). During 1980s consumption became an important subject matter in the social sciences. Sociologists approached consumption as a social phenomenon instead of addressing it with economic explanations like supply-demand and production (Bocock, 2014, p. 15). However, when we look at the previous periods especially in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is possible to claim that sociologists addressed the industrial development and the increased production. Gottdiener also warns about the fact that there is a common approach asserting that:

...a so-called consumer culture is a necessary feature of capitalism, many of the qualities of that culture – consumption as social positioning, consumption as a mode of self-expression - can be found in European society in periods that predate the rise of capitalism (Gottdiener, 2000, p. 11).

The studies relying on the critical analysis of "mass consumption" and "consumer culture" focus especially on the industrial revolution and its aftermath. In order to analyze the sociological theories of consumption through a particular focus on sustainable consumption, in this part I will outline the classical theorists of consumption like Marx, Weber, Veblen, and Simmel, then, I will move on to the theorists whose works could be considered as the analysis of the post-modern world: Bourdieu and Baudrillard. Since this thesis applies the theories of practices to the analysis of sustainable consumption, Bourdieu's approach will be of greatest importance for this study.

During the century following the Industrial Revolution, the world has faced growing industrial production, diversified products, and evolving distribution networks. Western countries that are industrially developed, have had unprecedented capital accumulation and circulation thanks to the raw material support from their former colonies and the cheap labor force working in the factories. In his monumental work, *Capital*, Marx (2018) discusses the characteristics of new relations of production

emerged following the industrialization. In his classical political economic analysis, Marx defines the working class who sells its labor power and produces in contrast to the bourgeoisie class who owns the capital as well as means of production. In this analysis, Marx was not only interested in production relations and production processes, but also interested in "use value" and "exchange value" of commodities (ibid). Thus, according to Miles (1998), "Marx was the first theorist to touch upon the inherent contradictions of the 'consuming paradox'" (p. 17). In relation to use value and exchange value Marx states that:

use-values become a reality only by use or consumption: they also constitute the substance of all wealth, whatever may be the social form of that wealth. In the form of society, we are about to consider, they are, in addition, the material depositories of exchange-value (Marx, 2018, p. 27).

Marx (2018) claims that "we have seen that when commodities are exchanged, their exchange-value manifests itself as something totally independent of their use-value" (p. 28). Based on Marx's assumptions on commodities we can claim that the exchange value of commodities attributes a quality that Marx referred to as commodity fetishism. In volume one of Capital, Marx writes that "a commodity is, in the first place, an object outside us, a thing that by its properties satisfies human wants of some sort or another" (ibid: 27). By looking at the character of a commodity as "an object outside us" Marx emphasizes the fetishization of commodities (Gottdiener, 2000, p. 4). Marx defines commodity as follows:

A commodity is, therefore, a mysterious thing, simply because in it the social character of men's labour appears to them as an objective character stamped upon the product of that labour; because the relation of the producers to the sum total of their own labour is presented to them as a social relation, existing not between themselves, but between the products of their labour (Marx, 2018, p. 47).

For Gottdiener (2000) what Marx observed and explained with the term commodity fetishism coincides with today's ordinary fact that "people see themselves and others through the possession of commodities. Goods are the tools that signal to others who we want them to think we are and who we want to be" (p. 4). The relationship that Gottdiener has established between the theory of Marx and today's world is important because it underlines the potential of sustainable consumption in terms of challenging today's rather commonplace situation. Throughout the thesis, it will be addressed as

an important theme. Sustainable consumption provides ways of living better while consuming less and challenges the idea that the more we consume, better we live (Jackson, 2005).

As another influential figure in sociology, Weber also contributed to the study of consumption. Through focusing on cultural and symbolic aspects of society, Weber emphasized the significance of the notions of prestige and status to analyze the social rankings in the society. According to Gottdiener (2000), different from Marx, Weber emphasized that “status and wealth measured slightly different distinctions in modern society and the former, in particular, played an important role in personal lifestyle” (p. 5). In addition to the approach that relates the concept of consumption to status, Weber also deals with consumption by relating it to capitalism.

In his seminal work, *The Spirit of Capitalism and Protestant Ethic* Weber (1992) directs his focus on the spiritual aspect of capitalism experienced by Protestants. In his analysis, Weber claims that “this worldly Protestant asceticism, as we may recapitulate up to this point, acted powerfully against the spontaneous enjoyment of possessions; it restricted consumption, especially of luxuries” (ibid, p. 115). By using the term “elective affinity” Weber emphasized the relation between Protestant ethic and capitalism although there is no established direct causality between them. Weber claims that “when the limitation of consumption is combined with this release of acquisitive activity, the inevitable practical result is obvious: accumulation of capital through ascetic compulsion to save” (ibid, p. 116). In this way, according to Weber, protestant ethic establishes the spirit of capitalism.

Zukin and Maguire (2004) criticize Weber for his inability to see consumption as a social action instead of approaching it instrumentally. Furthermore, they claimed that the classical theorists did not provide any empirical analysis regarding consumption but instead relied on meta-historical analysis (ibid, p. 174). Even though they have a point in their criticism against Weber’s lack of empirical analysis, it should be noted his works have marked the evolvement of social theory, as well as the theories of consumption in particular. Both Marx and Weber contributed to the analysis of consumption by relating it with capitalism arguably the most powerful source of change witnessed in the period starting with 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Different from

Weber's analysis, Veblen and Simmel analyzed people who live in the urban environment and who do not refrain from spending money on things such as clothing, consuming with the motivation of creating an identity (Bocock, 2014, p. 27).

The works of both Veblen and Simmel include the topics such as consumption, status and everyday life. In the book, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, published for the first time in 1899, Veblen determines that under modern capitalist conditions, the American bourgeois class lives with the aim of not working but consuming. Veblen uses the term "conspicuous consumption" to refer to this group who buy luxury items to display their wealth. According to Gottdiener, Veblen observed the significance of sign value that Marx overlooked by focusing merely on the 'use value' and 'exchange value' of commodities. For Veblen, commodities act as "prestige signs" and mark people based on society's hierarchy. In this way "they (commodities) are visible symbols of status and they connote meanings as sign vehicles about social positioning in a way that class relations cannot" (Gottdiener, 2000, p. 10).

Unlike Veblen, Simmel analyzed the situation in Europe through studying consumers in Berlin and observing their daily lives. Due to both world wars and the rise of fascism, the studies of Veblen and Simmel unfortunately faded into the background after publication (Bocock, 2014, p. 26). Yet, their works are quite efficient for the analysis of consumption since they coincide with the opening of the first major shopping centers in major cities (ibid). Consequently, in their analysis, both Veblen and Simmel analyze fashion consumption. In the article, *The Desire for The New*, while talking about the theories of fashion Colin Campbell (1992) explains the model that he called "the Veblen-Simmel model". According to Campbell, "Simmel echoes Veblen's stress on the functional significance of the purchase and display of goods -in this case mainly dress- for the confirmation of an individual's position within a status system" (ibid, p. 49).

The topics of fashion and goods as a display of wealth and identity continued to be studied after the periods analyzed by Veblen and Simmel. Following the raise of industrialism, the number of new products developed proliferated and were spread by extensive distribution systems. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the concept of mass production and mass consumption that has since been referred to the Fordist model

had become widespread (Bocock, 2014, p. 29). Warde (2017) underlines that in the second half of the twentieth century the “scope, scale, and span of consumption” advanced (p. 1). Sassatelli (2007) writes that “in the Fordist phase the economy was dominated by mass production, commodities were little different and the phenomenon of consumption was characterized by the spread and, to quite an extent, the appreciation of standardized consumer durables” (p. 48). Miles (1998) presents the historical view of the process whereby “people inevitably became consumers as well as producers” (p. 6). By analyzing the Fordist economy, something he considers a crucial development, Miles concludes that “consumption came to play an increasingly important role in people’s everyday lives. People were not only offered what they needed but also what they desired, while simultaneously ‘wants’ actively became ‘needs’” (ibid, p. 7).

By analyzing today’s society Sassatelli (2007) claims that “today’s post-Fordist economy is instead characterized by customization: a generalized emphasis on individual style as well as specialized and flexible production, a greater variety of commodities changing rapidly, and niche models of consumption that are proudly hybridized, eclectic and fluid” (p. 48). In order to understand the dynamics of today’s consumer society, it should be underlined that there are series of phenomena; consumer society is interconnected with the notion of ‘modern’, it is also connected with the diffusion of a range of commodities, and it is also related with commoditization (ibid, p. 10). By looking at the features of ‘consumer society’ it is possible to assert that consumer society can be considered as “a historical type of society that exist in the West from the dawn of modernity to the present” (ibid, p. 43).

Baudrillard and Bourdieu have also contributed to the advent of the "post-structuralist" era between 1960-1980, with their emphasis on the importance of symbols and signs (Bocock, 2014, p. 68). According to Bourdieu, symbolic systems that are independent of the will of subjects, are not only found in language but they can at the same time be found in social life as the collective of objects (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14). Bourdieu carried out his study highlighting the lifestyles among status groups, starting with the comparison of consumer goods, meals, household items, and their display. Based on this analysis, Bourdieu describes four different forms of capital and conducts a detailed analysis of the meaning each capital possesses in different fields. The theoretical



approach that Bourdieu developed through the concepts of habitus, field, capital, and social practices will be elaborated in detail and the application of these concepts to the line of sustainable consumption will be discussed.

Structuralism revealed the importance of signs and symbols, leading some thinkers to focus on the role of consumption symbols in industrial society (Bocock, 2014, p. 12). Baudrillard is one such thinker who elaborates on signs and symbols. According to Baudrillard, there is a myth of needs to motivate individuals to consume more. Baudrillard (1998) emphasizes the ideological discourse on consumption by stating that “when we consume we never do it on our own. (...) Consumers are mutually implicated, despite themselves, in a general system of exchange and in the production of coded values” (p. 464). With reference to Baudrillard's critique of the consumer society, it can be argued that consumption is an activity driven by desires rather than needs (Bocock, 2014, p. 12). Yet, Gottdiener (2000) criticizes Baudrillard on the grounds that “the system of signs dominates culture so that the real no longer is a referent” (p. 26). Rather, Gottdiener underlines the significance of sign value by relating it with everyday life;

In sum, sign value combines with the political economic aspects of exchange value and the everyday life reality of use value in the satisfaction of needs to structure a complex environment for consumption that also remains related to the work-a-day world of production and that is intended for the realization of profit. If these sign worlds also entertain and give pleasure, that is simply Late Capitalism's way of making money (Gottdiener, 2000: 29).

The post-modern consumption conditions pointed out by Featherstone (2013) emphasizes the variability instead of associating consumption with the status. In the post-modern condition, anyone can purchase designer products regardless of the status group they are affiliated with (ibid). Gottdiener (2000) also emphasizes that culture and image became the central themes of the postmodern world and “material goods are not connected directly to the demands of daily life. Instead, they are converted to signs. People respond to these goods as images and symbols” (p. 19).

Gottdiener (2000) lists the recent developments that we encounter in ‘late capitalism’. Almost every day new needs and new products are created; markets are segmented; fashion determines the appearance and desirability of more and more commodities;

there are lots of alternative ways of shopping both in physical and virtual ways; lifestyles and personal interests as consumption practices became the marker of identity (ibid, p. 21).

In sum, the period following the World War is a period in which consumerism gained considerable momentum, coinciding with the period when green thinking began to develop, as previously mentioned. In a contemporary sense, green thought emerged in the period following World War II, when the economy was growing rapidly, with a simultaneous rise in consumption (Şahin, 2017a, p. 27). However, despite the emergence of green thought, the study of sustainable consumption represents a rather new attempt at confronting this system. The next section deals with the study of sustainable consumption with reference to theoretical analysis.

### **3.2.2. Theoretical Approaches to Sustainable Consumption**

Sustainable consumption became an area of interest for ecologists motivated by finding ways to overcome the ecological detriments of industrial development. According to Dobson (2016), the initial point for considering the necessity of sustainable consumption is basically related to the building desires for growth and the unsatisfied formation of consumption. In this respect, it is possible to say that reducing excessive material consumption is the goal of ecologism (ibid, p. 133). Based on this approach, it is a common response to problematize consumption in relation with population increase. It is possible to say that this viewpoint has prevailed since the Limits to Growth thesis was put forward. Dobson also addressed population increase while discussing excessive consumption and stated that since countries differ in terms of their consumption habits, we could not benefit from the suggestion of equally reducing consumption in the world (ibid, p. 136). Thus, while problematizing consumption it must be underlined that consumption habits vary widely; this differentiation must be considered in reducing consumption overall. In this case, we can argue that urban environments should be treated as consumption areas and most of the activities attempting to reduce consumption should target urban populations.

Miles (1998) conceptualizes consumerism as “a systematic fashion as an arena within which social lives are currently constructed” (p. 4). According to Miles:

consumerism should be considered as an issue that has a fundamental influence upon the everyday experience of social life in advanced capitalist societies. Not only does consumerism structure our everyday lives, but it does so by offering us the illusion of consumer freedom (Miles, 1998, p. 5).

By referring to Miles, we can claim that sustainable consumption leads people to develop a more careful approach in managing limited resources and directs people to find out new ways of renovating the current consumption practices. Indeed, sustainable consumption necessitates being ‘active consumers’ that establish a self-control mechanism directed by ecological and ethical inquiries. In a similar vein, Gottdiener (2000) claims that “the act of consumption itself is no longer viewed as a passive mode of behavior and the ability of producers to manipulate people’s desires and purchasing habits via advertising has been greatly exaggerated” (p. 16). Instead, now there are diverse cultures of consumption that people can use to infer particular meanings and transform their lifestyles (p. 17).

According to Spaargaren, environmental sociologists should study consumption behavior, lifestyles, and daily routines by avoiding the limitations of micro approaches (2003, p. 687). It has to be noted that sustainable consumption should be addressed in accordance with green consumption, responsible consumption, and ethical consumption since they possess meanings developed through a similar vein. As evidenced by the listed concepts, applying sustainable consumption practices is the result of combining ethical values, environmental or ecological sensitivities, and spiritual orientations. Interestingly, sustainable consumption can also arise as a preferred consumption model due to living conditions that necessitates it. For instance, as Warde mentions, during World War II, in the USA, people were forced to recycle materials and contribute to the production of more war materials as a patriotic duty (2017, p. 16).

The ways in which the consumption practices of greens or sustainable consumers differ from other, less sustainable behaviors will be discussed in detail to reveal the how the choices of consumers are embedded in the routines of everyday life. In relation to this, we can suppose that consumers, engaging with sustainable consumption, produce new, alternative ways of living. In order to reveal the diversifying aspects of sustainable consumption practices and sustainable lifestyles, it is necessary to focus on the specific

characteristics of sustainable consumers and the particular aspects of sustainable lifestyles. The following sections will underline how sustainable consumption practices and sustainable living can be approached theoretically.

### **3.3. Identifying Sustainable Consumers**

While analyzing the consumption in a post-modern world, Baudrillard states that the idea of buying became an incentive for people (Baudrillard, 1988). Sassatelli writes that:

The particular cultural politics of value which underpins the development of ‘consumer society’ is thus not a natural one, it is one which requires a process of learning whereby social actors are practically trained to perform (and enjoy) their roles as consumers (Sassatelli, 2007, p. 11).

Yet, some argue that consumption choices are not merely the result of ‘learning to perform the consumer role’. According to Schudson (2007), “sometimes consumer choices are political since they are made so as not to augment respective utility but to maximize social value and the public good as well as an individual utility” (p. 239). While discussing the political aspect of consumption inevitably this thesis mentions the significance of ethics with regards to consumption.

The discussion of ethics including sustainable consumption brings to mind the discussion of weak and strong sustainability. A weak pathway to sustainable consumption can be understood as a shallow engagement with sustainability. On the other hand, strong approaches demand far-reaching systemic changes in the current production-consumption systems (Hobson, 2013, p. 1083). Hobson outlines weak and strong forms of sustainable consumption by underlining distinctive aspects:

**Table 2. Weak and Strong Approaches to Sustainable Consumption**

Key facets	Weak approaches	Strong approaches
Central tenet	improve material, social, and institutional efficiency of the prevailing production–consumption nexus	displace current foci of ‘growth’ and ‘the economy’ with nonconsumption concepts and practices
Methods	technological innovation, voluntary, multiscale interventions; limited use of nonvoluntary measures	diverse grassroots movements and communities; ontological displacement of growth and the economy in modernity
End goal	continued economic growth alongside improved socioecological well-being	multilevel sociopolitical transformation that bring nonconsumption-based well-being to the fore

*Source: Hobson, 2013: 1083*

By looking the current literature on sustainable consumption, Lorek and Fusch (2013) claim that this literature is dominated by weak approaches focusing on the improvement of the efficiency of consumption through technological measures. By contrast a strong sustainable consumption approach pays attention to the social dimension of well being by referring to radical social change (ibid). Therefore, adopting a strong sustainable consumption approach mirrors the assumption of political consumerism asserted by Micheletti (2003). Micheletti claims that “the market is an arena for politics” (ibid, p. 2) for people who regard consumer choice both as part of politics and economics. Therefore, we can claim that strong approaches link everyday consumption practices with wider environmental issues and they demand sociopolitical transformation. By giving reference to Schudson's (2007) claim that “consumption can be a political behavior and “consumer decisions can be political” (p. 240) we can approach sustainable consumption as a mode of political consumption.

The concept of political consumption is first used by Micheletti (2003) to represent “actions by people who make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market practices” (p. 2). According to Jacobsen and Dulsrud (2007), this conceptualization of political consumption conceives of consumption as an arena for political participation and makes the individual purchaser an active agent. Political consumption can be conceptualized as using the market as a place for political participation both for individuals and collectives who are seeking a change in the market. Stolle et al. (2005) focus on another aspect of political

consumerism when arguing that “political consumerism is less organized, less structured, and more transient than conventional political participation” (p. 252). In the same vein, Schudson (2007) also underlines that “consumption can create the conditions for political action and mobilization” (p. 240).

According to Sassatelli (2009), consumer choice is “capable of expressing consumer sovereignty only if consumers take full responsibility for the environmental, social, and political effects of their choices and are ready to reconsider their consuming life on those grounds” (p. 34). Therefore, sustainable consumer choices can make a difference both in the market and daily lives of individual consumers. In a similar vein, Williams and Paddock (2003) approach alternative consumption as the acquisition of goods through informal means or in a second-hand form and they approach alternative consumption practices as a matter of choice. In other words, consumers may prefer alternative consumption practices in the direction of 'ethical' and 'political' decisions they make. For sustainable consumers, we can say that they are motivated by environmental or ecological concerns.

Ethical consumption as an alternative mode of consumption actually tends to focus more on the production side than the consumption. It takes into consideration the production process to evaluate the conditions in which a particular product was produced and assesses the environmental harm caused by the production of that product. Furthermore, the preference for using fair trade products may be regarded as an ethical consumption approach. As it is emphasized in the report of OECD (2008) “the trend towards considering the social dimensions of sustainable consumption has led to more attention to how products are produced” (p. 7). According to the OECD report governments must use labels to inform consumers about the damages of products (ibid). These mandatory labeling practices are very important in their effect of eliminating from the market -products produced in unsustainable ways. In addition, increasing the prices and taxes of less sustainable products can create an incentive for consumers towards more sustainable products (ibid, p. 13).

Sustainable consumers are identified by their ethical and political motivations, tending towards sustainable options instead of mainstream and unsustainable consumption. Yet, in order to fully define sustainable consumers, we must elucidate their

consumption behaviors and define lifestyles. In the following two sections the notions of 'sustainable consumption behavior' and 'sustainable lifestyles' will be discussed.

### **3.3.1. Sustainable Consumer Behavior**

Before proceeding to define sustainable consumer behavior it must be underlined that there are different ways of terming sustainable behaviors in the literature. Discussion on sustainable consumer behavior inevitably considers the ecological commitment of consumers and their lifestyles. In this study sustainable consumption behavior is used to refer to both environmentally responsible behavior and green behavior. The notion of sustainable consumption includes the definitions of responsible consumption, green consumption, environmentally-responsible consumption, and environmentally-friendly consumption. These are the major phrases used in the study of sustainable consumer behavior (Kostadinova, 2016, p. 225). Even though the terms “green” and “sustainable” are mostly used interchangeably, Kostadinova underlines the distinction between these two terms as such:

“green” refers to individual products and practices aiming to reduce the negative effects of human behavior on the environment and “sustainable” relates to a fundamental shift in the paradigm of consumerism towards a more balanced relationship with the environment and equitable allocation of resources (Kostadinova, 2016, p. 225).

Although the concepts described above are so intricate and thus cannot be completely separated from one another, there are small nuances in their connotations. However, contained in all of them is the notion of 'conscious consumption'. This notion underlines the process that assumes consumption is not a momentary behavior or a buy-and-sell relationship. We may refer to sustainable consumption as a process or even as a cycle because consumption involves the production process, distribution process, consumption process and waste management process, as well as the recycling process.

De Geus (2009) defines ecological consumerism as a “mode of behavior in which the selection and purchasing of products and services are not based on considerations of utility maximization, individual profit, and enjoyment, but on considerations and feelings of social responsibility and the burden placed on our environment” (p. 127).

In a similar vein, Miles (1998) underlines that the goods and services that we consume act as determinants of “who we are and how we construct our social lives” (p. 3). Motivations behind sustainable consumption behavior conceal the worldview of individual and determine the consumption practices and preferences. Thus, sustainable consumers tend to define consumer choices by addressing the production conditions of the products and the manufacturing policies of the brands.

Marketing perspectives also focus on sustainable consumer choices by targeting the green consumer as a potential buyer. A main tendency is in developing new marketing strategies to meet the needs of these potential consumers. According to Paco et al. (2009), marketing research of consumption behavior is necessary for firms to assess their attractiveness, adopt a correct positioning towards green consumers and define suitable marketing programs. In other words, marketing research pays attention to the green consumer behavior to take advantage of the profit opportunities of environmental consumerism (ibid). Although both marketing and social science perspectives focus on the behaviors of green consumers, marketing perspectives pay attention to marketing strategies which are arranged according to the consumption behavior of green consumers. According to Clark and Deurloo (2006), sustainable consumption refers to sustainable products and at the same time sustainable industrial processes. This has forced firms to develop sustainable and green alternatives or perhaps to pretend to develop new alternatives. “Greenwashing” is a major strategy applied by production industries to make consumers believe that they are behaving in a socially and environmentally responsible way.

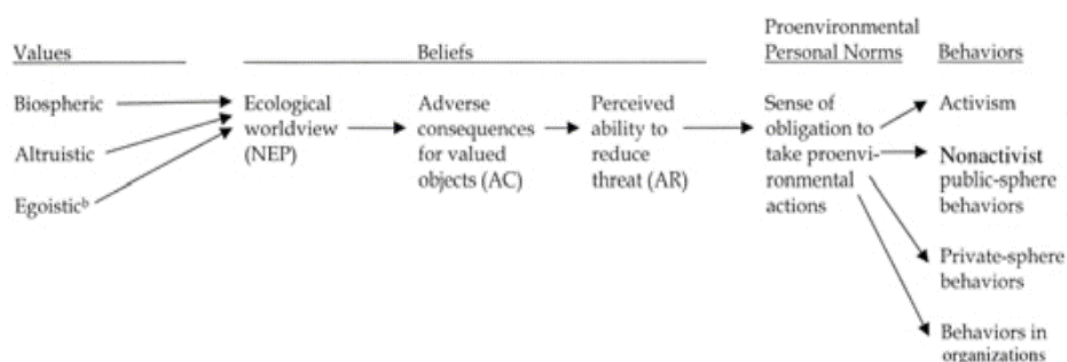
According to Kostadinova (2016), “the growing concern about environmental issues is also reflected by an increase in demand for environment-friendly products and the pressure on companies to conduct their business in a socially and ecologically responsible manner” (p. 224). This increased demand for environment-friendly products can be analyzed in relation to the development of pro-environment behavior since it directs consumption choices. According to Steg and Vlek, physical and technical innovations aiming to reduce environmental harm only work in the case that the individual is knowledgeable about those products and their efficiency (2009, p. 309). Steg and Vlek, using insights from environmental psychology, define pro-environmentalist behavior as follows: “Pro-environmental behavior refers to behavior



that harms the environment as little as possible or even benefits the environment” (ibid).

The value-basis of sustainable consumer behavior is also a significant aspect in defining pro-environmental behavior. Stern and his colleagues describe the determinants of environmental behavior different from those who define those behaviors as a worldview. As a response, Stern (2000) developed a value-belief-norm (VBN) theory of environmentalism. According to Stern, “the theory links value theory, norm-activation theory, and the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP)<sup>24</sup> perspective through a causal chain of five variables leading to behavior” (ibid, p. 412).

**Figure 2. Values, Beliefs, and Behaviors**



*Source: (Stern, 2000: 412)*

According to Stern, in conjunction with VBN theory, each variable in the causal chain through constituting a direct effect on one other, forces individuals to take proenvironmental action. These relations designate the personal norms and beliefs that influence all kind of behavior motivated by a pro-environmentalist will (Stern et al., 2000, p. 413). Thus, based on the arguments provided by Stern, it can be said pro-environmentalist behaviors developed from values that determines the ecological worldview and beliefs. Therefore, it is important to discuss everyday consumption

<sup>24</sup> “The view that humans represent only one among many species on Earth, that human activities are determined by the environment as well as by social and cultural factors, and that humans are strongly dependent upon the environment and its resources. Contrast dominant social paradigm” (Oxford Reference. Ed.) Retrieved 21 May, 2018 from <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100231375>).

practices to understand how the routinization of those practices affects the lifestyle choices of individuals. For Haanpää (2007), green consumers tend to control their consumption behavior and contradict traditional consumers through environmental motivations. Additionally, Haanpää (2007) asserts that “awareness of the consequences that consumption has on the environment inspires altruistic behavior and environmentally sound consumption decisions” (p. 148). This awareness that Haanpää mentioned is another instance of “the politicization of everyday practices” (Binkley, 2009, p. 95) in the case of sustainable consumption.

Contextualizing sustainable consumption as conscious consumption and focusing on the politicization of everyday life is actually an attempt to differentiate sustainable consumption from conventional consumption, which is often regarded as an unsustainable pattern. According to Haanpää, green consumer behaviors contradict general consumer behavior in the degree of commitment (2007, p. 479). In using the phrase ‘general consumer behavior’ Haanpää refers to ‘mainstream’ and ‘conventional’ consumer behavior. Haanpää notes “partaking of general consumer behavior encompasses an assessment of likely benefits and costs relevant solely to the individual consumer demonstrating the behavior” (ibid, p. 480). Therefore, to identify the differentiating features of green consumers and to set the frame for green consumerism social, cultural and economic factors need to be estimated (ibid). It seems that the basic motivations behind sustainable consumer behavior and the values that those consumers subsequently developed, based on these practices better understood through the analysis of the social, cultural, and economic background of individual consumers. That kind of analysis is applicable to Bourdieu’s study of habitus. The analysis of Bourdieu provides fertile ground to discuss how individual consumption choices differ in their forms of capital inherited through different sources: economic, cultural, and social. The following chapters will emphasize the applications of Bourdieu’s concepts to the analysis of sustainable consumption.

In the discussion of sustainable consumption, this thesis claims that sustainable consumers are in a position that challenges the approach which refers consumers as “a ‘savy’ individual or as a ‘sucker’, duped by media, government, and corporations into being a passive consumer” (Patterson, 2006, p. 6). According to Patterson, there are false needs that direct individuals to consume goods that are not necessary for

biological existence. Therefore, unlike the sucker consumer, the ‘savy’ consumer actively interpret signs to develop a dialogue within a culture or a subculture based on these interpretations (ibid).

Another concept that needs to be mentioned in terms of sustainable consumer behavior is the ecological citizenship concept developed by Dobson. As he previously distinguished between environmentalism and ecologism, Dobson defines ecological citizenship with reference to ecologism. According to Dobson,

The idea of ecological citizenship disrupts standard citizenship architecture by emphasizing citizen duties over citizen rights, by suggesting that the private sphere is as much a legitimate site of citizenship activity as the public sphere, by denying the usual association of ‘passive’ citizenship with the private sphere, and by endorsing ‘deterriorialised’ concepts of citizenship (Dobson, 2000a, p. 40).

With the notion of “ecological citizenship” Dobson claims to disrupt oppositions like public-active citizenship and private- passive citizenship (2000b, p. 43). Indeed, Dobson claims that as we all should be ecological citizens of the world, ecological problems must be a concern for anyone, regardless of the place they live. According to Dobson, “the ecological citizen’s principal duty is to act with care and compassion towards distant strangers, human and non-human, in space and time” (ibid, p. 48).

By relying on the notion of ecological citizen we claim that people apply the same eco-sensitive approach in their sustainable consumption practices. In addition, the majority of sustainable consumer activities are carried out in the household, and this is one of the points Dobson (2000b) mentions when defining ecological citizenship. According to Dobson, "the household is the site of much ecological citizen activity" (ibid, p. 50). Household consumption patterns reveal the routines and habits of individuals. Similarly, this thesis asserts that household consumption practices determine the ways people apply sustainable consumption in everyday life. A household can be considered as an arena that individual environmental responsibility is practiced.

### **3.3.2. Sustainable Lifestyles**

In order to identify green consumers, we must identify the varying features of their lifestyles. According to Patterson (2006) everyday life is “complex and processual

rather than simple and reified” (p. 7). Since it involves a huge number of conscious and unconscious processes, in relation with consumption we can consider the importance of routines and ordinary activities in terms of revealing “very complex dialogues and transactions to do with identity, status, aspirations, cultural capital, and position within a social group” (ibid).

In the analyses of postmodern lifestyles in relation to consumer behavior Haanpää notes that consumption systems in postmodern times are believed to be more complex than they were in modern times. The rapid social, cultural, and economic changes that mark contemporary society have a counterpart in consumer behavior (Haanpää, 2007, p. 479). Similarly, Miles (1998) claims that “how we consume, why we consume and the parameters laid down for us within which we consume have become increasingly significant influences on how we construct our everyday lives” (p. 1). As consumption has a direct effect on our activities, preferences, habits, routines, and practices, it determines not only our identity and social status but also how we organize our everyday life or in other words our lifestyles.

At this point, we can ask what the significance is of studying lifestyle in the case of sustainable consumption? According to Miles (1998, p. 2), in recent years sociology of consumption has evolved to question the fact that the determination of our lives is not just based on production relations. Therefore, the sociology of consumption considers the significance of consumption relations so as to pay sufficient attention to the consumption-based relation which determines our life experiences. Haanpää (2007) claims that “lifestyle is measured by consumption styles and green commitment by certain environment-related consumption choices” (p. 478). Based on data from 2003 study on Finnish consumer-behavior, Haanpää notes that green commitment can be better explained by different lifestyles than socio-economic background factors (ibid). Therefore, before proceeding with the significance of lifestyle for identifying sustainable consumers, first, we must question how everyday life and lifestyles can be approached from a sociological point.

Everyday life activities are quite significant for the analysis, which considers the transition of lifestyles. We should take into account that personal habits and household routines are directly related to many environmentally significant behaviors (Stern,

2000, p. 415). De Geus claims that modern society confronts the materialistic and hedonistic 'art of living' which results with ecological hazards since it is based on 'vicious' ways of consumption (2009, p. 116). Therefore, instead of pursuing a materialistic and hedonistic 'art of living', De Geus counsels to opt for the principles of sustainable hedonism as a sustainable alternative, as well as an ecologically sensitive 'art of living' (ibid, p. 119). Following this, this study attempts to reveal the ecologically sensitive alternative 'art of living' in a manner of seeking for the transition of unsustainable lifestyles into sustainable lifestyles.

According to Haanpää green perspectives and consumption forms can be respected as life-style based expressions of an individual consumer's concern about the case of the environment, and thus, different lifestyle-based factors are assumed to alter consumer's green beliefs and consumer behavior (2007, p. 479). As De Geus has pointed out ecologically sound lifestyles have diverse forms (2009, p. 120).

Jackson (2006) writes that lifestyle change became a 'holy grail' for the area of environmentalism and social policy. Now, authorities question what more can be done to direct people in accordance with the principles of sustainability. Jackson emphasizes that how people's preferences for transportation, their eating habits and the choice of vacation can be transformed into less harmful options to the environment is now a major area of concern for social policy (ibid, p. 7). Additionally, he poses a question of "how can we encourage 'sustainable living' and discourage unsustainable living?" (ibid, p. 8). There are multiple perspectives, previously discussed, that have given tentative answers to this question. Through a policy-based psychological approach we may assert that when people are motivated enough to consume less and supported by the policies encouraging sustainable consumption, they would be more willing to participate in a sustainable lifestyle. On the other hand, economics might approach the issue of fostering sustainable consumption through the claim that creating a demand for sustainable products would lead to a transformation of production processes. Lastly, the sociological approach would emphasize the individual and collective aspects of a lifestyle change by focusing on daily life practices, routines, and habits.

Some recent works in consumption revealed that the status-seeking aspect of consumption was overemphasized and overlooked many important aspects of

consumption (Jackson, 2006). However, by referring to Shove (2003), Jackson (2006) underlines that some recent studies emphasize the importance of “convenience, habit, practice, and individual responses to social and institutional norms” (p. 11). The examples of practicing ecologically-oriented lifestyle change can be seen as an alternative and ecologically sensitive ‘lifestyle movements’ namely “voluntary simplicity” and “minimalism”.

Both voluntary simplicity and minimalism refer to willingly consuming less in spite of an individual’s affluence out of their respect for nature and concerns about sustainability. Examples of this sort of living are found in different regions of the world. Robins (1996) recount such an example from Norway: “‘The Future in Our Hands’ movement was launched in the 1970s with the goal of pioneering reduced consumption and simpler lifestyles. Original members ... who committed themselves to simpler lifestyles, even though they had above average incomes” (p. 34). Thinking about simplicity is not a concern only for today’s society; “a common basis for living simply can be found in all the world’s spiritual traditions and is expressed in the “golden rule” – the compassionate admonition that we should treat others as we would want ourselves to be treated” (Elgin, 1993, p. 408). Therefore, how people identify themselves with their mode of living is significant for the analysis of sustainable lifestyles. The effect of lifestyle choice can be better analyzed if the environment identity is included in the analysis (Haanpää, 2007, p. 480). Therefore, when we discuss how people identify themselves based on ecological commitment, we observe the reflections of that identity construction directly from their lifestyle choices:

To live more voluntarily is to live more deliberately, intentionally, and purposefully – in short, it is to live more consciously. We cannot be deliberate when we are distracted from life. We cannot be intentional when we are not paying attention. We cannot be purposeful when we are not being present. Therefore, to act in a voluntary manner is to be aware of ourselves as we move through life. This requires that we not only pay attention to the actions we take in the outer World but also that we pay attention to ourselves acting – our inner world. To the extent that we do not notice both inner and outer aspects of our passage through life, then our capacity for voluntary, deliberate and purposeful action is commensurately diminished (Elgin, 1993, p. 397).

To sum up, as Elgin (1993) underlines “an ecological approach to living invites us to continuously balance two aspects of life – maintaining ourselves (creating a workable

existence) and surpassing ourselves (creating a meaningful existence)” (p. 403). Therefore, ecological living should be contextualized as a sophisticated response to “the demands of deteriorating industrial civilizations” (ibid).

### **3.4. Promoting Sustainable Consumption to Benefit the Environment**

Sustainable consumption cannot be contextualized by referring only to individual practices. It eventually became an important part of the global agenda. Sustainability emerged as a very important issue within development plans issued by the UN programs. Moreover, in the future goals set by the UN, there is a great deal of attention paid to sustainable consumption and responsible consumption. Some sources developed by the UN will be discussed below to underline the main points of sustainable consumption offered by the UN.

Western societies are unsustainable because of their dependency on finite resources. The richest nations take advantage of material means while the poorest fail to satisfy their basic needs (Jackson, 2006, p. 1). Furthermore, Clark and Deurloo (2006) identifies both over-consumption and under-consumption as challenging problems for the global environment. These issues not only lead to problems for the environment, but they also negatively affect the sustainable development by hindering these future plans. For example, in United Nations Goal 12 it is written that “should the global population reaches 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three planets will be required to sustain current lifestyles” (UN, 2015)<sup>25</sup>. The United Nations relies on a reading of consumption that takes its position from human development. From such a perspective, UNDP claims that since awareness of sustainability increase and it leads people to transform the way we produce and consume for the well being of future generations (UNDP, 2016, p. 43).

According to the OECD, promoting sustainable consumption is important for sustainable development. The OECD in the booklet about the promotion of sustainable consumption states:

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<sup>25</sup> UN Environment, (n.d.) Retrieved 14 September, 2018 from <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/sustainable-development-goals/why-do-sustainable-development-goals-matter/goal-12>

Promoting sustainable consumption and production are important aspects of sustainable development, which depends on achieving long-term economic growth that is consistent with environmental and social needs. Most government policies in this area focus on stemming the environmental impacts of unsustainable industrial production practices, primarily through regulations and taxes. Promoting sustainable consumption is equally important to limit negative environmental and social externalities as well as to provide markets for sustainable products (OECD, 2008, p. 7).

1992, 1995, and 2002 are comparatively significant dates in terms of the responses of the UN in the arena of sustainability and consumption. In 1992, The Rio Summit made a significant contribution to the global arena in terms of providing the policy document, Agenda 21. In the following years, the international agenda on sustainable consumption and production evolved. In 1995, The United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) announced a program on changing production and consumption patterns into a more sustainable manner. In 1997, Rio Plus 5 conference was held to contribute to sustainable development. In 2002, the World Summit on Sustainable Development convened in Johannesburg determined to change consumption and production as an inevitable part of sustainable development (UN, 2002).

When we look at the reports of the United Nations, we observe that sustainable production and consumption are seen as preconditions for sustainable development. By 2030, the proposed worldwide change is achieving more sustainable practices. In their reports and programs, the UN focuses on outgrowing unsustainable practices and offers ways to achieve this. Agenda 21 and most of the early environmental literature had clearly defined the lack of sustainability in existing patterns of consumption and production (Jackson, 2006, p. 4). As the UN mentioned in the report published in 2015 titled, 17 Goals, responsible consumption is vital part of ensuring sustainable production patterns. In Goal 12 especially, the organization gives detailed recommendations on changing daily household practices (UN, 2015).

#### **3.4.1. ‘Alternative Hedonism’ or Solution to Ecological Crises**

Consumption and hedonism are two words that are commonly equated with one another. Sassatelli (2001) claims that “consumer hedonism must be tamed by forms of



detachment which stress the self in order to work as the organizing principle for the legitimization of contemporary consumer practices” (p. 94). In fact, as Sassatelli underlines, understanding what contemporary consumer practices are and addressing their implications in different social contexts helps establish firmly the relationship between sustainable consumption practices and hedonism. We will firstly focus on the concept of “consumer” in this relationship.

The consumer as a subject-category is the result of different theoretical and practical studies. Sassatelli writes that:

Social scientific discourses, advertising and marketing, state welfare agencies, consumer defence organizations, women’s groups, consumer boycotts and, more recently, the European Union, environmental groups, and new global movements have all contributed to situate the ‘consumer’ as a fundamental subject-category within public discourse (Sassatelli, 2007: 41).

Since each perspective approaches the consumer as a subject category differently, is worthwhile to examine these differences. This can lead us to its relation to hedonism.

Properly understanding the discussion of hedonism in the literature helps clarify the meaning of sustainable consumption as an alternative hedonism. Campbell (1992) differentiates what he calls modern hedonism from the more traditional hedonism. According to Corrigan (1997), elaborating on a distinction originally made from Campbell these two modes of hedonisms could be differentiated from each other as follows:

So a big difference between traditional and modern hedonism lies in the fact that the former tried to control objects and events in the world in order to gain pleasure from them, while the latter finds pleasure in control over the meaning of things (Corrigan, 1997, p. 16).

Campbell also defines a concept which he calls “imaginative hedonism” or the “insatiability of modern consumer” (Campbell, 1992). In this conceptualization hedonism derives from a "spiritual" character rather than an external object. Yet, the hedonism referred to here is associated with insatiability, therefore, it is quite different from the hedonism associated with sustainability. However, by giving reference to the assumption of De Geus (2009), we can find a similarity between Campbell's imaginative hedonism and De Geus' "sustainable hedonism". De Geus defines what he calls “sustainable hedonism” as “essentially spiritually oriented, leaves nature

unharmful, does not disturb ecological balance and is not obsessed with the relentless acquisition of novelty and luxury” (ibid, p. 124). We can reinterpret the imaginative hedonism to underline the motivation sources of sustainable consumption that are spiritually oriented.

We can easily derive from De Geus that although we can attribute spiritual character to sustainable consumption by emphasizing ecological balance, sustainable hedonism should not necessarily be handled independently from material objects and goods. Sustainable hedonism is also possible when people produce their own products in the household. However, this hedonism is so distinctive that it cannot be dealt with in the contexts of traditional and modern hedonism, which Campbell has differentiated. For this reason, sustainable consumption should be considered as an "alternative hedonism" and its potential to create a social change should be emphasized.

The concept of “alternative hedonism” came from an effort to criticize consumerism and its hedonistic aspects. Soper (2009) underlines the transformative capacity of the alternative hedonistic response by stating that “alternative hedonism performs a critical attitude to contemporary consumer culture for shifting to greener lifestyles (p. 4). Additionally, Soper claims that:

the ‘alternative hedonist’ responds to the current situation not only as crisis, and by no means only as presaging future gloom and doom, for she or he sees it also as an opportunity to advance beyond a mode of life that is not just unsustainable but also in many respects unpleasurable and self-denying (Soper, 2009, p. 3).

What Soper (2009) tries to emphasize with the notion of alternative hedonism is that “when the individual motivated by alternative hedonism he or she tends to alter consumption practices in a greener way” (p. 5). Thus, alternative hedonism presents a new and 'alternative' approach outside of Campbell's hedonism classification. Alternative hedonism provides a framework of meaning closer to sustainable hedonism in the sense that De Geus conceptualizes.

Alternative hedonism is a major motivation source that brings lifestyle change and leads to a greener and more sustainable lifestyle. At the same time, if we emphasize the potential of creating social change through consumption practices, this concept has inherent potential to force people translate their concerns into actions. We can argue

that this potential is realized through the transformation of everyday consumption practices and lifestyles.

To understand how this lifestyle change takes place, there are two components of alternative hedonism to note: the conceptualization of consumer as an agency and the issue of rational choice. Regarding the first component, this thesis approaches consumers as active agents who purposefully avoid a certain form of consumption and avoid products which harm the environment. According to Soper (2009), “such ‘agency’ would no longer be class specific, but more diffusely exercised – even if in the first instance many of the more rebellious consumers would probably be relatively well off” (p. 10).

In Sassatelli’s (2001) discussion of the consumer as a subject category, there was no mention of the role of ecology in this development. The definition of sustainable consumer as an agent would be adds a needed ecological perspective to Sassatelli’s. From here, the concept of rational choice also emerges as an important aspect of defining consumer as an agent. If it is true that consumers act through rational consumption, then they very probably also have consumption strategies. In the case of sustainable consumption, using the concept of alternative hedonism we claim that sustainable consumers are actively interpreting their own consumption, or in other words, that they are conscious of their acts of consumption. If we define consumers as active agents by giving reference to rational choice, we need to look at where these rational choices are realized. It is possible to understand this through consumption practices. Everyday life practices tell us about consumer choices and about consumer lifestyles. From this point of view consumer choice “dissolves into a myriad of situated learning processes entrenching rituals and routines” (Sassatelli, 2001, p. 95).

The next section will focus on theories of practice in order to situate practices within the sociological theory. Theories of practice will be discussed in the frame drawn by Bourdieu, Giddens, and Warde. The aim here is to highlight the significance of routines and habits in defining the sustainable consumer as an agent who can force social change by applying sustainable consumption practices.

### **3.5. Analyzing Sustainable Consumption: Practice Theory Approach**

As Schatzki underlines philosophy, cultural theory, sociology, history, anthropology, and even science and technology studies referred to practices in their analysis (2001, p. 10). From a sociological point of view, the theories of practices can be discussed in relation to the works of Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Giddens (Rouse, 2007, p. 499). Drawing upon Schatzki's categorization, the academic responses to practices could be listed as follows: philosophical responses are based on the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein, Hubert Dreyfus and Charles Taylor; social theory-based responses are found in the works of Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens, and ethnomethodologists; cultural theorists' approaches are represented by the works of Michel Foucault and Jean-François Lyotard (2001, p. 10).

This thesis approaches practices as a driving source of change in transitioning from unsustainable lifestyles to sustainable lifestyles, and so takes everyday practices of individual consumers into consideration, particularly their sustainable consumption. Accordingly, this thesis draws upon the theoretical frame of Bourdieu, Giddens, and Warde. Their analyses are a valuable reference source for the discussion of social change through the diffusion of ecologically sound lifestyles.

Before proceeding to the perspectives of Bourdieu, Giddens, and Warde we should first focus on how social theory approaches practices. According to Schatzki even though there is no unified practice approach, the nexus point could be underlined as follows:

most practice theorists would agree that activity is embodied and that nexuses of practices are mediated by artifacts, hybrids, and natural objects, disagreements reign about the nature of embodiment, the pertinence of thematizing it when analyzing practices, the sorts of entities that mediate activity, and whether these entities are relevant to practices as more than mere intermediaries among humans (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11).

According to Rouse (2007), “applications of the practice idiom extend from the most mundane aspects of everyday life to highly structured activities in institutional settings” (p. 499). Drawing upon the relationship between practices and order, Schatzki makes a conclusion regarding the areas analyzed by practice approaches. According to Schatzki (2001) “practice approaches can then analyze (a) communities,

societies, and cultures, (b) governments, corporations, and armies, and (c) domination and coercion as either feature of, collections of, or phenomena instituted and instantiated in practices” (p. 15). Based on Schatzki’s approach this thesis refers to individual and collective aspects of consumption practices. By looking at practices, I will underline the contribution of sustainable consumers’ grassroots organizations to the transformation of individuals’ unsustainable lifestyles into sustainable lifestyles.

Different from Schatzki’s categorization, this thesis will also refer to Alan Warde’s perspective. While Giddens underlines the differences between practical consciousness and discursive consciousness, Bourdieu’s approach focuses on how practices are developed through the frames of “field” and “habitus”. On the other hand, Warde’s approach emphasizes the significance of everyday life and ordinary practices. In this way, practices are seen through the frame of sustainability and everyday activities are properly emphasized. Warde (2014) writes that: “the regularity and order identified by theories of practice arise from processes based upon repetition, habit, routine and convention” (p. 293).

Schatzki (2001) underlines two central points about practices. The theories of practices provide “the priority of understanding: skills are not just omnipresent in human activity, but the capacity of formulations to guide what people do rests on abilities to use and understand them” (p. 17). A second point, these theories underline that “skills are shared, that is, they are the same in different individuals” (ibid, p. 18).

When we deal with practices in relation to everyday life, it is possible not only to treat them as routine activities but also as conscious responses to everyday life. For example, through a private-public dichotomy, Micheletti analyzes how the concern of eating healthy food as a private issue becomes a public matter through the interference of the political consumption:

Healthy food for one’s family may mean finding where one can buy it, leading to a demand for organic foods and a movement for eco-labeled produce that takes a stance against genetically modified organisms, and finally in institutions that audit and label food products to ensure their environmental quality (Micheletti, 2003, p. 35).

According to Binkley, the points Micheletti addressed prove that political consumerist theory and practice creates a sort of reflexivity and self-awareness that can evolve into

political conduct (2009, p. 98). This point is the basic reason why this thesis adopts the theoretical approach of practices. A practice theory-based approach understands the potential for social change in everyday life through the meanings provided by the notions of reflexivity, self-awareness, rational choice, alternative hedonism, and daily conduct. It should also be noted that the perspectives of new social movements, particularly environmental movements also provide a fertile ground to discuss collective accounts of sustainable consumption. However, referring to the theories of practices allows us to consider individual responses without becoming overwhelmed by the collective accounts of sustainable consumption.

The next sections will discuss the approaches of Bourdieu, Giddens, and Warde. In this way, the reason for approaching sustainable consumption from the perspectives of practice theory will be better explained.

### **3.5.1. Analysis of Social Practices: Habitus and Field**

As Jourdain and Naulin point out the notion of habitus was not originally invented by Bourdieu. Its first occurrence came when Thomas Aquinas translated Aristotle's term of "hexsis" expressing the physical skills and attitudes provided by education and which constitute the basis for the capacity of a human act. Based on Aquinas' translation, Bourdieu reinterpreted the term (2016, p. 42). Binkley interprets Bourdieu's notion of habitus by saying that

the habitus express deeply engrained patterns of perception and apperception, ways of being conscious of specific things but also ways of remaining specifically unconscious of them... where life politics is premised on new forms of awareness directed at the body, the habitus seems specifically structured around the suppression of such awareness as a condition of its operation, foreclosing the very distance one takes on oneself when one considers one's actions ethical (Binkley, 2009, p. 101).

Bourdieu contextualizes habitus through the internalization of externalizations, individuals exhibit certain behaviors in a situation without thinking of the role of habitus as a "structuring structure" (Jourdain and Naulin, 2016, p. 45). Habitus as a structuring structure organizes the perception of practices, and, at the same time, as a structured structure habitus is the product of an internalization of class-based social

divisions (Bourdieu, 2015, p. 255). Habitus is, therefore, “the unifying principle of all practices” (ibid, p. 259). According to Bourdieu:

If agents are possessed by their habitus more than they possess it, this is because it acts within them as the organizing principle of their actions and because this *modus operandi* informing all thought and action (including the thought of action) reveals itself only in the *opus operatum* (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 18).

Bourdieu’s concept of field is best understood in relation to his conceptualization of capital. According to Bourdieu (2015), depending on their capital, individuals are placed in various social positions and different fields. Bourdieu’s analysis identifies four different types of capitals: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital (ibid). Economic capital refers to an individual’s tangible assets and financial income. Cultural capital is an individual’s ability to interpret and understand cultural goods and practices. Social capital, on the other hand, refers to social networks based on mutual recognition. Lastly and no less important, symbolic capital represents the prestige and public recognition that one possesses, and this form of capital is actually inseparable from economic capital and cultural capital (Jourdain & Naulin, 2016, pp. 106-108).

Based on Bourdieu’s theory of capitals, we argue developing sustainable consumption practices necessitates the possession of these capitals by individuals. Since sustainable consumers prefer to use green alternatives instead of conventional goods, they are also to buy these goods, which are often expensive items. Alternatively, social capital can create networks for consumers to exchange their goods instead of buying new ones, and in this way negate the necessity of economic capital in the field of sustainable consumption. Cultural capital also contributes to the development of sustainable consumption practices, as the transformation of unsustainable practices requires the development of an ecologically sensitive approach. Furthermore, the recognition by others as a sustainable consumer and by the consumer themselves can be a reflection of symbolic capital.

We can now question whether sustainable consumption can be approached as a field in the sense of Bourdieu. Although the concept will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter I will briefly introduce it here.

In Bourdieu, fields have emerged as the result of differentiation in the social world. In order for a field to be autonomous, it has to produce its own purpose and individuals have to act in accordance with the objectives of this field (Jourdain & Noulain, 2016, p. 122). Sustainable consumption can be properly characterized as a field. The field of sustainable consumption aims to reduce or even eliminate the environmental damage by creating ecologically sustainable lifestyles and obliging individuals to develop more sustainable and greener practices. If sustainable consumption is understood as a field, the main rule of this field would be applying sustainable consumption practices in everyday life. This echoes the concept of *illusio* which refers to collective involvement in the game and shared beliefs of individuals in a particular field to maintain the game. Thus, the internalization of *illusio* of a certain field is only possible by the development of *habitus* unique to that field (ibid, p. 124). In his own words, Bourdieu (1998) writes that “*illusio* is the fact of being caught up in and by the game, of believing the game is “worth the candle” or, more simply, that playing is worth the effort” (p. 77).

Bourdieu (1998) also emphasizes the notion of “interest” in his conceptualization of game by stating that “interest is to ‘be there’, to participate, to admit that the game is worth playing are worth pursuing; it is to recognize the game and to recognize its stakes” (p. 77). Indeed, the purposeful sustainable choices of consumers in everyday life prove that they are “there” or in the field of sustainable consumption. Bourdieu states that every social field “tends to require those entering it to have the relationship to the field that I call *illusio*” (ibid, p. 78). Bourdieu also underlines the importance of prestige as a secondary benefit that can be gained through the confirmation of rules specific to the field. Bourdieu claims that:

Quite apart from the direct profit derived from doing what the rule prescribes, perfect conformity to the rule can bring secondary benefits such as the prestige and respect which almost invariably reward an action apparently motivated by nothing other than pure, disinterested respect for the rule (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 22).

Therefore, it is possible to claim that within the field of sustainable consumption, we cannot talk about prestige through the confirmation of rules in Bourdieu’s sense. Instead, when individuals develop the practices necessitated by the field, they are developing ‘alternative hedonism’ rather than acquiring prestige within that particular



field. It is possible to interpret this hedonism as a source of motivations within the field of consumption by thinking of Bourdieu's (1977) approach to habitus as "a socially constituted system of cognitive and motivating structures" (p. 76). In fact, the definition of habitus as both a "structuring structure" and a "structured structure" reinforces this approach.

Bourdieu (1990) also states that: "Habitus cannot be dealt with only through present conditions by claiming that the habitus, a product of history, produces individual and collective practices – more history – in accordance with the schemes generated by history" (p. 54). For example, the efforts of individuals living in the urban environment to transform their unsustainable practices into sustainable practices are actually an attempt at transforming habitus. Therefore, individuals are challenging their unsustainable behaviors with the aim of developing habitus of sustainability. This also confronts with history in Bourdieu's analysis, what he refers to as the unconscious part of habitus.

According to Bourdieu (1990), "the 'unconscious', which enables one to dispense with this interrelating, is never anything other than the forgetting of history which history itself produces by realizing the objective structures that it generates in the quasi natures of habitus" (p. 56). Since we conceptualize sustainable consumption practices as rational and conscious choices, unsustainable consumption can be thought of as the history part of habitus development.

According to Bohman habitus does not simply "regulate" the actions of individuals, instead, it just defines who and what they are and directs behaviors according to the common background of pre-reflective assumptions (1999: 130). In this sense, habitus does not determine directly the actions of individuals but direct them to certain goals. It is appropriate here to introduce Giddens' structuration theory, namely the practical consciousness and discursive consciousness thesis, in order to discuss the effect of practices in the motivation for social change.

### **3.5.2. Structuration Theory: Practical Consciousness and Discursive Consciousness**

In his analysis of structuration Giddens (1979) criticizes the existing literature of social sciences due to “the lack of theory of action in the social sciences” (p. 2). In his analysis of structuration, based on the principle that “the notions of action and structure presuppose one another” (ibid, p. 53), Giddens elaborates on this with two terms: ‘action’ and ‘agency’. According to Giddens, “the notion of action has reference to the activities of an agent and cannot be examined apart from a broader theory of the acting self” (ibid, p. 55).

With the stratification model, Giddens defines three sets of relations: the unconscious, practical consciousness, and discursive consciousness (1979, p. 2). In fact, what is quite remarkable in Giddens's conceptualization is the distinction between "practical consciousness" and "discursive consciousness". Based on this distinction Giddens claims that practical consciousness refers to “a tacit stock of knowledge which actors draw upon in the constitution of social activity” and discursive consciousness could be defined as “knowledge which actors are able to express on the level of discourse” (ibid, p. 5). Thus, Giddens claims that “all actors have some degree of discursive penetration of the social systems to whose constitution they contribute” (ibid).

With respect to sustainable consumption practical consciousness is evident in the routinized practices, the unconscious relations as defined by Giddens (1979, p. 2). Giddens (1986) explains the “practical consciousness consists of all things which actor knows tacitly about how to 'go on' in the contexts of social life without being able to give them discursive expressions” (p. xxiii). Just as Bourdieu emphasized, the routinized practices the things done without mental awareness of their meaning, is also found in Giddens’ discussion of practical consciousness.

Unlike practical consciousness, an individual’s discursive consciousness attributes meaning to their actions and gives them verbal expression. It is a self-interpretative mechanism that individuals apply to their own actions. Through this interpretation, individuals become aware of their actions. In sustainable consumption, consumers begin to realize their own practices, as suggested by their discursive consciousness.

The most important point that differentiates Giddens from Bourdieu is his emphasis on reflexivity. This idea emboldens the transformative nature of practices. This reflexivity is found in Giddens' (1979) rationalization of action thesis, or "the capabilities of human agents to 'explain' why they act as they do by giving reasons for their conduct" (p. 57). According to Giddens:

It is a necessary feature of action that, at any point in the time, the agent 'could have acted otherwise': either positively in terms of attempted intervention in the process of 'events in the world', or negatively in terms of forbearance (Giddens, 1979, p. 56).

When we evaluate Giddens' theory of structuration from the vantage point of sustainable consumption, we can claim that discursive consciousness empowers sustainable consumers by making them develop alternative hedonism through the act of attributing meaning to their practices. By giving reference to the "rationalization of action" (Giddens, 1979, p. 72) which he considers as the reason provided by agents for their particular action, Giddens' theory of structuration is a source to discuss the ecologically-motivated efforts of sustainable consumers to transform their practices and their lifestyles. Significantly, Giddens also emphasizes the importance of everyday behavior by relating it to the social system through the assumption that "the duality of structure relates the smallest item of day-to-day behavior to attributes of far more inclusive social systems" (ibid, p. 77). For instance, Spaargaren and Oosterveer use their analysis of "citizen consumers" by drawing upon the structuration theory of Giddens (Spaargaren & Oosterveer, 2010). In order to analyze of day-to-day social conduct, I will refer to Alan Warde's perspective regarding the application of practice theory to the analysis of sustainable consumption.

### **3.5.3. Ordinary Consumption and Routinization of Practices**

Unlike Bourdieu and Giddens, Warde's analysis of practice revolves around the topic of consumption, although he remains indebted to both thinkers to aid him in his approach. In his own words, Warde (2017) states his intention to "develop a framework for analysis which draws upon theories of practice and explores their application to topics of consumption" (p. 5).

Warde's analysis of practices is closer to Giddens' analysis than Bourdieu's analysis because of his focus on the distinction between practices as performances and practices as entities (Warde, 2005). Welch and Warde write that "practices as entities have a history and a trajectory, or path of development, but at the same time only exist through their performance. Performance and entity are therefore recursively related rather as agency and structure in Giddens's theory of structuration" (2014). According to Welch and Warde, Giddens had a major impact on the study of consumption through his analysis of structuration that provides an attractive solution to the structure-agency problem (ibid).

Warde (2017) approaches consumption in relation with practices by stating that "consumption can be seen as a moment in the many practices of everyday life which shifts attention to the appropriation and appreciation, as well as the acquisition, of goods and services" (p. 5). In this way, he extends the scope of his analysis beyond the economic frame by relating it to the everyday life experiences and daily practices. Warde claims that by focusing on normalized, ordinary and routine aspects of consumption in everyday practice, he also identifies its spectacular and conspicuous elements (ibid).

According to Warde, as a major topic in the fields of global politics and social sciences, sustainable consumption means sustainable practices. Warde claims that:

Consumption is a second-order activity; many motivations are involved in the purchase-use cycle, including status, convenience, internal goods of an enthusiasm whose extraction of value is specific to the practice of which it is a part. The importance of acquisition and appreciation, as well as appropriation, requires acknowledgment. However, rendering appropriation central shows consumption to be serving purposes for life conduct, for being a decent person who is competent in the management of everyday life (Warde, 2017, p. 78).

Based on his analysis of consumption we can conclude that consumption is embedded in the routines of everyday life. In the analysis of Warde (2006) ordinary consumption is understood in relation with "the concepts like habit, routine, constraint, and so on and can be summed up as a recognition of the conventional nature of consumption" (Randles and Warde, 2006, p. 226). By applying practice theory to the ordinary acts of everyday life Warde problematizes the usage of resource consumption in the

household as an ordinary act of daily life. Thus, for Warde's analysis, we can assert that he tries to raise awareness of the potential of ordinary activities to transform unsustainable practices (ibid).

In sum, the analysis of sustainable consumption necessitates a focus on everyday routinized practices, and therefore, practice theory provides a fertile ground for an empirical analysis that problematizes consumption practices. Warde's empirical analysis provide a base for new empirical researches that consider diverse individual responses regarding everyday consumption practices.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **4. ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION PRACTICES THROUGH THE CONCEPTS OF PRACTICE THEORY**

In this chapter, based on the narratives of the respondents, I will first refer to Bourdieu's concepts habitus and field to clarify how sustainability can be regarded as habitus and how sustainable consumption can be a distinctive social field. Moreover, I will touch upon Giddens' (1979) concept of discursive consciousness in terms of identifying the meaning attributed by respondents to their own sustainable consumption practices. In addition, I will mention Warde's (2005; 2017) analysis of practice to refer to routine aspects of consumption.

An analysis based on practice theory enables us to determine how ecologically sensitive behaviors have been developed by green consumers and applied in their everyday lives. Thus, it is possible to examine everyday consumption practices with special reference to habitus of sustainability and environmental capital. In this chapter, I will analyze the ecologically sustainable transformation of consumption patterns and lifestyles by referring to sustainable consumer behavior. Finally, I will refer to the future expectations of green consumers regarding the process of ecologically sustainable transformation of lifestyles.

#### **4.1. Habitus of Sustainability and Environmental Capital**

Bourdieu provides several definitions for the concept of habitus, but there is one definition which Jourdain and Naulin (2016) acknowledged as the most famous definition of the concept:

The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 53).

In brief, Bourdieu approaches habitus in two ways: a structured structure and a structuring structure. In the first contextualization, Bourdieu defines habitus as the perception of the social world and internalization of social classes (Bourdieu, 2015: 255). On the other hand, Bourdieu describes habitus as “a structuring structure, which organizes practices and the perception of practices” (2015). Therefore, habitus both produces and classifies practices (ibid, p. 254).

Yet, Bourdieu does not claim that habitus solely defines the behaviors of people. Instead, he emphasizes that habitus refers to embodied dispositions. In this way, habitus can be used to explain people’s practices, perceptions, feelings, and tastes or in other words the way in which people perceive the social world and react to it. In this manner, habitus should be regarded as the driving force for unfocused routines and ordinary practices in everyday life which are unconsciously repeated. Thus, the keyword for the analysis of habitus is the internalization of the social world, the rules, and the norms. This process of internalization, according to Bourdieu, can be best understood in relation to class conditions.

In his most prominent work *Distinction*, Bourdieu discusses the development of cultural tastes via class conditions (Bourdieu, 2015). According to Bourdieu, practices are objectively classified, and they become the symbolic representation of class conditions through the taste which they embody (ibid, p. 261). In Bourdieu's cultural taste analysis, the concept of habitus is important. He approaches habitus, as “the unifying and generative principle of all practices”, and it enables to reveal the distinctions of individuals (ibid, p. 259). In fact, Bourdieu's point of distinction emphasizes that the habitus varies depending on the class conditions of the individuals, and thus it differentiates the practices. According to Bourdieu, different conditions of existence produce different habitus, so the practices of different habitus reveal these class-based distinctions. Thus, through their lifestyles, agents of practices are equipped

with perceptual patterns through which they can distinguish themselves from others (ibid, p. 255).

This thesis aims to extend the definition of habitus into the field of sustainability. Since as both a ‘structured structure’ and a ‘structuring structure’ habitus influence practices, the development of the habitus of sustainability will affect individual’s consumption patterns and lifestyle. Besides emphasizing the habitus of sustainability in relation to middle class consumption culture, this author aims to emphasize the self-determination of the consumption choices by approaching green consumers as environmental or ecological citizens (Dobson, 1998), and citizen consumers (Spaargaren & Oosterveer, 2010). In this way, the emphasis will be on the individuals’ rational choices regarding their preferred practices with the goal of developing sustainable behaviors.

Discussion on class positions can produce a ground to question the differences among green consumers in terms of applying different practices. For example, some green consumers may tend to buy organic products from the regular market, while others prefer to go to ecological farmer’s markets. Therefore, it is possible to say that the consumption pattern is directly influenced by the socio-economic position of the individuals even in the case of sustainable consumption. In order to differentiate respondents from one another, their practices are categorized as weak sustainable consumption practices and strong sustainable consumption practices. Although green consumers can be differentiated based on their daily practices, they are still considered as one group of consumer fraction since they all have the habitus of sustainability as the unifying principle of their consumption practices.

Class-based interpretations are still important in terms of defining the characteristics of green consumers and emphasizing similar and different aspects of their lifestyles. However, this author does not aim to analyze how individual respondents locate themselves in relation to others in the society or among the other green consumers. Relying too heavily on the social positioning of green consumers and drawing boundaries between them carries the risk of overlooking the unifying principle of the habitus of sustainability. Therefore, this study mostly focuses on the self-determination of sustainable consumption patterns and the unification of green consumers based on their shared practices. It is aimed to underline individuals’



everyday sustainable practices and its effects on the sustainable transformation of lifestyles by giving reference to the collective efforts of grassroot-groups.

The habitus of sustainability is a nexus point for green consumers regardless of how they practice sustainable living in the city. It is asserted that what makes green consumers' consumption practices different from the conventional consumption pattern is the development of the habitus of sustainability. This habitus explains the paradox that even though most people are aware of the relationship between consumption and environmental degradation, their concerns are not translated into action. Since the habitus of sustainability is the organizing principle of daily life practices of green consumers, without the development of the habitus of sustainability people do not regularly perform the practices of sustainable consumption. Regarding this, following questions should be posed: How do the respondents in this study develop the habitus of sustainability? And what were the basic motivations that led them to change their practices through the way directed by the habitus of sustainability?

Approaching sustainability as a habitus, this thesis considers the interests and main motivations of consumers that initially directed them to live more responsibly and change their everyday consumption practices. Development of the habitus of sustainability makes green consumers more sensitive about environmental issues and leads them to behave responsibly towards the environment. Therefore, the habitus of sustainability influences the consumer behavior of green consumers and makes them conscious of their own consumption pattern.

Referring to sustainable consumer behavior enabled this author to emphasize the different characteristics of green consumers from those who continue to apply conventional consumption patterns. In the following chapter, I will analyze the sustainable consumer behavior in relation to the habitus of sustainability and the transformation of everyday life will be analyzed as well. Before I elaborate on sustainable consumer behavior, I will continue to discuss the habitus of sustainability within the boundaries of the theory of practices.

As it was mentioned previously, the habitus of sustainability is developed through individuals' sensitivities regarding environmental and ecological issues. How this relationship is realized is discussed through the analysis of the main motivations of green consumers. By referring to the literature of sustainable consumption, it is aimed to explain from which sources the habitus of sustainability has evolved. Therefore, I will utilize the existing literature which applies the theories of Bourdieu to analyze ecological and environmental practices. Starting from this, it will be detailed how the habitus of sustainability developed and how it transformed the consumption practices of green consumers.

There are some views asserting that there is a relation between environmental education and the development of the habitus of sustainability which I think is important and in need of elaboration. Karol and Gale (2004) claim that habitus of sustainability require an environmental capital which involves learning in order to value the environment. They refer to individuals' environmental commitment as an environmental capital which they regard as a hybrid form of capital including the combination of cultural, economic, and social capitals. According to their contextualization, having environmental capital is a necessary condition for the development of the habitus of sustainability as opposed to an unsustainable habitus. They underline the significance of education in terms of establishing environmental capital to achieve a habitus of sustainability by identifying the unsustainable habitus as a product of history based on the instrumentalization of nature (ibid). Therefore, the habitus of sustainability requires environmental capital to challenge the unsustainable approaches towards environment. It is important to identify the sources through which environmental capital would be gained and their effects on the habitus of sustainability. Analogous with Karol and Gale's point on the importance of education, it can be asserted that the development and awareness of environmental and ecological issues from an early age is crucial to a sustainable transformation of consumption patterns and consumer behavior. Therefore, in relation to environmental capital and the habitus of sustainability, I will discuss the relation between early environmental education and the development of environmental capital.

One of the most striking observations of this study is that the respondents are eager to learn new things about the environment and ecology and to revise their practices accordingly. During the interviews, all interviewees expressed that they were involved in activities that they thought would improve their knowledge about the issues of environment and ecology. These activities can be listed as participation in workshops, following current researches, publications and documentaries on environment and ecology. However, they all considered these efforts as late-stage awareness and expressed a desire to have gained ecological and environmental awareness at a younger age. In other words, the respondents expressed the fact that their environmental capital did not develop during childhood but developed under the influence of cultural capital during their adulthood.

The respondents referred to the significance of environmental education during the childhood in the development of green consumer behavior. They justify their point by referring to their initial encounter with the notions of environmentalism, ecology, and sustainability.

My encounter with the term ecology dates back to my early ages. My parents are both agricultural engineers. I have been associated with land matters and agricultural production since my childhood. My mother became the distributor of organic products made in Turkey after she had retired. There were always organic products in our house and I used to read the publications of Bugday Association. That is to say, I got to know the term ecology through books and family conversations when I was younger. I can say that I was a lucky kid (respondent 16, from Istanbul).

I do not remember when exactly my ecological awareness started. Probably at a very early date... It was said that the ozone layer was being depleted. After that, our teacher at school started to tell us about it. We had Environment as a school subject back then, we began to question and think about environment. For example, I stopped using deodorant then and I have never used it again. However, we were not taught ecology, permaculture et cetera in this subject. Instead, we were told that we should not litter and waste electricity and water (respondent 3, from Eskisehir).

Actually, here is the thing; I was a scout in primary school. I think that my environmental awareness was first raised there. We used to plant saplings, sing songs about nature and set up camps. I mean, we used to set up short-term camps, not long-term ones. Just then I learned to see birds, beetles and nature from a fresh angle. I started to love nature back then. In fact, I can say that those days have definitely had an impact on the reason why I started to study Environmental Engineering afterwards (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

As we mentioned previously, with the habitus of sustainability, environmental capital transforms consumer behavior into a more sustainable type. Sustainable consumer behavior encompasses the habitus of sustainability, environmental commitment, as well as environmental interests. Therefore, the source of environmental commitment is derived from education which fosters environmental values. In this vein, Karol and Gale (2004) define environmental capital as “an understanding of the interdependence of all life on Earth, and an awareness of the complicity that individuals possess in contributing to both positive and negative environmental consequences”. Therefore, the development of an education program for children through environmental sensitivities would contribute to the development of sustainable consumption practices from early ages. However, In Turkey, even though there are short-term projects aiming to raise environmental awareness among children, the curriculum as defined by the Ministry of Education does not include any particular course regarding ecology or environment. As a planned attempt, we can only refer to the proposal submitted by The Union of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) for the course ‘environment and nature’ to the Ministry of Education in 2017.<sup>26</sup>

Since there are no policy-based transformations in environmental education, grassroots activities and individual efforts stand out. Within the scope of this study, the Kokopelli Sehirde group is one of the grassroots groups interviewed. The Kokopelli group stated that they carry out activities targeting children. Two group members claimed that they are mothers of small children, so one of their main aims is to convince children to respect the environment and behave responsibly. Similarly, a participant who is an English teacher, organizes workshops to transform consumer behaviors of adults. When she was asked about the responses of adults and children towards sustainable consumption she responded that children adapt to a sustainable consumption pattern more easily and behave more responsibly than adults.

Our dream is to bring permaculture to schools step by step. We are trying to make it to the school curriculums, our dreams can come true within a year by starting from school gardens. You can set up a workshop about a certain thing

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<sup>26</sup> The content of the education program has been determined to cover both theoretical and practical applications. It has been stated that municipalities and provincial directorates should allocate the application areas in order to create a practical education plan for children. Birgün, (2017). “Bakanlığa ‘Çevre ve Doğa dersi’ önerisi”. Retrieved September 01, 2018. from <https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/bakanliga-cevre-ve-doga-dersi-onerisi-162550.html>

but it will eventually hang in the air. By being included in school curriculums for a semester, a year or for many years, we can indeed achieve many things with children, which make much more sense. We are heading for it (respondent 11, from Istanbul).

I guess our prior dream at the moment is to be able to create our own application areas in school gardens, where kids can develop their sustainable life skills and be a part of the solution process. There are people out there who make these areas. But the saddest part about it is that no matter how fantastic your design is and how well you present the program, schools and teachers do not instantly embrace these areas. It takes some time for people to appreciate these areas. That is why, we aim to educate teachers and make them know more, so that they can keep them going. Otherwise, what we make stays there for no reason. It is the reason why we are making this program (respondent 12, from Istanbul).

I have got only one class, which involves fifth graders. Fortunately, this year we have subjects as Natural Sciences and Social Sciences. So, we teach sustainable practices to kids, such as reducing carbon footprint. Yet, I am actually trying to stray from the curriculum a little bit to make students get to know all the environmentalist and ecologist concepts that I know. I tell them that they learn the things that I learned when I was 25, while they are only 10. The kids actually support me in this, I mean, they are by my side... At first a teacher that does not own a television and wears the same shoes was very strange to them. Now, they are used to it. For example, they warn each other when there is a student in the classroom who drinks water in a plastic bottle instead of a reusable water bottle. They do not evaluate people by their look anymore. Instead, they consider their mind and thoughts, which motivates me a lot. Because, adults that I work with do not go out of their comfort zone and make any effort to carry out these practices, while kids do it enthusiastically (respondent 4, from Ankara).

To summarize, environmental capital should be mentioned in relation to the habitus of sustainability and ecological awareness gained through environmental capital is crucially important for the analysis of sustainable consumer behavior. Most of the respondents claimed that they did not attend ecological and environmental training courses during childhood. When discussing the development of the habitus of sustainability, I was more focused on how this habitus developed during adulthood. I asked the respondents about what motivates them to learn more about ecology and sustainability. As a response, they mentioned their concerns about unsustainable consumption practices and environmental problems they confronted with in their daily lives. The narratives of respondents 2 and 7 exemplify the sources of motivations that make green consumers develop sustainable consumption practices.

I guess I heard of Bugday Association first about sustainability. Ten years ago there was an infamous water cut enforced in Ankara that lasted so long. I got sick back then. It was an epidemic illness resulted from the water cut. At that time I read that it was totally the local government's mistake. There were sources whose publications were mostly about ecology. So, I somehow got to know about all that. In the following 10 years, my interest in this issue gradually increased. Because I was not satisfied with the way I live my life. Therefore, I started to carry out the sustainable consumption practices step by step (respondent 2, from Eskisehir).

I guess my relation with the sustainability rests on my relation with Greenpeace. In 2010 I started to work with Greenpeace voluntarily. Naturally, it raised my environmental awareness and I started to be more interested in ecology. I guess my belief that there can be a different world has been my greatest motivation. We live in a consumer society and it bothers me a lot. I was very sad about it. That is why, I started to think about how I can live in a different world based on solidarity, where I do things differently without harming the nature and consuming much. This is how I got to know about sustainability I guess (respondent 7, from Ankara).

As is clear by the narratives of the respondents, the motivations which directed them to a more sustainable consumption pattern and way of living are similar. They emphasized consumption related concerns by pointing to environmental issues. However, they differ from each other in terms of how they respond to these problems. While some of the respondents tend to take measures regarding changing their individual consumption pattern, some others aim at creating more collective changes. In fact, this point will bring us back to the differences between ecologism and environmentalism. However, this time it will be useful to add the conceptualization of strong and weak sustainability, which is emphasized in identifying green consumers.

#### **4.1.1. Weak and Strong Standardization of Sustainable Practices**

The weak sustainability approach attempts to force changes within the existing production-consumption nexus. In other words, it promotes creating alternatives in current boundaries without achieving structural changes in the cycle of consumption. On the other hand, strong sustainability accounts aim sociopolitical changes and question the present production and consumption system. In this respect, grassroots movements and the existence of eco-communities are activity areas for strong sustainable approaches (Hobson, 2013). Indeed, sustainable consumption practices of

respondents in this study are diverse, which can be considered both as a practice of weak and strong sustainability. For instance, some green consumers in the study are still involved in the conventional consumption cycle. Their practice of buying organic or green-labeled products from grocery stores can be considered a weak sustainability approach. On the other hand, organizing grassroots movements or, establishing a food community informed by community-supported agricultural models can be considered strong sustainability approaches.

I try to use eco-friendly and organic products that I order online or buy from shops. However, I have observed that shops are lack of eco-friendly products. I mean, if there were more eco-friendly products almost at the same price as toxic products, I think that people would most probably choose to buy the healthy ones. For instance, I would love to find the products of Turmepa in any shop I go (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

By creating a food community it is actually aimed to establish a relationship between the producer and the consumer. That is to say, it is targeted to establish a direct relationship by getting rid of all the intermediaries in the present production-consumption cycle. In fact, a new cycle is being established (respondent 17, from Ankara).

However, it is necessary to state that these weak and strong sustainable approaches cannot be completely separated from one another since green consumers apply both modes of practices in their experience of maintaining sustainable living in an urban environment. In other words, weak and strong sustainable consumption practices can be experienced transiently in the daily lives of the respondents. For example, a person can continue to buy organic products from grocery stores, while this consumer can also be a part of a community-supported agriculture system through a food community and make her own products at home. The aim of emphasizing the differences among sustainable consumption practices is not to differentiate the participants from each other, but to emphasize the transition between practices.

Based on the narratives of the respondents, it is possible to claim that they engage in weak and strong sustainable consumption practices at the same time. Therefore, it can be asserted that the habitus of sustainability involves both weak and strong responses. In other words, sustainable consumer behavior can be linked to neither exclusively weak nor exclusively strong approaches. Rather, it likely exists as some combination of these two approaches.

The most prominent feature of the behavior of sustainable consumption is its rational and deliberate nature on the part of consumers who wish to change their lifestyles. Therefore, by focusing on consumer behavior we can discuss the relation between the habitus of sustainability and the sustainable consumer as an agent. Political consumerism (Micheletti, 2003) leads us to approach consumers as agents who make rational and deliberate choices to transform their lifestyles into a more sustainable manner. This perspective comes from the idea that consumers are not weak and manipulated masses but political actors.

Briefly, this thesis claims that sustainability as a habitus directly affects the organization of daily life since it transforms daily routines, habits, and practices. It determines both the behaviors of green consumers and their lifestyles. Therefore, the next part will discuss sustainable consumption as a field in order to reveal how the habitus of sustainability transforms everyday life.

#### **4.2. Sustainable Consumption as a ‘Field’**

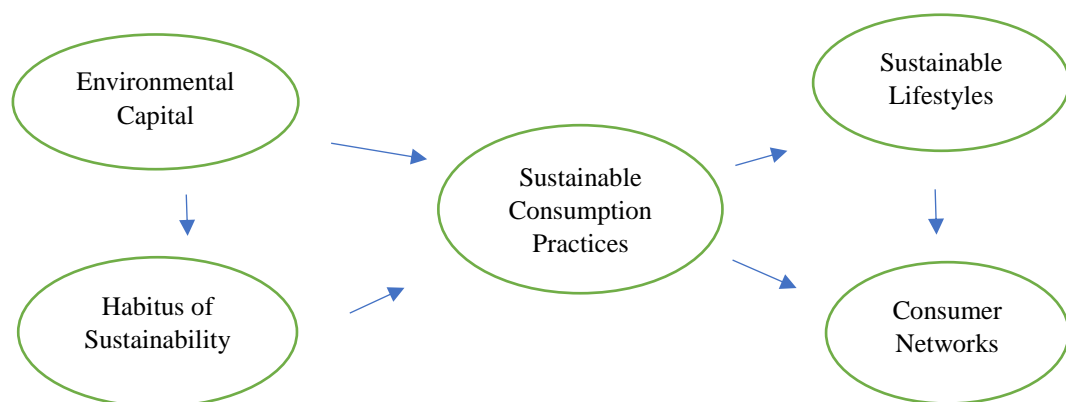
When we apply Bourdieu’s analysis of field into the discussion of sustainable consumption, we have to challenge some aspects of the field defined by Bourdieu. First of all, in Bourdieu’s analysis, field is described as “... an arena of constant struggle for ‘stakes’, particular types of field-specific and generic capitals” (Warde, 2017, p. 119). In his analysis, Bourdieu claims that individuals are placed into several positions in the field based on their capitals. In the field of sustainable consumption, we can refer to capitals since they promote sustainable consumption behaviors. Economic capital, social capital, and environmental capital are meaningful sources for sustainable consumers within the field of sustainable consumption. For example, the purchasing power of high-priced, eco-friendly products can be handled in relation to economic capital. Besides, taking part in consumer networks like food communities necessitates a social circle to be informed about alternative ways of reaching organic foods. Significantly, cultural capital favors the development of environmental commitment, while contributing to the feeling for the “game”.



According to Bourdieu, the field operates like a game based on strategic conducts and it is a place for constant struggle (Warde, 2017, p. 120). In the analysis of Bourdieu, capital acts as a strengthening force for an individuals' position within the field. In other words, according to the quality or quantity of capitals, people strengthen their hands in the field-based struggles. However, for the field of sustainable consumption we cannot claim that there is an arena for constant struggle. Rather, this field can be best analyzed with reference to the alternative hedonism that can be gained through the practices of sustainable consumption.

According to Warde (2017), Bourdieu underlines that the notion of habitus is necessary for a “feel for the game”. In other words, habitus is a necessary condition for the *illusio*, which is the feeling of being in that specific field. Therefore, in the field of sustainable consumption, alternative hedonism works as an *illusio*, which motivates an individual to be in the field of sustainable consumption. Bourdieu claims that “each field calls for and gives life to a specific form of interest, a specific *illusio*, as tacit recognition of the value of the stakes of the game and as practical mastery of its rules” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 117). As Bourdieu emphasizes, each field demands a certain kind of interest by which people apply certain practices. Therefore, we can correlate environmental capital to the habitus of sustainability and we can claim that the habitus of sustainability favors the interest of environmental commitment within the field of sustainable consumption.

**Figure 3. Field of Sustainable Consumption**



As it is clarified in the figure above, environmental capital and the habitus of sustainability are considered the main source for green consumers to develop sustainable consumption practices. As previously discussed, the notion of environmental capital is conceptualized as the hybrid form of capital including social, economic, and cultural capitals (Karol & Gale, 2004). This hybridity character of environmental capital is the reason for linking it with the notion of the middle class. Since they are eager to learn more about the subjects of ecology and environmentalism and have the necessary economic and cultural capitals to be educated on these subjects, middle class position is considered the class position which is suitable for the development of the habitus of sustainability through the environmental capital. This interpretation of middle-class position also includes the definition of green consumers within the field of sustainable consumption. In this social field, green consumers can be defined as the specific consumer fraction, who have environmental capital and possess the habitus of sustainability to implement ecologically sustainable consumption practices in daily life.

Through the analysis of sustainable consumption practices, the middle-class position will be discussed as the social group developed by the habitus of sustainability and environmental capital, and they will be referred as ecological citizens (Dobson, 1998) through an emphasis on their purposeful acts to change their lifestyles. Cultural, economic, and social positions of middle-classes easily form an efficient basis for the development of the habitus of sustainability comparing to other social classes. The historical responsibility of upper classes to reproduce current social system and the absence of economic and cultural capitals among lower classes necessary for the political participation to transform the social system, addresses middle-classes -even they have own internal contradictions- for creating a social change.

While talking about the differences between class positions Edgell (1993) defines three distinct class positions that all have their own fractions: “a dominant/upper class based on property, an intermediate/middle class based on credentials, and a working/lower class based on labour-power” (p. 38). According to Edgell, the fractions within the middle class are more visible like “propertied old middle class” and “propertyless new middle class” (ibid). Similarly, while defining the new middle class, Keyder (2013) mentions education and skills and defines them as mental laborers working in the

fields that necessitates specific knowledge. Furthermore, Keyder emphasizes that the bourgeoisie has lost its transformative power and these new middle classes can come to the front with new demands beyond the scope of the economic and political agenda that we used to know (ibid). In this manner, sustainable consumption can be considered as one of the new demands that Keyder mentions and green consumers can be linked to this new middle-class position.

While analyzing the differences among middle classes, Üstüner and Holt (2007) claim that cultural capital determines the social positions more than economic capital does. It is possible to claim the same with reference to green consumers. The differences among green consumers in the urban environment are analyzed by referring to the habitus of sustainability and environmental capital through the special emphasis on cultural capital. Therefore, even if we claim that the respondents in this study are middle-class sustainable consumption practitioners, it is not possible to define homogenous consumption practices and lifestyles. Furthermore, this study includes the respondents from both upper and lower middle-class positions. Therefore, the differences among the respondents can be best analyzed by referring to their environmental capital which affects both the development of the habitus of sustainability and the implementation of sustainable consumption practices. Since it is considered as a hybrid form of habitus, to analyze the aspects that characterize environmental capital we should refer to other forms of capitals.

As it was mentioned previously, the theoretical frame of this study is developed based on the theories of practice. Welch and Warde (2014) describe the focal points of the theories of practice by saying “practice theories’ central claim is to move beyond problematic dualisms like structure and agency, methodological individualism and holism, determinism and voluntarism, and subject and object” (p. 2). Also, Warde refers to the differentiation of “practices as entities” and “practices as performances” (ibid).

As it was clearly explained in Figure 1, consumption practices are centrally important within the field of sustainable consumption. Based on this assumption, it can be claimed that sustainable consumption practices create a link between the habitus of sustainability and the lifestyle change. Therefore, the analysis of the transition to

ecologically sustainable lifestyles necessitates linking each concept that has direct effect on the formation of sustainable consumption practices. Besides the notions of habitus and capital, the discussion on lifestyle transformation demands emphasizing discursive consciousness and the routinization of consumption practices. In this way, it is aimed to question why green consumers implement these practices and how they maintain their lifestyles in the urban environment. In the analysis of these inquiries it is observed that alternative hedonism (Soper, 2009) gained through the practices and lifestyles provides the source for motivation that green consumers needed to maintain their practices. As Giddens referred through the notion of discursive consciousness, when green consumers raise their awareness about their own consumption practices and commit themselves to them they gain hedonic aspirations which motivate them for having more sustainable lifestyles.

Basically, environmental commitment and the development of the habitus of sustainability are considered as the main sources of the interest of sustainable consumers. Bourdieu claims that “to understand the notion of interest, it is necessary to see that it is opposed not only to that of disinterestedness or gratuitousness but also to that of indifference” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 116). Therefore, approaching sustainability as a habitus would disclose the sources of the ‘interests’ of green consumers.

As Warde (2017) underlined, in Bourdieu’s analysis, the concept of the field can be interpreted as “the major area of practices” (p. 110). However, Bourdieu does not give information about how these fields operate (ibid). Therefore, Warde interprets Bourdieu’s analysis of the field in relation to practices by stating that “practices are the activities which provide the content of the fields” (ibid, p. 111). Therefore, everyday consumption practices determine the content of the field of sustainable consumption. Thus, in this field, we can refer to sustainable consumers as active agents who have the power of directing their own actions through conscious calculations motivated by their ecological or environmental interests. Respondent 1 exemplifies how the constant thinking on doing practices takes place:

If you want to achieve sustainable consumption in the city, you have to calculate everything and act accordingly. You have to think about every detail from the origin of the products you use to the transportation vehicle you use to get to

work. Although it is hard to do so, knowing the fact that you do something good will make you happy (respondent 1, from Eskisehir).

Therefore, it is assumed that green consumers, who possess the habitus of sustainability feel forced to avoid unsustainable behaviors. The respondents claimed that they are struggling with changing their unsustainable practices such as driving car, eating meat, using plastic bags, storing products that are unnecessary etc. These are basic measures taken for reducing carbon footprint in everyday life. Thus, reducing carbon footprint can be defined as the necessary condition to be in the field of sustainable consumption and the basic source of motivation to feel for the game.

What is it that is distinctive about the field of sustainable consumption? The field of sustainable consumption demands a certain type of lifestyle which is ecologically deliberate and responsible. Therefore, the field of sustainable consumption carries the potential for lifestyle-based social change towards sustainable consumption. In other words, different from Bourdieu's analysis of social fields, the field of sustainable consumption inherits the potential for collective social change to appear as a social movement. As this study claims, this social change can be based on the transformation of consumption patterns, as well as a diffusion of these patterns within society in general. While some respondents avoid mentioning the link between social movements and sustainable consumption, some others emphasize the necessity of the recognition of sustainable consumption as social movement. Even though it is beyond the scope of this thesis to claim that the field of sustainable consumption would eventually evolve to consumption and lifestyle-based social movement, the consumer networks are emphasized to mention the solidarity among green consumers. Respondent 4 mentions her aim of transforming the practices of the other people as follows:

I do not only aim to transform my own lifestyle, but also intend to popularize the sustainable consumption especially at the household level. I try to popularize these practices by sharing the products I made with people and setting up workshops to make people carry out the same practices at home (respondent 4, from Ankara).

In the analysis of field, Bourdieu claims that people perform actions in the field without knowing why they perform those actions. However, in the case of sustainable consumption people consciously perform actions with the aim of avoiding unsustainable practices. Therefore, different from Bourdieu's analysis of fields, in the

case of sustainable consumption there is an emphasis on conscious actions. Again, unlike Bourdieu's approach, in the sustainable consumption field, people perform actions not to strengthen their position in the field, but to have alternative hedonism and the pleasure of sustainable living through their practices. Respondent 4 illustrates how practicing sustainable lifestyle can be a source for hedonic aspirations:

Actually, adjusting the sustainable lifestyle to city conditions requires too much time, not too much money. If you are in communication with a food community that allows you to reach the organic and sustainable products, if you are able to shop these products directly, or if you supply the foodstuffs such as baking soda and soft soap that are required to make your own products at home, it means that you have already sorted it out. You do not buy more clothes anymore. You do not waste money on luxury goods. Moreover, you even prefer to use public transportation, which is a cheap way of transportation, to reduce your carbon footprint. As a result of sustainable lifestyle, you end up saving money. But, what makes you happy is actually the pleasure of advancing a fairer lifestyle, not money. You feel proud of yourself when you see other people (respondent 4, from Ankara).

For Bourdieu, fields are organized around specific types of capitals and each field has its own set of rules. Thus, if we approach sustainable consumption as a field in a Bordieuan sense, we should define a set of "rules" for this particular field. For the field of sustainable consumption, we can only identify certain patterns of behaviors and some consumer strategies. These consumer strategies include boycotting and buycotting,<sup>27</sup> the valorization of local farming, the preference to use organic products, considering ethical aspects of production and consumption, which can also be rules of the field of sustainable consumption.

All in all, we assume that the field of sustainable consumption requires the development of environmental capital and the habitus of sustainability. In this way, people regulate their consumption practices based on the precepts of sustainability. Since these practices constitute the field of sustainable consumption, the development of sustainable consumption patterns and practices are the rules specific to this field. However, this field does not possess a constant struggle; instead, it refers to individuals' possession through their practices which make them feel as if they are in

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<sup>27</sup> Buycotting refers to a consumer movement that necessitates deliberately buying certain products for ethical, political or environmental reasons.

the game. In other words, individuals' interest and engagement with sustainable consumption practices create the specific illusio of the field of sustainable consumption. Thus, the field of sustainable consumption demands a certain type of lifestyle; namely an 'ecologically sustainable lifestyle'. The organization of this distinctive lifestyle will be discussed in chapter 5. However, before delving into the sustainable lifestyles, I will refer to Giddens as another thinker of the theory of practice in order to address how green consumers make sense of their consumption patterns as active agents.

#### **4.3. Discursive Consciousness: Being Aware of Consumption Practices**

Whether consumers are free in terms of their consumption choices or have been directed by marketing strategies has been a long debate in social sciences. In the case of sustainable consumption, we can expect that people who possess the habitus of sustainability would be making "rational" choices, since their consumption is the result of their conscious calculations regarding environmental sensitivities. This sort of consumer analysis prompts the discussion of structure and agency. In this sense, Giddens' theory of structuration is mentioned to define a sustainable consumer as an agent. Thus, Giddens' analysis would provide a ground to direct the discussion of routinization and ordinary life to conscious actions.

According to Jackson, Giddens' analysis provides a basis for approaching consumption as a set of practices influenced by social norms and lifestyle preferences as well as institutions and social structures of the society and his analysis divides everyday practices into conscious and unconscious acts (2005, p. x). In this sense, Giddens refers to two types of consciousness: practical consciousness and discursive consciousness. According to Jackson, "...every day, the routine action is performed in practical consciousness. But there is evidence to suggest that intentional or goal-oriented behaviors require elaboration in discursive consciousness. This insight is important in devising strategies to change habitual behavior" (Jackson, 2005, pp. x-xi).

Since green consumers possess the habitus of sustainability, they constantly and critically analyze their own behaviors and consumption practices. In other words, they

comment on their own practices to keep them under control. They consider the effect of their behaviors on the environment and they always strive to reduce their carbon footprint to an acceptable limit. The respondent 1 commented on this process of calculation as follows:

There was a time when I started to calculate my carbon footprint obsessively on a regular basis, as all our everyday activities are a part of consumption. There is a web site that allows you to calculate your carbon footprint when you enter your amount of consumption. This way, I learned to restrict myself. I do not frequently check that web site anymore, since I know what increases my carbon footprint better now (respondent 1, from Eskisehir).

Therefore, the study of sustainability underlines the significance of considering consumption practices as an immanent part of everyday life. People who possess the habitus of sustainability would be expected to pay attention to their own consumption practices and exclude unsustainable habits. According to Jackson (2005), “goal-oriented behaviors require elaboration in discursive consciousness” (p. xi). This point is important in understanding how green consumers organize their consumption practices with the aim of transforming them into more sustainable ways. It means that consumers are attributing meaning to their act of consumption through discursive consciousness and internalizing the consequences of their actions. Green consumers critically analyze their own consumption preferences and calculate the costs and benefits of their consumption choices on the environmental level. The respondent 9 illustrates the change in her perception of consumption practices after the development of environmental awareness.

I am aware of the effects of my own practices on the nature and the environment. When I do something, I know the reason why I do that. Adopting a cleaner, better form of consumption makes me happy in this respect. However, before I adopted a sustainable lifestyle, I was not thinking too much about my everyday consumption in life (respondent 9, from Istanbul).

This thesis claims that green consumers are making ethically and politically conscious choices. Therefore, their consumption practices and preferences can be understood as political consumerism (Micheletti, 2003). As a practice of political consumption, when they go shopping, green consumers tend to critically evaluate the products by taking production processes and ingredients into account as a practice of political and moral reasoning. The respondents frequently complained about the time they spent while



reading lists of ingredients in the supermarkets. The respondent 8 refers to the reaction of her partner to her shopping habit as follows:

It takes me some time to finish my shopping, because I read labels. That is why, when we need to buy something immediately, my husband says things like: “You just stay, I will go get it” or “Please, just go and get it (without spending much time).” I downloaded a label-scanner app on my smart phone to read the ingredients in products. I also have an app that checks whether a product is vegan or not, whether the production process of a product involves animal testing or not. However, I do not need to use these apps anymore. I learned many things (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

Raising awareness about sustainable consumption practices is directly related to addressing environmental problems and proposing sustainable consumption as a solution to those problems. However, it is not possible to reduce the release of carbon or greenhouse gases by changing only the practices of everyday consumption and lifestyles of individuals. According to Warde (2017), “the problem of excess carbon in the atmosphere was caused initially by the industrialized societies of North America and Europe who remain the principal beneficiaries and still the principal polluters” (p. 183). Therefore, efforts of sustainable consumers in terms of reducing their carbon footprint would not create a direct effect on the global scale.

Nevertheless, the sense of alternative hedonism that they gathered from their consumption pattern will motivate green consumers to maintain a more sustainable lifestyle. As long as green consumers maintain their environmental sensitivities and concerns, they will continue to control their practices. Green consumers’ habit of constant controlling can make the people around them question their own practices. The narrative of respondent 8 illustrates the transforming effect of sustainable consumption practices on the people witness the consumption practices of green consumers.

I recycle paper, packaging wastes and oil at home. More precisely, I separate these materials and put them in different boxes. There are waste recycling boxes and recycling bins in a shopping mall nearby. I even told to my colleagues: “You just bring your jars to me, I will do it. Just bring them.” After I insisted too much, they started to ask me why waste oil is too harmful. One of them even brought jars (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

Being aware of the results of everyday routine practices facilitates green consumers' ability to transform their practices. By relating their ordinary consumption to wider environmental problems, they feel motivated to develop a more sustainable consumption pattern. They learn how to distinguish sustainable and unsustainable consumption practices in order to mitigate their effect on the environment. Therefore, the development of discursive consciousness would contribute to the contextualization of green consumers as active agents.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **5. TRANSFORMATION OF LIFESTYLES: ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE ORGANIZATION OF EVERYDAY LIFE**

Analyzing sustainable transformation of daily life presents the way how it was structured. Shove (2003) discusses the process of structuration of daily routines by asking “how do routinized practices, in fact, fit into daily routines and how are these patterns themselves organized and structured?” (p. 410). This question can be answered by referring to Bourdieu’s notion of habitus again. The habitus of sustainability cannot only be studied in relation to behaviors. It should also be approached through the structures that affect the consumption patterns. In order to reveal how practices are organized and structured, this chapter discusses sustainable behavior change and reorganization of everyday life practices.

The transition of practices demands huge efforts in terms of changing everyday routines and habits, in other words, it necessitates a reorganization of everyday life based on the principles of sustainability. How this transformation experienced by sustainable consumers represents the way in which habitus of sustainability works in the process of transition to a sustainable lifestyle. While talking about this transformation the respondents mentioned to the practices they changed hardly. Following the difficulty in quitting eating meat, changing shopping habits was the second most referred practice change that was hard to make by the green consumers in this study. Respondent 1 exemplifies the difficulty she faced while transforming her lifestyle as follows:

At first I had a hard time changing my shopping habit. I still have difficulty in keeping my hands off shopping online. For instance, sometimes I think like

“Summer is coming, I should buy a dress.” But I stop myself and if I still desire to wear something new, I ask my sibling or friends: “Do you have a dress like this? (respondent 1, from Eskisehir)”

Sometimes consumption practices of people around us can be a source of motivation to achieve more sustainable lifestyle change. One of the respondents emphasized her first encounter with the notion of sustainable living when she moved to Spain in 2014. Her experience reveals thinking on and being aware of consumption practices can direct people to more sustainable living.

I got to know the term ecology and started to head towards reducing consumption when I moved to Spain in 2014. I had a roommate who was against consumption. Once I was preparing breakfast. I put 5-6 different kinds of cheese on the dining table. My roommate asked me: “Why do you have 5 different kinds of cheese?” I first started to think about it then and I did not really know why I had 5 different kinds of cheese. I just happened to buy them. I was so into consuming that it was quite normal to me. It feels just normal even if I buy 100 different kinds, because I have been raised in this consumer society. Back then I used to think that I have got money, I am wealthy, so I buy, eat and drink. My roommate asked me: “Which one do you like the most?” I realized that I actually love only one of them, I bought the rest for nothing, I did not eat them. By the way, my roommate is actually very rich, she is the daughter of one of the very wealthy families in Spain. Then I started to think like: “Why do I spend money on five kinds of cheese?” I began to reduce redundant consumption and I realized that I am actually happier with the things that I really love (respondent 6, from Eskisehir).

With reference to the transformation of consumption practices, the notion sustainable consumer behavior is discussed through the changes in household or domestic consumption practices (energy use and waste organization etc.), shopping practices, eating practices, and mobility practices. Therefore, analyzing the changes in sustainable consumer behavior reveals the transformation of the above-mentioned practices. Habitus of sustainability starts the change and motivates the maintenance of ecologically sustainable transformation of lifestyles by forcing green consumers to implement same sustainable consumption practices as daily routines. According to Warde (2017), “practice theory allocates a secondary role to the values of individuals... Instead habits and habituation play a larger role in much everyday practice, supported and steered by routines and conventions” (p. 197). Even though practice theory does not consider the values of individual in the first place, discussion on the habitus of sustainability allows us to mention ethical inquiries, political ideas,

and cultural values of green consumers which are discussed in relation to sustainable consumer behavior.

### **5.1. Habitus of Sustainability and Middle-Class Consumption Culture**

In order to analyze daily life consumption practices of green consumers, the habitus of sustainability is referred as source of motivation and interest. This notion of the habitus of sustainability is developed with reference to Bourdieu's unique conceptualization of habitus. Therefore, in order to protect authentic associations of the notion of habitus, other preeminent notions of Bourdieu's capital and field are referred.

In the analysis of Bourdieu habitus is clearly linked to consumption practices, lifestyles, tastes, and social positions, as well as class conditions. Therefore, the feeling of belonging to a specific group in the society can be best explained through the habitus. In other words, consumption practices and lifestyles specific to particular social positions are embodied in the habitus. Therefore, the physical, cultural, and social environment that individuals live in have direct influence on the class positions of individuals.

In relation to the literature of ecology and environment, the notion of habitus is discussed by others. The notions of "environmental habitus" and "ecological habitus" are some of the notions that have been developed (Haluza-DeLay, 2008). The main reason for naming as the habitus of sustainability comes from the aim of including the connotations of both ecologism and environmentalism, which Dobson (2000b) differentiated, into the analysis of sustainable consumption. As previously discussed, ecologism and environmentalism differ from each other based on the solutions they produced regarding to current environmental crises (ibid). Environmentalists defend reformist approaches through maintaining the current system avoiding structural changes. On the other hand, ecologists address that radical, political and social changes would create a change at the societal level. In order to avoid excluding one of these connotations, this author preferred to name it as the habitus of sustainability.

Haluza-DeLay (2008), stating that the practices sensitive to the environment becoming a routine would enable the individuals to decrease their impact on the environment,

and thus a tendency that would give prominence to the ecological sensitivities, i.e. the ‘ecological habitus’, would emerge (p. 206). For instance, he asserted that daily live environmentalism such as the recycling practices performed by individuals in their daily lives, is beyond being a part of a collective movement or being a result of rational thinking but is a manifestation of the ecological habitus (ibid, p. 208). Thus, it would be possible to talk about an ecologically sustainable social transformation in case the ecological habitus or sustainability habitus, as it is termed in this study, is popularised.

Habitus directly affects all consumption practices of the individuals. It can be argued that sustainability, as a habitus, has a direct effect on rendering the consumption practices of the individuals more sustainable. The underlying points to be considered for touching upon the sources of this effect, in fact, would provide the specific source of the sustainability habitus. It is important to define, making use of the theoretical instruments of Bourdieu, the environmental capital and sustainable consumption domain, to which the sustainability habitus is related. Thusly, what kind of an analysis level the daily consumption practices present in this conceptualisation would be revealed, and the consumer group, called the green consumers, would be discussed with regard to the concept of middle class.

Environmental capital, also used in this study, is stated in relation with all the economic, social and cultural concepts analysed by Bourdieu. Environmental capital constitutes a basis for the individuals to access the sustainability habitus. In fact, this concept explains how sustainable consumption practices and lifestyle are developed by the green consumers. This attempt for explanation would provide us the opportunity to evaluate the class position, to which the environmental capital and sustainability habitus are related. In order to make this evaluation, issues such as what kind of a domain sustainable consumption is, in Bourdieu’s terms, and what kinds of interactions are possible are mentioned in the previous chapters.

Environmental capital and habitus of sustainability are discussed by relating them to the middle classes, and thus the middle class is pointed out as the position that would ensure the ecologically sustainable transformation of the daily life. It is possible to claim that the experience of the transformation in the lifestyles of some green consumers, who are also members of the middle class, coincide with their spiritual

experiences. In other words, some of the green consumers living in the cities related the satisfaction they obtained by changing their daily life consumption practices with hedonism, and they also stated that they developed new routines such as yoga and meditation. Green consumers, as we have discussed in the deep ecology debate, related the spiritual sensitivities they experienced as a part of the transformation in their lifestyles with the daily life consumption practices.

The spiritual aspect of sustainable consumption is emphasized, since the respondents referred to their sense of spiritual fulfillment that they gain through their simple living practices. They claimed that this experience of sustainable and simple living did not only affect their consumption patterns but also changed the way they perceive the world and others around. Some of the respondents claimed that their attempt to live a sustainable lifestyle attached new subjects to their daily lives such as nonviolent communication, yoga, and meditation.

As we mentioned previously, sustainable consumption practices are sources for green consumers to gain greater hedonism as we put it into the form of alternative hedonism. De Geus (2009) underlines the spiritual orientations of alternative hedonism. This spiritual aspect is also described by participants in this thesis as "feeling good", "doing the right thing", "being aware that we are part of the whole".

Some respondents mentioned the pleasure they gain through their lifestyle by saying that they are satisfied with their lifestyles and everyday practices since they act ethically and responsibly. Moreover, respondent 4 describes the thing that motivates her for a transition to sustainable lifestyle as the feeling of doing it morally and environmentally. Moreover, respondent 2 mentions her feeling of being part of nature by referring to the pleasure that she derives from observing the growing steps of seeds she planted.

Only two of the green consumers who participated in this study (respondent 4 and respondent 7) stated that they related the ecological transformation of their lifestyle with a spiritual perspective. Even though a direct relation cannot be claimed between sustainable lifestyle and spiritual beliefs just basing upon the experiences of these two green consumers, it should be stated that this relation is about simplifying the lifestyle (Walther et al., 2015).

Green consumers who expressed that they simplified their life style to render it ecologically sustainable stated that they felt in harmony with nature and as a part of it. In fact, respondent 4 and respondent 7 said they are engaged in yoga and meditation as a part of this transformation in their life styles. It is possible to understand the idea of considering oneself as a part of nature with reference to "Gaia", which we mentioned in the chapter 3. According to Katinić (2013), Gaiasim evolved as one of the New Age spiritual pursuits in the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century (p. 3). The New Age movement should be referred to as a driving source for sustainable consumers. They practice yoga and meditation for the healing, as well as they are in search of alternative health practices. These practices also lead people to consume healthy foods in order to avoid hazardous chemicals.

I got a chance to meet with so many new people when I started on sustainable consumption. For example, meeting yoga helped me not only to simplify my everyday life practices, but also to simplify my soul. That is one of the main reasons why I try to take care of the nourishment which I take in my body. Alongside with yoga and meditation, I focus on the matters such as nonviolent communication and equality, because I think we are all one (respondent 7, from Ankara)

As to feeling bound with nature and one another, in addition to the spiritual approach, respondents stated that they faced the reality of how they are bound with nature and one another in such fields as permaculture education, where green consumers produce together aiming to raise an awareness of responsibility in particular. Respondent 1 emphasized how the permaculture training makes the participants attached to one another, as well as to nature. She says that the participants of that permaculture training are now wearing green wristbands to make themselves remember that they are a part of nature like any other living beings.

We (Eskisehir Ecological Living Community) carried out our first permaculture training in June, 2016. This is a very costly training, yet the municipality needs to provide it for free. The prices in Istanbul are incredibly high. We carried out that training with lower prices and the support of the municipality. During the commitment game, in lay terms meeting game, we threw each other a green rope while trying to figure out why we are here and we want to do something good for the environment. We were connected to each other. As our trainer said, if we wear this rope, the idea of responsibility would spring and we would feel it. That is why I do not take this rope off (respondent 1, from Eskisehir).



In one of the trainings on ecology, they asked us like which animal we feel ourselves that day. We revealed the animals we feel close to and explained the reasons behind that. Then, we wrote the names of those animals on papers to put in our necklines and wandered around with those papers all day. It was both nice and important for the fact that it shows we are not that different than animals (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

The wisdom of eastern philosophies, intuitionism and the importance attached to the wisdom of local people are noticeable amongst the sources of the green thought. This thought claims that all living beings and the planet are sources of value in themselves, contrary to the industrial understanding (Şahin, 2017a, p. 23). Therefore, spirituality creates a ground for green consumers to feel themselves responsible for the nature since they regard themselves as the part of nature and attribute value to nature. However, it is not possible to say on the basis of the narratives of green consumers that the sustainability habitus will necessarily create a spiritual sensitivity. Experiences of green consumers, who established a relationship between their own life styles and spiritual experiences, can be evaluated in relation to the discursive consciousness. In other words, green consumers can transform their life styles ensuring that the sustainable consumption practices of their daily life become a routine by creating sources of spiritual hedonism, while attributing a meaning to their own practices. This transformation is observable in their preference concerning the life style of voluntary simplicity.

#### **5.1.1. Voluntary Simplicity**

Simple living is preferred by sustainable consumers as an ideal way of living to minimize the carbon footprint. In that sense, the respondents assert that when they started to reorganize their lives based on sustainability, their aim began to change the unsustainable parts of their lifestyles. As a determiner of lifestyle, consumption cannot be separated from the analysis of sustainable living. In that sense, to analyze sustainable living experience in the form of simple living, we should refer to consumption choices and practices.

The experience of sustainable living can be diverse based on individuals' economic means, ethical considerations, as well as the degree of their environmental

commitment. Furthermore, the infrastructures of the urban environment also affect their experiences of sustainable living. Even though all respondents claim that they can find new ways in the city to transform their lifestyle, they also mentioned the “limits” of the cities in terms of preventing them to apply all practices that they have in their mind.

Actually, I want to produce my own detergent. But I have not made an attempt on it so far. For now, I do not have any convenient space to produce detergent. In an urban life, this is what we are lack of. Especially in these buildings in Eskisehir, when you try to produce detergent and use caustics, you may encounter gassings and reactions. You are supposed to carry out the process outdoors. It is unlikely to find that convenient outdoor area all the time. Considering that the caustics are completely chemical reactions, when you use caustics, gassings are possible to occur, and you are not supposed to inhale that gas. For this reason, the production process should take place outdoors (respondent 5, from Eskisehir).

Owing to the density of its population, Istanbul shelters plenty of people stuck in very confined space. When it is the case, you are obliged to accommodate some conditions in the city. For example, unfortunately, I do not have the luxury for riding bicycle to commute rather than using public transportation. I live in Kartal, and my workplace is in Besiktas. In order to commute, I must take both bus and ferry every day. In this case, I cannot regard bicycle as an alternative. But I am pretty sure about the fact that I do not want to drive a car unless there is any case of vital importance (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

On the other hand, one of the respondents referred to her sustainable living experience in the city as ethically refusing to take part in the “capitalist organization of the life in the city.” Respondent 13 emphasizes the conflict between her idealized lifestyle and the realities of the urban environment she lives in as follows:

I hate living in a city. This makes me feel so worthless. When you are in the city, you always have consumption on mind. I think we only exist to consume and to consume more in a city. That is the reason why we go to work. We spend our lives by earning money and consuming, this is a circle. I have adopted a simpler lifestyle instead. I try to go to eco-villages and farms, and to spend time in those places. But, unfortunately, this does not help me derive a profit financially. For this reason, when I am in the city, I go to houses as a cleaner. Thus, I can earn and spend money at minimum (respondent 13, from Ankara).

In terms of the experience of simple living, the lifestyle choices are strongly related with the practices of the people that green consumers share the same living area with.

Regarding this situation, respondents emphasized the conflicts in their household due to their attempt of applying sustainable consumption practices.

I am in a conflict with my family because of their consumption habits. For example, my father is a retired worker. By claiming that the bottled water prices are so low in a supermarket, he brings a number of bottled water whose bottles are made of plastics. He says that we can learn how much water we drink by this way. I disagree with him by saying this is not how it is supposed to be. But it is hard for him to understand given that he has a different perspective. Yet sometimes, we manage to change our ideas mutually (respondent 10, from Istanbul).

In fact, simple living emerged as a desired lifestyle by green consumers. According to Kronenberg and Lida (2011), motivations behind simple living can be diverse and it can be motivated by individually or socially (p. 68). Therefore, in the analysis of sustainable living personal values and interests are important as much as the anti-consumptionist pressure groups. Alexander and Ussher (2012) refer to Voluntary Simplicity Movement and they define it as follows: “The Voluntary Simplicity Movement can be understood broadly as a diverse social movement made up of people who are resisting high consumption lifestyles and who are seeking, in various ways, a lower consumption but higher quality of life alternative” (p. 66). In this manner, voluntary simplicity can be regarded as an attempt to produce an alternative way of living which value reducing the levels of consumption. Voluntary simplification is directly related with the ethical considerations of green consumers. Therefore, it can also be referred as an ethical simplicity (Shaw and Newholm, 2002, p. 183).

The notion of voluntary simplifiers refers to people who voluntarily reduce their consumption levels. Their motivation could differ; however, the key point is that voluntary simplifiers are group of people who can afford to have high-priced products but refusing to buy them to reduce the carbon footprint. Therefore, voluntary simplifiers develop sensitivities towards the notion of sufficiency and by questioning the meaning of “enough” in their lives, they minimize their consumption practices.

This is what we call ‘voluntary simplicity’. I saw the word in an ecological dictionary. It is incredibly nice. For some time, I started to do things by asking myself if I really need it. Because, sometimes people try to fill their emotional voids with different things. One of those things could be shopping. It is possible to apply such things to various different patterns of everyday life. As I said, it could affect both shopping habits and food consumption. Claiming that you

need to eat that dessert might be an example for this. For this person, everything becomes clear in a while and he/she feels mentally relaxed. I guess we can talk about the personal aspect at this very point (respondent 10, from Istanbul).

When green consumers express that they prefer voluntary simplicity as a life style, it becomes obligatory to emphasize their middle-class position one again. As Arslan (2012) claims, "urban middle-classes" or "new middle-classes" have become categories being discussed with an emphasis on their life styles and consumption habits. Thus, it is possible to say that green consumers reject the life style they may have with the support of their economic capital deliberately and willingly. As mentioned before, it can be said that the environmental capital, a hybrid form arising from the combination of social, cultural and economic capital, prompts the green consumers to become voluntary simplifiers.

Shaw and Newholm (2002) emphasize the link between ethical concerns and voluntarily simplified behaviors. They use the term 'ethical simplifiers' to refer to people who practice voluntary simplicity (p. 169). Shaw and Newholm differentiate ethical consumers from downshifters by stressing that ethical consumers consider environmental, social, and animal welfare issues (ibid, p. 170). By referring to their approach, it can be claimed that ethical consumers demand to change only certain practices without asking for any radical changes. Through reference to Dobson (1998), we can underline this point based on the distinction between environmentalists and ecologists. Then, ethical consumers may be categorized as environmentalists, who only demands shallow changes within the current system of consumption.

In fact, it is possible to state that green consumers adopting voluntary simplicity as a life style are engaged in "downshifting". It leads to a change in life style happening in the form of earning and consuming less in order to create more leisure time (Kennedy et al., 2013, p. 765). Research carried out by Kennedy et al. revealed that environmental practices in domestic consumption may develop since downshifting increases the time spent at home -as in the voluntary simplicity example. However, it is not the case for transportation practices (Kennedy et al., 2013, p. 777).

The positive impact of the time spent at home on the sustainable consumption practices is also emphasized by the green consumers participating this study. Most of the respondents stated that the more they spend time at home the more they become open

to try different practices for transforming their life style. In these narratives, gender is appeared to be a significant dimension and said to be of determinative importance in terms of implementation of the practices.

### **5.1.2. Gender and Sustainable Consumption**

The relationship between gender and sustainable consumption has been discussed by giving reference to everyday practices. There are several studies discussing that comparing to men, women are more engaged with sustainable consumption (Cairns et al., 2014; Stolle et al., 2005). As a reason for this, Stolle et al. (2005) claim that women are more engaged with political consumption in the form of consumer activism since they go shopping more frequently than men.

The theories of practice underline the significance of daily life routines and practices in terms of defining consumer behavior. When we analyze sustainable consumer behavior through a gender sensitive perspective we can conclude that since women are traditionally accepted as the main caretakers in the household, they are more engaged with the practices like cooking, cleaning, and shopping. Therefore, compared to men, women are more sensitive about the consumption practices and its effects on the environment.

In the process of data gathering I attended the ecological living workshops organized by the respondents. Based on my observations that I gathered from these workshops I can claim that women participate more comparing to men. Besides, it should be reminded that in this study there are only two male participants; therefore, the narratives of women are overemphasized.

During these workshops for sustainable consumption practices, the use of hazardous chemicals for cleaning purposes in the household is the issue that women complained about the most. Therefore, the contents of the workshops I attended both in Istanbul and Ankara were quite similar, as they targeted the household cleaning practices. It is also observed that women with young children are more sensitive to the use of these alternative and sustainable products. The mothers emphasized that wet wipes are the

most used cleaning item in baby care and they need to find alternatives since the use of wet wipes harms the nature in a long term.

Therefore, the question of how gender differences shapes everyday consumption practices is quite meaningful in the case of women's experience of motherhood. There are two mothers in this study (respondent 11 and the respondent 12) and they mention how being mother directed their attention towards the issue of organic farming.

My experience in practicing sustainability started with food. When I got pregnant, I started to eat healthily. I started to question how I feed my baby, from where I get the food. I was not comfortable with buying food from supermarkets. That is how I started to care about sustainability. When I became involved in it, new doors opened. I realized that we have responsibilities for new generations. Moreover, as a mother I started to think more about what values I will raise my kid with. Then I quit my job, founded Kokopelli and it led me to form an ecology-based social entrepreneurship (respondent 12, from Istanbul).

Cairns et al. (2014) stated that the pressure upon women and mothers in particular to become ideal mothers is now nourished with ecological concerns. They claim that feeding children with organic and natural food is perceived as a must for being a good mother. Based on the interviews they had with young mothers living in Canada, they said that the mothers who are in financial difficulties that they cannot afford buying organic food for their children feel insufficient. They also stated that those women strive for overcoming the obstacles such as knowledge, time and money so that they can become an "eco-mom", the notion which is idealized by them (ibid). Mothers participating this study mentioned similar problems. However, they said their basic motive is feeding their children with healthy food and supporting organic agricultural production, rather than realizing the eco-mom figure.

In relation to discussion on women and the diffusion of sustainable consumption, some of the respondents mentioned women as the target group they have in their mind, and the starting point for sustainable social change. They targeted women by stating that women are the caretakers in the household and they spend most of their time engaging with various chemicals in an ordinary day. Therefore, some respondents claim that if we can transform women's consumption patterns, it could be a huge step towards the promotion of sustainable consumption practices.

I believe that a real transform into sustainability can only be achieved by transforming women. By saying women, I particularly attribute to old women that have cleaning taboos that are hard to break. For example, I visit the houses of my boyfriend's and my friends' families. I spare time for this and they invite their neighbours. I even go to places like Kecioren to introduce them nonhazardous products. I do this and they actually want this, they really like it (respondent 4, from Ankara).

I think that there must be workshops aimed for women. I am sure that if they organize a team within the municipalities that will introduce sustainable cleaning products by visiting neighbourhood after neighbourhood, women will definitely be interested. The economic crisis is on the way anyway. When you go to a neighbourhood and introduce these cleaning products that are way cheaper than those in supermarkets to local people, they will definitely be interested (respondent 14, from Ankara).

Although the implementation of women-oriented projects can be seen effective in terms of ensuring the ecologically sustainable transformation of society, there is a danger that it may reinforce the care-taker role of women in the family. Respondent 17 criticized the approach which aims to change the women's practices:

Women are the main participants of the Ecological Life Practices workshops which are coordinated by me. Generally, they are either middle- and upper-class women or university students. I think that these practices are already being practised in other parts of the society somehow. I mean, learning how to make homemade vinegar is surprising for urban people who live in a city, while it is a very common thing to do for some others. For example, it is an ordinary thing to do for my grandmother... What I want to highlight is that linking sustainable consumption with women or saying that transforming women is the solution for sustainability means reproducing the gender role of women in a negative way (the respondent 17, from Istanbul).

Even though empowerment of women in the domain of sustainable consumption can favor the well-being of the planet, it must be noted that this sort of approach makes the area of sustainable consumption a delicate subject. As respondent 17 mentioned, targeting women for the "real" change carries the risk of regarding women as responsible for unsustainable consumption behavior. Furthermore, this approach tends to equalize the area of sustainable consumption with household without targeting the social system that favors and benefits from diffusion of unsustainable behaviors.

To contribute the discussion between gender and sustainable consumption, it is possible to deal with the issue from an ecofeminist perspective as instructed by Dobscha (1993). Thus, it will be possible not only to analyse the green consumers in

terms of their consumer behaviours but also criticize them socio-politically. Approaching the matter of sustainable consumption with an ecofeminist critical perspective will allow for criticizing the "environmental housemaids" role of women (ibid).

## 5.2. Individual and Collective Aspects of Sustainable Consumption

The analysis of this chapter will explain how sustainable consumption habitus affects the consumption practices of daily life. Sustainable consumer behaviours will be evaluated based on domestic consumption practices, shopping practices, eating and drinking practices and transportation practices. In addition, 'prosumers' will be defined as a special group among green consumers and the transforming impact of their 'DIY' ethics on the consumption practices of daily life will be dealt with.

As mentioned before, environmental capital is of importance in terms of the development of the sustainable consumption habitus. We can state that the sources from which the environmental capital, dealt with in relation to the cultural capital, is developed can be found in ecology- and environment-based educational efforts. Having a low or high cultural capital directly affects whether the consumption practices are weak or strong. It is possible to group the weak and strong practices addressed within the scope of this study as follows:

**Table 3. Weak and Strong Sustainable Consumption Practices**

Weak Sustainable Consumption Practices	Strong Sustainable Consumption Practices
Buying organic foods from regular markets	Growing own food in the household
Buying natural cleaning products	Self-producing cleaning products
Waste Disposal	Composting
Using public transportation	Cycling



As stated in the table above, the basic difference between the weak and strong sustainable consumption practices becomes meaningful based on being a consumer and a "prosumer". Green consumers consider participating in the production process of the products they use and foods they consume as a part of DIY ethics. As Warde (2017) claims, if we consider consumption as a collection of practices, it is possible to say that the sustainable consumption is created through practices in which consumers are actively participating. In other words, whether they are engaged in weak or strong sustainable consumption practices, it is possible to state that green consumers are active actors/agents compared to the consumers in the conventional consumption system.

Analysis of the consumer dimension of sustainable consumption should not hamper the analysis of the responsibilities and roles of other actors in this consumption system. Claiming the social change based on the promotion of sustainable consumption practices and ecologically sustainable lifestyles needs to address three aspects of the issue: consumers, business, and policymakers. In this part, I will refer briefly to the roles of these three actors through the notion of "responsibility." Therefore, I aimed to analyze which measures are needed to be taken by those actors in terms of encouraging sustainable consumption.

Sustainable consumption as an emergent agenda has forged public opinion at the international level and has directed attention from the issues of pollution-control or eco-efficiency to consumption (Southerton et al., 2004, p. 2). In the literature of daily life studies, sustainability applied to everyday consumption. Household waste and increasing energy use became the major source of issues to discuss sustainability in the context of everyday life. Therefore, household consumption patterns became the concern of policy area. Southerton et al. (2004) claim that "patterns of unsustainable consumption are related almost entirely to the social and economic decisions of individual households" (p. 3). Therefore, the household becomes an area where all the three actors search for a sustainable solution.

Individual accounts of sustainable consumption have been emphasized through everyday sustainable practices like growing one's own food, producing one's own cleaning products, using energy-efficient products etc. Yet, the role of business and

policymakers have not been underlined. Therefore, in this part of the thesis, I will mention the responsibility of business and policymakers, as well as the collective efforts of consumers. Since the practice theory approach allows us to deal with social practices and lifestyles, I will keep my focus on the efforts of these actors in terms of the changes they make on the practices of green consumers.

While discussing the importance of ‘behavioral change’ to transition of lifestyles and consumption choices in the market, it should be noted that there must be an emphasis on governments’ responsibility. In other words, the perception that the issue of unsustainable consumption is a matter that consumer sovereignty must challenge (Warde, 2017, pp. 183-184). The narrative of respondent 14 exemplifies this issue as follows:

I graduated from the department of urban and regional planning. The main thing we learnt at the department was that the living quarters are designed to hinder people from moving too much. That means, institutions like schools, supermarkets, health centers are ought to be close to each other. But we cannot talk about it here. For this reason, some people need to drive to go to the supermarket. In order to prevent people from consuming too much, we need structural changes (respondent 14, from Ankara).

According to McDonald et al. (2009), after the Second World War the term “urban regeneration” evolved in Britain and Europe with the aim of achieving better societies through government policies (p. 51). However, in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century sustainability entered the agenda of urban regeneration and demanded major changes to create sustainable communities and places in the cities. This change necessitates the cooperation of several actors including policy makers, municipalities, businesses, and urban residents.

The governmental aspect of the creation of sustainable urban regeneration includes not only structural changes but also cultural and social changes regarding the sustainable development of the vulnerable parts of the cities. The issue of sustainability in the city includes the aspects of ecological sustainability, environmental sustainability, and social sustainability. Therefore, these different aspects of sustainability should address how sustainable social change is possible in the cities.

Some respondents stated that capitalist society and its consumption system cannot be altered through only the changes in daily life practices. To illustrate this, respondent 16 says: “if we cannot alter the system we can challenge it through eco-innovations like the production of more eco-friendly options in the market.” However, Alexander and Ussher (2012) emphasize the rebound effect of the claims similar to respondent 16’s. They state that even if we produce more energy efficient cars, we contribute to the maintenance of the consumer society by promoting the car use (p. 68). Therefore, according to them, efficient technological solutions will not solve the ecological crisis unless the global consumer class leaves the unsustainable consumption pattern (ibid).

According to Spaargaren (2004), sustainable consumption can be approached from the sides of marketing, social policy, and social movements. Since all of these areas deal with ideas and behaviors of citizen-consumers they will pay regard to sustainable transformation of the behaviors and ideas of citizen-consumers (ibid, p. 687). Thus, environmental policymaking should aim the lifestyle of sustainable consumers. Spaargaren suggests the usage of environmental heuristics in order to lead consumers to live a more sustainable way. These heuristics would include “the principle of waste prevention and separation (“keep them apart”), the use of eco-labels (“buy green”), and the use of the modal-shift notion in transport (“park and travel”)” (Spaargaren, 2004, p. 690).

Actually, the state has the power to do more. First of all, they may take precautions against green washing. Or maybe they can conduct an inspection for the chemicals in the products and if it is needed, they can categorize the chemicals. I accept that we will not be able to overcome this consumption culture unless we explain people the importance of the sustainability and try to win them over. But if the state reveals the ingredients of these products expressly to the public, the people will know that they use such products, even if they harm both human health and the environment. I suppose the people cannot understand how harmful those products are, unless they get cancer and go to hospital. The consumption process has also production process, but nobody considers how much water was spent in the production process so that they can use this product (respondent 15, from Ankara).

On the other hand, in the scope of corporate social responsibility businesses implement programs regarding sustainability. Yet, since they are still profit-oriented their sensibility in terms of sustainability would be limited with the corporate’s own interests. One of the respondents who is experienced in corporate works claimed that

some of the businesses take real measures regarding their water usage in their production processes.

There was a meeting which brought people from private sector, NGO's and the other people working on this field together in order to find a solution. Something personal is needed to be carried out, but that is not enough. Therefore, the private sector, NGO's and public institutions need to work together...They talked about that plan in the meeting. According to their research on the topic, it might be concluded that the people's request on sustainable products have increased. Even if the private sector produces goods only in beneficial terms, they are also aware of the fact that as a marketing strategy, satisfying people's request is also beneficial. Therefore, they go about producing sustainable products. They may also earn money for it, but if they do it in sustainable ways, our preferences may draw attention and become decisive. Whenever I say that I do not want to use Domestos and this demand will increase, they will want to produce an alternative. Or, as a consumer, when I urge them not to use plastics, they will make it turn into a marketing strategy. Therefore, sustainability is currently on the agenda of the companies and it assumes that the personal efforts will turn into collective one, and it will grow (respondent 12, from Istanbul).

NGOs are also important in terms of propagating the ideas of consumer sovereignty. Some of the respondents in this study are experienced in working in several environmental NGOs. One of the respondents in the study is currently working at YUVA Association and another respondent worked in Green Peace and YUVA Association. Both of them emphasized the policies of these NGOs to underline how they approach environmental issues. The respondent who is currently working at YUVA emphasized collective accounts of sustainable consumption by driving forward the importance of corporate organization.

Within the events of our association, we arrange ecologic literacy trainings for kids, teenagers and adults. Our aim is to make our target audience prefer more sustainable alternatives in their daily life by means of our events. For example, two of our main points in the trainings is plastic wastes and non-recyclable wastes. We try to motive our participants to use products which they can use for a long time, instead of disposable products. Conducting these works in an association which is organized institutionally is important for us to sustain efficient division of labor, to get permission from the institutions, and to be granted for the projects. Besides, thanks to the events of the association, we can extend our target audience and arrange free events (respondent 15, from Istanbul).

Therefore, in order to promote the transition to sustainable lifestyles and maintenance of sustainable consumption practices, we cannot only refer to the individual

responsibilities. Instead, the emphasis should be on the collaboration among consumers, business, NGOs and policymakers.

### **5.2.1. Individual Aspects: Prosumers and Ecological Citizenship**

In the theory of Bourdieu, political action is produced by habitus (Haluza-DeLay, 2008, p. 205). When we base the fundamental theoretical framework on the sustainability habitus, the change in the consumption practices of individuals can also be expressed as their political agency. It is possible to state that green consumers are engaged in activities politically by means of alternative consumption systems. It can be said that the efforts of persons who implement and try to disseminate alternative consumption systems especially in cities may cause a change not only at an individual level but also at a social level. The image of consumption culture is associated with urban life style (Featherstone, 2013). Thus, it is possible to say that green consumers, in particular those living in cities, can challenge the conventional and unsustainable consumption system with their daily life practices.

The notion of prosumer is derived from the combination of two words: producer and consumer. In the context of sustainable consumption, it actually refers to green consumers and all the practices we mentioned as sustainable consumer behavior. Carlo Petrini, the founder of the Slowfood movement, claims that in order to protect our food we have to be both producers and consumers at the same time (Buğday Derneği, 2014). By establishing food collectivities, we need to control each step of the food system starting from production to waste management. In this sense, as a prosumer, the consumer can actively take part in the production process as such in community supported agriculture (ibid, p. 13). Jacobsen and Dulsrud (2007) emphasize that ethically conscious consumer has been praised as the new hero which carries the hope for an ethically improved capitalism (p. 469). Therefore, prosumers can be regarded as the ethically conscious and ecologically sensitive consumers who aim to develop a system which resists overproduction, as well as overconsumption.

Prosumers do not only target the area of growing food, but they also engage with producing their own goods. In the booklet written by Bugday Association, prosumers

are encouraged to self-produce cleaning products, grow their own foods, and find ecologically alternatives for transportation, reduce energy consumption, avoid luxury consumption, re-establish an ecologically sensitive relationship with nature, and adopting a voluntary simplicity as a lifestyle (Buğday Derneği, 2014).

Therefore, prosumers are political agents as in the sense that Micheletti (2003), Jacobsen and Dulsrud (2007) emphasized. Jacobsen and Dulsrud (2007) claim that “the inertia of ordinary consumption and the moral complexities of everyday life restrict the adoption of an active consumerist role” (p. 469) as in the case of prosumers. Therefore, being prosumer can be idealized in terms of the best way of practicing sustainable consumption and adopting ecologically sensitive lifestyle as in the form of voluntary simplicity. Furthermore, politicizing everyday life through consumption would challenge the view that consumers as manipulated masses by regarding them as morally responsible political actors (ibid, p. 469).

The practices of green consumers as prosumers can be linked to the do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic. DIY ethic dignifies manual labor, as well as recycling and upcycling practices as a form of sustainable consumption practices. According to Carfagna et al. (2014), through the diffusion of DIY ethic, the devaluation of manual labor and elevation of the mental discussed by Bourdieu and Veblen have changed (p. 165). DIY suggests that consumers should always seek for an alternative to produce what they need. In this sense, we can regard DIY ethic as the main practices of the prosumers.

I produce my cleaning products and cosmetics on my own. For around six months, I have been living alone. I work 6 days in a week, yet I definitely spare time to produce my own products. On Sundays, I try to arrange voluntary workshops to transmit my knowledge and products to other people. Unfortunately, I have not got any chance to start for balcony gardening owing to the season. But when it gets warmer, this is going to be the first thing that I will engage in. But for now, I manage to produce my own vinegar, jam and even my own tomato paste. I think even this is a step (respondent 4, from Ankara).

As the respondent mentioned through ecological living workshops prosumers gather in the cities to discuss and practice the alternatives, as well as to reproduce those alternatives. In this sense, we can claim that DIY ethic links prosumers to each other by creating a nonviolent space, which means that it is equally open to everyone's

presence and contribution. Böylece workshop'lara katılan bütün prosumers kendi bilgisini ve deneyimini paylaşabileceği bir alan bulmaktadır.

The notion of 'citizen-consumer' has started to be widely used to refer to rapprochement of politics and consumer culture even though a generation ago these two paired terms sharply diverged. While the notion of citizen located in the public sphere, the notion of the consumer was associated with the private sphere. Additionally, Dobson (2003) uses the term ecological citizenship to emphasize the shared commitment of people towards sustainability. By using this term, he refers to consumers' feeling of responsibility on a planetary scale. According to Dobson, this feeling of responsibility would lead people to behave responsibly and to have more sustainable consumption and living. In other words, in the case of ecological citizenship, the feeling of responsibility can be regarded as the source of motivation that would transform consumer behavior in a sustainable way.

Like Dobson, this thesis also assumes that when people possess the habitus of sustainability, they develop environmental and ecological commitment which lead them to change their lifestyles and consumption patterns. This change can be realized in several ways as in the form of weak and strong sustainable approaches. Furthermore, it can be realized through individual or collective accounts of sustainable consumption and living.

Therefore, rational choice and deliberate action make the activities of ecological citizenship distinct from the conventional consumers. Moreover, the notion of ecological citizenship also encourages the consumer activism. For instance, consumer movements, boycotts, and buycotts (supportive buying) can be parts of the activism connotation of the ecological consumer-citizen concept. Therefore, ordinary consumption and everyday practices can open a space for consumer activism and they can be regarded as the determinants of the social movements in the case of sustainable consumption.

By focusing on the tie between ordinary consumption practices and larger systems of provision which link private and public domains of life, Trentmann underlines the link between consumption and citizenship. Trentmann also highlights the significance of practices by stating that:

It is the practices that shape public life, rather than the goods themselves or their symbolic value. Consumption practices depend on external conditions, including policy and infrastructures, but consumers, through their practices, also help to shape these systems – telecommunications, tourism and mobility, gas and water are obvious examples. In addition to openly political forms of action (such as boycotts or political mobilization), consumers through their everyday practices, consciously or unconsciously, leave an active mark on these larger social systems (Trentmann, 2007, p. 155).

Therefore, while acting on local scales, consumers can actually lead a change to a larger extent. As Humphreys stated (2009), ecological citizenship is linked to the carbon footprint. Therefore, any attempt aiming to reduce ecological footprint can be the practice of ecological citizenship. In this vein, community-supported agriculture, which is a locally organized alternative food system, could be a promising alternative system that both producers and consumers have direct control over the processes of food production, distribution, and consumption. In this system, both producers and consumers share the risks of food production and they can control the quality of food produced. This system seeks to increase organic farming and supports the local, small-scale producers. Community-supported agriculture (CSA) can be summarized as “...a localized food production and consumption system, organized to share farming risks between producers and consumers, practice ecologically sensitive forms of food production, and contribute to building community and educating the shareholders about agricultural processes and realities through their participation” (Feagan and Henderson, 2009, p. 203).

Urban agriculture is emerging as a widespread practice. As an urban agriculture practice in Turkey, it is possible to talk about grassroots movements. “Şehir bostanları” (urban agriculture) was established in Istanbul, Adana, Izmir, Bursa, and Ankara.<sup>28</sup> In this thesis, there are two participants (respondent 14 and respondent 17) experienced with this sort of farming ODTU Bostani and 100. Yıl Berkin Elvan Bostani).

Although the orchard that we set up at ODTU attracted a great deal of attention at first, since it did not draw many participants later on, only a few people was held responsible for all the work. This consequently affects the sustainable production at the orchard. We had to lock the orchard though we did not want

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<sup>28</sup>Urban Agriculture, (n.d.) Retrieved 12 September, 2018 from <https://www.ekoharita.org/ekoloji-haritasi/kategoriler/>



to, because people were plucking even the seeds. As a result, we had to contact the seed swap networks to buy seeds again (respondent 14, from Ankara).

In sum, ecological citizens can challenge the current production and consumption systems, but they need a green network to maintain their practices both individually and collectively. Seyfang (2005) evaluated the notion of ecological citizenship based on the daily practices of individuals. According to Seyfang, the greatest obstacles for individuals to act as ecological citizens are related to the prevalence and affordability of sustainable products (ibid, p. 296). Ordinary practices of daily life may be influential in acting as an ecological citizen. The narrative of respondent 11 summarizes this fact.

I believe carrying fabric handkerchief is a resistance in everyday life. My friend tells me that she grows interest in such topics owing to me. I was so happy, my eyes were brimmed with tears. Because this is the first time I have heard all of these. This is really what I can do in my personal life every day. But some does not think so (respondent 11, from Istanbul).

Therefore, acting as ecological citizens can transform the practices of other people. The ordinary activity in daily life can turn into a source for alternative hedonism. As it was discussed previously, together with alternative hedonism the transformative capacity of daily life practices increases since it directs green consumers to include more sustainable practices into their daily lives.

In sum, we claim that the ethics of green consumers also promote the ecological citizenship through its emphasis on locality. Therefore, everyday consumption practices can challenge the conventional system of production and consumption by putting forward the presumption as an alternative consumption system and voluntarily simplicity as the ideal form of ecologically sustainable living. The respondents claim that they are hopeful about the future of the transition to sustainable lifestyles based on the reactions they get from other people.

### **5.2.2. Collective Aspects: Sustainable Consumer Grassroots Movements**

Sustainable consumption practices are hardly individual. Instead we should underline the collective accounts of sustainable consumption and sustainable lifestyles. In other words, since it is not aimed to limit the discussion with individual practices, collective

efforts would be underlined to evaluate the solidarity networks among green consumers.

As it was mentioned, the habitus of sustainability directs people to greener and more sustainable lifestyles. Therefore, it transforms the consumption practices and changes the lifestyles. However, the notion of habitus cannot only be linked to the individual accounts. As the way Warde (2017) interprets, the notion of habitus can be regarded as a way that “connects actors with acts and with other actors and is a mechanism for generation of habitual and routine action” (p. 118). On the basis of Warde’s point, we can claim that the collective accounts of sustainable consumption can be found in deliberately established consumer networks such as food communities, ecological living communities, and neighborhood collectivities. In this thesis, these networks are called as solidarity networks and their activities are analyzed in terms of how they link the green consumer to each other.

Southerton et al. (2004) emphasize the developing tendency or approach shift in the study of sustainable consumption as the transformation of the focus of attention from individualistic approaches to social institutions and technical infrastructures. They explain this paradigm shift as “rather than viewing sustainable consumption as a matter of personal ‘choice’ or changing ‘lifestyles’, the emphasis is on how routine practices and consumption ‘choices’ are mediated through the social institutions and technical infrastructures through services which are provided” (ibid, p. 1). I partially agree with this assumption since I am doubtful that this approach carries the risk of overlooking the importance of consumer behaviors and collective accounts of sustainable consumption in the form of grassroots movements. Therefore, instead of grounding on just individualistic approaches or social institutions-based approaches, I would rather focus on individual efforts and consumer behaviors as well as collective convention. The narrative of respondent 4 explains the collective aspect of individual practices.

If you want to carry out the sustainable consumption practices in a city, you definitely have to get in touch with other people. By saying other people, I mean the ones that have ecological worries. Let’s suppose that you have just moved to Ankara. You have to do some research online to find food communities at least in order to know the places where you can buy organic food. Namely, since these communities are not visible or do not have events in public arenas, you

can only get to know their existence by searching for them on your own. Only this way you can get clean food (respondent 4, from Ankara).

Building solidarity links among consumers in the city is necessary to establish alternative consumption systems. Therefore, in order to challenge ecologically unsustainable and socially unfair economic system in the field of sustainable consumption, there is a potential for developing economic relations based on solidarity between producers and consumers. In the case of sustainable consumption solidarity-based, economic practices include the relation established through food communities between the consumers in the city and local producers around the rural areas. As we mentioned before community-supported agriculture is a perfect example of how the solidarity-based economic system works.

It is possible to find several food communities or collectives that have narrow or wide networks. Some of them are communities built by people who came together aiming to minimize the carbon footprint by only ordering in bulk. Some of them, on the other hand, really managed to bring the community-supported agriculture practices to life. For example, they live in Istanbul at certain times of the year, but they go to Izmir for olive cultivation in summer. We buy olives from those friends, as we trust them. Every year we calculate the costs, set the quantity and share the products. This way we consume olive that are both low-priced and truly natural (respondent 16, from Istanbul).

On the other hand, sustainable consumers develop exchange networks that we can analyze in relation with solidarity economy. Appadurai (1988) claims that “economic exchange creates value. Value is embedded in commodities that are exchanged” (p. 3). He refers to this value as the social life of the commodities themselves. Appadurai criticizes the Marxian understanding of commodity by stating that this analysis reduces the meaning of commodities to “special kinds of manufactured goods (or services), which are associated with capitalist modes of production” (ibid, p. 7). Instead, he makes another definition of commodities by saying that “commodities are things with a particular type of social potential, that they are distinguishable from “products,” “objects,” “goods,” “artifacts,” and other sorts of things – but only in certain respects and from a certain point of view” (ibid, p. 6). The particular type of social potential which Appadurai referred to can come to light through gift economy-based commodity exchanges. As an example to consumers’ solidarity network we can mention “Es-dost Kargo” project:

I think that we should borrow things from other people or swap things with them. We should definitely not buy. Besides, we have just created a Facebook group, it is quite new. So I do not know whether it will work out. Its name is “Es-Dost Kargo.” As the name suggests, it is a delivery system among people. For example, when you go on a vacation, you post on the group that on certain dates you will be travelling from some point to another and you can deliver a parcel. Then, people get in contact with each other and this way they manage to deliver or receive cargo without increasing their carbon footprint (respondent 4, from Ankara).

Therefore, solidarity-based economies prove the possibility of the exchange of goods in a way that is not tied to money. Appadurai refers to two modes of exchange: barter or direct exchange and exchange of gifts (1988, p. 9). According to Appadurai, barter refers to “the exchange of objects for one another without reference to money and with maximum feasible reduction of social, cultural, political, or personal transaction costs” (ibid). Even though Appadurai’s usage of barter refers to large-scale industrial relations in the form of trade, we can apply barter for the analysis of sustainable consumption through food and goods swapping. The experience of respondent 4 illustrates this issue:

I have self-made products such as apple cider vinegar and dishwashing liquid. There are people that who cannot make these, so I swap my products with them. I tell them that I am going to gift them my products and they can give me something in return if they would like to. For example, one of my friends wanted a kilo of dishwashing powder from me and gave me hazelnuts in return. I try to do this when I need something, at least I take it into consideration. That is to say, I can say that I always prefer this way though it is definitely difficult (respondent 4, from Ankara).

Therefore, gift exchange puts forward some social values like reciprocity and it proposes an alternative way for good exchange, which is not self-centered and profit-oriented. The respondents commented on this issue by putting forward the reciprocity instead of the quality or quantity of the things which are exchanged.

According to Şahin (2017a, p. 24), developing an awareness based on minimizing the humans' intervention in nature, rejection of the dogmas of economic growth and development, and taking as basis the production-consumption relationships, which are compatible with nature within the framework of "small is beautiful" represents three characteristics of green economy. As the respondents in this study expressed, it

highlights the importance of localization of green economy products instead of transporting them to long distances globally (Şahin, 2017b, p. 28).

Although the notion of sustainability is overemphasized in the field of sustainable consumption activities, not only the economic relationships but also the regenerative approach needs to be referred to, especially at the point it is associated with agricultural production. According to Şahin (2017b), the destruction that man has created on nature has come to such a point that it is necessary to repair it instead of protecting it. In other words, the nature destroyed by dams or all kinds of industrial activities must be restored (ibid, p. 33). Although the alternative and ecologically sustainable consumption system created by green consumers cannot directly provide a regenerative approach, we can say that there are green consumers struggling in this field with the environmental movements they are engaged in due to their ecological sensitivity.

#### **5.2.2.1.Solidarity and Control Networks**

The solidarity networks established among green consumers create a sort of control mechanism allowing them to direct the practices of others in a more sustainable way. When green consumers participate in weekly organized workshops, they contribute to the maintenance of the sustainable consumption practices of one another by showing alternative ways that they applied in their daily lives. Moreover, the social media groups can also do the same effect in terms of the transition to sustainable lifestyle. The alternative practice ideas shared in these groups influence green consumers' practices.

What motivates me more is actually to attend the trainings about ecological practices. Besides, my husband shares the news about ecological practices with me immediately. He does research about people's approach to this issue in abroad. Actually, my husband is more like my social media assistant. He is very active and he guides me. He always says: "Let's go there and do this," "Look, people do this there," "Oh, there is a festival in Germany, maybe you can go there." It feels good to know that those people carry out the similar practices in their daily life. Because you feel like someone hears you, pays attention to you and cares about you (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

Welch and Yates (2018) use the notions “latent networks” and “dispersed activity” while defining collective activities and groupings. In their analysis of sustainability and collective actions they define dispersed collective activity as “the ways in which the socially, spatially and temporally patterned character of practices and arrangements gives rise to aggregate effects, at which point often further collective and collective-making practices develop, leading to groupings or bureaucratic organisations” (ibid, p. 298). Therefore, the solidarity networks established among green consumers analyzed in this study can be the example of this kind of dispersed networks and groupings. Besides, it is also assumed that these groupings also give rise to two forms of control mechanisms: latent networks and apparent networks of control.

The latent networks of control include the distant, online sharings as in the form of social media-based sharings which allows a minimum level of interaction in terms of collective activity compare to apparent networks of control. Welch and Yates emphasize the importance of latent networks by pointing the dispersed collective activity:

Latent networks, effectively infinite in number, refer to people that usually do not explicitly identify one another as co-members in any significant shared enterprise, yet are engaged in practices and arrangements which in aggregate have aggregated outcomes. The latent network is identified by the activity common to its members (which may or may not be reducible to a shared practice) (Welch and Yates, 2018, p. 12).

Unlike the latent networks of control, the apparent networks of control involve the individual’s physical interaction in the form of face-to-face relations. For example, co-producing cleaning products or working together in gardens can create spaces to comment on the practices of one another. As we mentioned in the discursive consciousness, thinking and commenting on the consumption behaviors motivate green consumers to search for more alternatives. Therefore, this discussion on networks of control underlines the significance of the collective activities for the maintenance of individual practices in the urban environment. These control mechanisms contribute to the maintenance of sustainable lifestyles in an urban environment through the consumer networks that these mechanisms work.

### **5.3. Transition to Sustainable Lifestyles: Changes in Consumer Behavior**

The process of transforming a sustainable lifestyle involves the phase of asking “Is my life ecologically sustainable?” as the respondents in the study experienced. For instance, respondent 4 said that constantly asking this question to herself make her aware of the unsustainable behaviors she has. Therefore, during the interviews, I kept my focus on the practice change when respondents narrated the phase they questioned themselves. Since their ethical and political considerations regarding the notion of consumption are different, they evaluate the sustainability of their practices differently. For example, while some respondents self-produce their own cosmetic and cleaning products, some others confine themselves to buy eco-labeled products from supermarkets.

I found out about sustainable consumption first in a place named Flora Mediterranean Garden in Antalya two years ago in 2016. While I was staying there, I realized for the first time that a sustainable lifestyle is possible to lead. During the first several days, I saw the others as aliens and I felt terrible. Then, the food and the cleaning process there impressed me a lot. When I came back to Istanbul, I felt like I got expelled from the heaven. It was that bad... I could not buy packed products anymore, it disgusted me. This way, I stopped going to the supermartkets. It is definitely not a sustainable behavior to consume products out there in supermarkets (respondent 4, from Ankara).

Unfortunately, I could not go beyond making my own vinegar at home and buying organic products when it comes to sustainability yet. I work at a private company and I reside in a large housing complex. That is why I cannot have a direct relationship with soil. Maybe next year I will try to be involved in some balcony gardening. I am very enthusiastic about it (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

In the following parts, I will analyze the sustainable consumer behavior by referring to household consumption practices, shopping practices, eating practices, and mobility practices. Before delving into that topic, it must be noted that this thesis does not use the concepts of practices and behaviors as interchangeably. In fact, practices are used to refer to particular consumption activities. On the other hand, consumer behavior is used to refer to the consumption patterns of individuals.

### **5.3.1. Greening Household Consumption Behavior**

This thesis approaches the household as an area where the major changes regarding the transition a sustainable lifestyle take place. According to Paddock (2015), the household is an area that the “normal” behavior for consumption is defined. The things that people used to do in their homes set the normal standards for the household consumption (ibid). Thus, the routines around the home are the moments of change in transition to a sustainable lifestyle.

Consuming less energy and saving water are the most emphasized household sustainable consumption practices in the narratives of respondents. They all said that they use energy-efficient white appliances and energy-saving bulbs. Besides, participant 5 mentioned that he has a solar-powered lighting and electricity generation system which produces most of the electricity he uses. Furthermore, all respondents mentioned that in order to reduce water consumption while waiting for the water to warm up, they run it into a bucket to reuse it for cleaning purposes.

The use of technological devices is the main reason for energy consumption in the household. Southerton et al. (2004) emphasize the significance of technological ‘lock-in’ in terms of directly affecting daily consumption practices (p. 7). We often feel locked-in to our daily routines and habits. Indeed, this is not only about individual practices, what makes the feeling of locked-in so effective is the fact that our everyday life practices are constrained by technology, infrastructures, unsustainable beliefs and value sources. Since the habitus of sustainability creates new consumption practices, it can challenge the feeling of locked-in.

According to Shove (2003), it is necessary to question how the use of same technologies become normal and how these technologies standardized our consumption practices in the household regardless of which part of the world we live in (p. 410). Thus, we can claim that green consumers can challenge the mainstream understandings regarding the use of technological tools in the household. For instance, since they are motivated with environmental sensitivities, green consumers can question the necessity of some products in the households like dryer or microwave oven.



When you go to buy goods such as refrigerators and washing machines, sellers can try to sell you microwave ovens in a promotional way. When you say you do not want not to waste energy, they say those are A+ or energy-efficient products. So, you have to convince them that these products are unnecessary (respondent 8, from İstanbul).

The habitus of sustainability, as a determiner of the everyday practices, also affects the way people organize their daily routines. According to Shove, high technological product use in the households makes life easier in terms of providing flexibility. In this way, the usage of hypermodern convenience devices such as freezers and cars makes people organize their own schedule without adhering to the technical limits (Shove, 2003, p. 411). Due to their huge reliance on natural resources these “hypermodern convenience devices” (ibid) probably will not be preferred by green consumers. In relation to this, some respondents mentioned their time-consuming practices.

There was a time I was working out of the city. I was in Ankara for 4 days and in the other city for 3 days. When I was there I used to stay in a teacher’s lodge, so I only paid attention to water and electricity use. But here in Ankara I share a house with my friends and I have to take charge in so many things, such as arranging the orders of the food community, contacting with producers et cetera... The orchard requires a lot of work as well. Then I look and realize that the week is already over, I do not even notice how fast the days are passing by (respondent 16, from Ankara).

In some ways I can define my lifestyle as sustainable, in some ways I cannot. Unfortunately, I cannot say that I am completely a sustainable consumer. In the simplest term, there are things that I cannot do just because I live in a city. For example, as I cannot cook at home on a regular basis because of my job, I cannot go shopping in food communities. I hold off from ordering from communities as I do not want to waste what I order. Secondly, I cannot grow anything at home. Thirdly, I have many concerns about cleaning supplies, I do not want to use them. I think they are completely toxic. But, I cannot spare enough time to make my own products unfortunately (respondent 14, from Ankara).

In fact, all respondents mentioned their problems associated with lack of time. They claimed that since the time they spend in the household is limited, they cannot engage in practices like growing their own food and self-producing cleaning products. Therefore, in the narratives of the respondents, household is mentioned not only as a living area but also a production site. Thus, it can be conceptualized as an important field where the domestic sustainability habitus is effective. Domestic consumption

practices where do-it-yourself ethics is influential constitute the most important field in terms of the activities of green consumers to transform life styles.

### **5.3.2. Changing Meaning of ‘Cleanliness’**

Green consumers in this study stated that the practices where the highest number of changes in terms of domestic consumption practices is observed are related to cleaning habits. Following the use of plastic bags, use of conventional cleaning products is mentioned as the most common unsustainable behavior by the respondents. To illustrate this point respondent 16 says that:

People need to question why they still use the chemical products very often, although they know that they are toxic. Only this way we can understand that we and the whole world must stop using them (respondent 16, from Istanbul).

As a household consumption practice, cleaning is the nexus point of energy use and resource use. And it is also affected by social expectations. Shove (2003) discusses comfort, cleanliness, and convenience as the domains of everyday life to question the systemic definition of “normal practice” (p. 395). According to her, air conditioners in the built environment are structured by the air conditioning systems, therefore, regardless of where you live, there is an ideal standardized degree. Furthermore, for domestic laundering, there are also established standards about when and how clothes will be washed. In other words, designers of these products can have an effect on changing the meaning of cleanliness (ibid, p. 403). According to Shove, therefore, these sociotechnical systems determine not only the suitability standards but also the everyday practices and routines regarding when something has to be done in the household and how it is normalized (ibid, p. 404).

When asking respondents about the cleaning products they prefer to use, all of them compared their practices as before and after sustainability. One of the respondents mentioned the change in his life by giving reference to the change in meaning of cleanliness for her.

My mother always told me that using bleach is a must for cleaning. In fact, I would have not been completely sure that I cleaned enough unless I had smelled the bleach. I was not comfortable with that. However, after I had read the

descriptions on the book “Zehirsiz Ev” by Mercan Yurdakuler, I asked myself “What if?” Then, after a quick research on the internet, I realized that the things I thought were pure, were actually toxic. I was intoxicating my own living space with my own hands the whole time (respondent 14, from Ankara).

As this respondent emphasized, the reproduction of the meaning attributed to “appropriately” clean can be best understood with reference to changing ideas about cleanliness. Shove discusses the idea of appropriately clean by referring to the fact that even though the technologies of the shower are slightly changed, the routine of body cleaning is transformed from weekly bathing to daily showering (2003, p. 397). One of the respondents mentioned the reason why she has to use conventional cleaning products by emphasizing the differences between natural olive soap and the regular shower gel.

I keep buying shower gel because I cannot feel clean enough by using only olive oil soap. Actually, the sustainable clean technology is not very convenient for our daily life. It does not fully meet our needs, it is not enough. A pure olive oil soap made traditionally fails to keep you clean if you are exposed to a dusty environment outside for 8 hours. That is why, you need those perfumed things full of chemicals when you have to spend a lot of time with other people. You always have to smell nice (respondent 2, from Eskisehir).

It requires effort to carry out the sustainable consumption practices in a city, because you are doing something that is total opposite to a city’s consumption behavior. You become a producer in the city. For instance, once someone who visited the workshop told me: “I have been trying for 3 years, but I could not stop buying cleaning products. I always end up going to the supermarkets to buy those products.” I think that a 3-year period is a very long term. I guess that person gave up at some point, did not try more. Maybe there was a point of view that she had to change, but she did not. I actually know the reason why. People who live with us at home have expectations, they want everything to be bubbled. Smell equals to being clean and bubbled (respondent 4, from Ankara).

Cleaning is something encoded in people’s mind with the scent of flower and bubbles. I think TV advertisements play a big role in this. For instance, when I think about Domestos, a brand of bleach, this comes to my mind: There were little green creatures in the toilet bowl. When Domestos was poured, they were running away. I think that advertisement had a very big impact on me. It feels like Domestos is the greatest detergent brand. If I cannot break this perception, I do not even know how my mother will (respondent 9, from Istanbul).

Based on the narratives of the respondents it can be asserted that the consumption practices related to cleaning are the area where the unsustainable part of sustainable

consumption is observed. Even though green consumers aim to totally transform their lifestyles into a complete ecologically sustainable manner, they are restricted by the expectations of society. Shove also emphasizes this point by claiming that the idea behind washing is commonly related to the aim of having socially suitable items ready to wear (2003, p. 403). Then, the question of what is “socially suitable” emerges as an important topic in terms of our daily life clothing choices. Almost all respondents mentioned how hard for them to make others, usually the people they work together, accept their choice of wearing second-hand clothes is.

I buy second hand stuff or do not buy anything at all as possible as I can. For instance, for the past 6 months I have not bought any shoes or clothes. In the school that I work at, external appearance is pretty important for everyone, but they have accepted me as the way I am. They say: “Okay, this is how she rolls” (respondent 4, from Ankara).

At work I face problems regarding my clothes, because I usually go to work wearing unrecognized, unusual clothes. When I was an acting student, it was pretty easy. Because, there were always certain clothes that you could wear for rehearsals. There was no meaning in wearing the same sweatpants for 10 years, 5 years or 3 months. It was a period in my life when everything was becoming old very fast, getting worn down very quickly. But when I started to work in an office, I mean, when most of my time started to pass by in the office, I realized that there is a totally different, more formal dress code there. Second hand or patched clothes are not appreciated even if they are clean and ironed. Even wearing the same clothes two days in a row is not accepted... (respondent 2, from Eskişehir).

Consequently, the conventional meanings attached to cleanliness must be challenged and reproduced by green consumers. Therefore, green consumers attribute a new meaning to cleanliness which is equalized with neither smell nor foam. Although we have mentioned that green consumers develop alternative consumption practices due to their sustainability habitus, it should also be pointed out that there are unsustainable dimensions to their daily life practices. In other words, green consumers living in cities are trapped between their ecologically sustainable life styles required by their own sustainability habitus and the norms imposed by the unsustainable consumption system.

### **5.3.3. Organization of Waste: Reuse, Recycling, and Upcycling**

The practices of reuse, recycle and upcycle are related to changing approaches towards the waste. Instead of throwing away the materials, sustainable consumers seek to find new ways to use the materials even by attributing new use purposes to those items. When people possess the habitus of sustainability they not only limit their consumption, but they are also motivated to reuse the materials they already have.

I cannot say that I completely do it but what I aim to do is to use everything cleanly for a long time. When you look at the situation in the logic of a typical consumer society, in a consumer society a cardigan has a longevity of a year. Because, it goes out of fashion after a year and new season clothes arrive. If it is possible, what we need to do is to use that cardigan for 10 or 20 years. Just like the previous two generations did... In my grandparents' time they used to wash, clean, patch, stitch their clothes to be able to wear them again and again. But we were born just in a time when everything is changing quickly, new season, new fashion... (respondent 3, from Eskisehir).

I am completely obsessed with this upcycling idea. I try to follow the Instagramers that work on upcycling. There is an important point in upcycling though: You should not try to upcycle things that you will not need. For example, if you do not have a garden, you should not make swings out of crates. If you do so, they will exist for no reason (respondent 9, from Istanbul).

Besides reusing the materials for different purposes, some respondents claimed that they are collecting organic wastes to make organic composts. The composts are used either to grow food or to feed the soil in the neighborhood. In this way, respondents make sense of their own practices since they have to consider every process of their consumption including waste management.

Our consumption habits have changed too much. I mean, we reduced our consumption dramatically comparing to past. Comparing to the practices we carried out at our corporate firm, the practices that we are currently carrying out at Kokopelli are completely different. For example, you buy some organic bananas in limited amount, because they may get spoiled. When they get spoiled, you can still make compost out of them, but consuming them before they get spoiled makes much more sense in the context of our consumption practices (respondent 11, from Istanbul).

I attempted to make composts for many times, and I will keep doing it. Composts really have large volumes. Tea, vegetables... When you make composts regularly, it helps you reduce trash. We tried to make compost at home, but we could not manage to make a utilizable one. I think that we probably could not set the temperature and the ventilation properly. We had

some mistakes, and it got spoiled. But we will probably try to make it again, we did not lose our motivation. Besides, we still separate our non-organic waste (respondent 3, from Eskisehir).

Composting in an apartment is challenging for some respondents. However, they see composting as one of the most pleasurable practices since it minimizes the carbon-footprint. The respondents claimed that even though the avoidance of consumption is not possible, at least they can decrease their negative effect on the environment through composting.

As a result, it can be said that sustainable consumer behavior necessitates less consumption and waste management. From the perspective of political consumerism, waste management practices of green consumers can be considered a political act. According to Jacobsen and Dulsrud (2007), political participation of consumers cannot be reduced to market contexts. Instead, their alternative practices like recycling can be a way of political participation (ibid, p. 471). Since green consumers challenge the conventional way of treating the waste, their daily recycling practices reproduce the meaning of the waste. The respondent 14 illustrates this point

I do not trust in municipalities. I know that even though we separate our trash, they load them all together on trucks and later they separate them again. I guess Cankaya Municipality has a recycling centre. All wastes go there. Once we had a trip to a recycling facility in Mamak and saw that they really recycle. They even separate organic wastes to be able to make composts. There we were told that even though we throw the bottle and paper separately, they are being put on the same truck and get mixed. If every citizen tries to play a big role and demands visiting these facilities, municipalities will definitely have to be more careful (respondent 14, from Ankara).

In the website of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, it is stated that the recycling bins in all private and public institutions including markets and shopping malls in the city are under the control of the municipalities. Therefore, the wastes collected through these bins are separated in order to reuse them in necessary forms.<sup>29</sup>

In sum, waste management is a widely applied practice among green consumers. They act to reuse the waste for different purposes instead of throwing them away. Moreover,

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<sup>29</sup> Ministry of Environment and Urbanism (n.d.) Retrieved 12 September, 2018 from <https://csb.gov.tr/ss/atik-yonetimi>

they use organic waste for composting. It should also be noted that since waste management is also common among people who do not define themselves as green consumers, in order to make this practice more efficient, the local governments should implement more projects especially regarding the recycling of waste oil.

#### **5.3.4. Sustainable Shopping**

Consumer society is characterized by a range of commodities and mass production (Sassatelli, 2007). Consumption becomes a source of self-expression favored by the consumer culture which leads people to consume more (Gottdiener, 2000). Instead of relying on the values of consumer culture, green consumers adopt counter values aggrandizing simple living and less consuming. Therefore, the issue of over-consumption is challenged by green consumers through individual and collective accounts like avoiding overconsumption and organizing anti-consumption movements.

As a collective response against over-consumption, we can refer to the "Buy Nothing Day" campaign which is organized against "Black Friday." The first Friday after American Thanksgiving is called as Black Friday and it indicates the beginning of the shopping season. Black Friday is criticized by anti-consumerist camps since it contributes to the maintenance of consumer culture. Therefore, "Buy Nothing Day" movement can be regarded as the most remarkable respond of these anti-consumer campaigns (Binkley, 2009, p. 93).

Discounted sales as a part of Black Friday have become widespread in Turkey too. These shopping weeks do not only allow people to get discounted products, but they also make the activity of collective shopping as a normal and a traditional activity. As a respond to this collective over-consumption activity, green consumers develop alternative consumption exchange systems.

I can say that I almost never buy clothes from stores. I think that I am actually a little bit lucky as I live at Yel Degirmeni in Kadikoy. There are many cafes here where you can buy second hand stuff or swap your clothes. When I get bored with my clothes or need something new, I simply go to one of those cafes (respondent 16, from Istanbul).

Respondents claimed that they do not value material abundance. Green consumers define their sustainable consumption behavior as responsible and ethical. Therefore, the respondents claim that in order to behave responsibly they reduced their luxury consumption. The definition of luxury for sustainable consumers has basically referred all the things that do not have use value. One of the respondents mentioned her choice of minimalist living as a form of responsible consumer behavior. The respondent 2 says that:

I have been applying a new effective method to decide how I will get rid of my stuff for a while now. When I apply this method for a whole year, I will figure out what goods I will need in that season and what goods I will still be keeping although I will not even need them. This is a project named 333. For 3 months you choose 33 different accessories and/or clothes that you think you are going to use. That is, these 33 pieces include your shoes as well as your earrings. You will not use anything except these 33 pieces for this period. This is the main purpose. I have been applying this method for the past 3 weeks. I had difficulty in finding 33 pieces in the first place, which was a pleasing moment. Deciding in 33 pieces was too much for me. I guess using 25 pieces is ideal for me. Of course this may depend on the season. Still, it has motivated me a lot (respondent 2, from Eskisehir).

The project 333 can be regarded as a social media-based campaign based on using fewer items at least for three months. The website namely “be more with less”<sup>30</sup> introduces this project and its application is explained by giving examples from real-life experiences of people through blog writings. There are also some YouTube channels introducing this project.

In addition to such individual changes mentioned above, respondents referred to the collective network they established among their family members and close friends. They state that instead of buying new products or clothes, they are initially asking people around them. In addition, there are respondents who say that they are selling goods or exchanging products in swap markets. For example, some respondents living in Ankara said that they exchange some products in this swap market which is established twice a year at the 100. Yil Neighborhood, Ankara.

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<sup>30</sup> Project 333, (n.d.) Retrieved 10 June, 2018 from <https://bemorewithless.com/project-333/>



Respondents regard using plastic bags as an unsustainable practice that can easily be changed after transitioning to a sustainable life.<sup>31</sup> Following their decision of living simply and more sustainable, the first thing that most respondents referred to is starting to use cloth bags instead of plastic bags. To illustrate this point, respondent 8 refers to the moral aspect of her choice of using cloth bags, as it follows:

I am trying to reduce my consumption as much as I can. To do this, I especially use cloth bags. For example, I give cloth bags as a gift to my friends so that they can get used to use them as well. If I have to buy a bag, I prefer cloth bags. There are sometimes reduced prices for cloth bags. When I find a cloth bag for 9.90 liras, I buy it. I try to avoid from buying plastic bags as much as possible. The moment I see a plastic bag, those pictures that I have seen online come to my mind... Those terrible images of animals that are covered by plastic products, plastic nets being all over their heads... On this matter, I motivate myself with a dark point of view. The end of the world is near, and you have to do something about it. You need to do the best you can (respondent 8, from Istanbul).

In order to reduce carbon footprints, some respondents mention their choice of not shopping online. Instead, they maintain alternative exchange networks involving the networks of family, friend, and work circles, recycling groups in social media, swap and flea markets, and food communities. In addition to that, respondent 17 gives an example of why she always goes to local vendors. She said further: “I never buy clothes from big chain stores. This is my intentional choice because I see it as an environmentally and ethically correct thing. I do this to reduce my carbon footprint and to protest the labor exploitation in those chains.”

Respondents claim that seeing news about climate change makes them more cautious about their practices. They mention the news about world overshoot day as affecting their consumer behavior. This year, August 1, 2018, was the world overshoot day which means we used the nature more than it can renew its sources in the entire year. In other words, for the last 5 months, we will use the sources for next year since we

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<sup>31</sup> According to 2018 report of World Wide Fund (WWF), across the Mediterranean region the plastic waste mainly comes from Turkey. The report says that “The countries that dump most plastics into the Mediterranean Sea are Turkey (144 tonnes/day), Spain (126), Italy (90), Egypt (77) and France (66)” (WWF, 2018). According to this report, Turkey aims to reduce the use of plastic bags and from 1 January 2019 people have to pay for plastic bags (ibid). Retrieved 14 September, 2018, from <https://wwf.fi/mediabank/11094.pdf>

exceed the limits of the regenerative capacity of the earth.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, questioning sufficiency can be seen as a self-control mechanism that leads green consumers to a more sustainable living.

#### **5.3.5. Eating Practices: Organic and Natural**

From the side of sustainable consumption, the discussion of organic and natural products echoes the affinity to local consumption systems. Sustainable consumers prefer to buy their fruits and vegetables from local farmers who employ organic and sustainable farming methods. All the respondents claimed that they do not trust the food in the supermarkets since they do not know the place where those foods were produced, and the methods used in the production of those foods. Instead, they prefer local farmers that they have a face-to-face relation with. They also claimed that there is a huge difference between foods they bought from regular stores and those in organic farmers' market. The respondents exemplify their reason for buying their foods from small-scaled local farmers as follows:

On a regular basis I buy rice, bulgur, pulses, fruits and vegetables online at the same time. Delivery part is a little problem though. I usually prefer to order from Toprak Ana, as I know that their products are healthier, and they are being produced without chemicals. The prices are higher comparing to the prices at ordinary supermarkets, but as we are two people living together, it is not a big deal. We consume in small quantities, but we consume quality products. It is still quite hard to do this in a city. Maybe there are many organic markets in Istanbul, but in Ankara there is only one and we do not know yet whether we can trust that place. What I aim to do is actually to buy directly from the producer without consuming industrial food so that the producer can gain money directly. It is a win-win situation, as I eat healthy food and support the producer. This is expensive, but I still prefer to buy quality food instead of buying clothes. I try to balance my consumption behavior accordingly (respondent 7, from Ankara).

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<sup>32</sup> Retrieved 08 September, 2018 from <https://www.overshootday.org/about-earth-overshoot-day/>  
Earth overshoot day is calculated by Global Footprint Network and in their website they claim that "To determine the date of Earth Overshoot Day for each year, Global Footprint Network calculates the number of days of that year that Earth's biocapacity suffices to provide for humanity's Ecological Footprint. The remainder of the year corresponds to global overshoot. Earth Overshoot Day is computed by dividing the planet's biocapacity (the amount of ecological resources Earth is able to generate that year), by humanity's Ecological Footprint (humanity's demand for that year), and multiplying by 365, the number of days in a year:

(Planet's Biocapacity / Humanity's Ecological Footprint) x 365 = Earth Overshoot Day"

Broccolis that you buy from ecological markets are cleaned much more difficultly than the ones you buy from ordinary markets. Because in ecological markets they do not use agricultural pesticides and while you are cleaning the broccolis you realize the flies and little bugs in it (...) Broccolis are not long-lasting and during the waiting period they start getting spoiled. However, spinach that I buy from the ecological market is definitely more different than the spinach sold in normal markets. It smells, looks and tastes differently. I mean, it is much better. But the cleaning process is again very difficult. You waste too much water while cleaning it (respondent 2, from Eskisehir).

The respondents also emphasized the problem of the use of eco-labeling in the form of greenwashing. They criticize the overuse of the “natural” label on the products that mislead consumers. Even though it is advertised as natural, it may include hazardous chemicals. For instance, in Turkey, there is no serious regulation regarding the control of this unnecessary use of eco-labels. Currently, there is a petition which has been started under the guidance of Bugday Association with the aim of preventing the usage of the term "natural" as marketing material in food labels.<sup>33</sup>

Buying organic and natural foods from local producers enable a direct interaction with the producer. Therefore, to support the local farmers and the maintenance of ecological farming systems, green consumers' intention of buying organic foods can be considered as a practice of their sustainable living. However, some respondents complain of high prices in organic markets. On the other hand, some other respondents claim that since the farmers produce organic foods in difficult conditions, high prices are quite normal.

Respondents also mention health-related concerns in the case of organic foods. Since the conventional foods that are sold in regular markets are exposed to intensive chemicals during their production, they are not healthy at all. Two of the respondents stated that in their families there are people living with serious illnesses, therefore, even if it is expensive, they have to buy food from ecological markets. Likewise, the respondent 12 stated that since she has children, the issue of food safety is a great concern for her. Respondents' health-related concerns can be considered in relation to

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<sup>33</sup> Change.org, “Doğal” teriminin gıda etiketlerinde pazarlama malzemesi olarak kullanılması yasaklansın!. Retrieved 27 August, 2018 from <https://www.change.org/p/do%C4%9Fal-teriminin-g%C4%B1da-etiketlerinde-pazarlama-malzemesi-olarak-kullan%C4%B1lmas%C4%B1-yasaklans%C4%B1n>

their middle-class identities. The distinctive aspect of the middle-class in terms of eating and drinking practices is emphasized in relation to healthy food (Hupkens et al., 2000). It is stated that the middle-classes have a concern about having a healthy nutrition system compared to the lower-classes (ibid). In their empirical studies on food consumption and social class discrimination Hupkens et al. stated that mothers of the middle-class are primarily concerned with the relationship between food and health, but the mothers of lower-class are mostly focused on food prices (ibid, p. 108).

On the other hand, the demand for organic food is in fact related to the food problem that is said to be effective today on a global scale. In her book *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply* Vandana Shiva, an ecologist activist, evaluated the global food problem through the example of stolen harvests of Indian farmers who could not get a proper share of the harvest they produce. The fact that farmers cannot get a share of the harvest impoverishes them. In addition, since this harvest is exported, the price of the organic products in the domestic market is so high that only a certain segment of the society can afford them. In describing the societies where this stolen harvest phenomenon is common, Shiva states:

It is being experienced in every society, as small farms and small farmers are pushed to extinction, as monocultures replace biodiverse crops, as farming is transformed from the production of nourishing and diverse foods into the creation of markets for genetically engineered seeds, herbicides, and pesticides (Shiva, 2016, p. 14).

There are prohibitions and restrictions on the use of organic seeds in Turkey. As of 2018, Turkey banned the use of uncertified seeds, which prevents the producers in the rural areas from using the uncertified heirloom seeds that are passed from generation to generation. It should be emphasized that this not the case only for Turkey. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of the World Trade Organization (WTO) grants big companies the right to have monopoly on seeds and information concerning seeds (Shiva, 2016, p. 16), which prevents local people and small farmers from having a say about food. As a result, small farmers started to work for factories in their own fields (ibid). Sustainable consumption approach as an alternative to the globally-organized conventional agriculture understanding aims to develop organic agriculture making production on a local scale instead of the industrial agricultural systems jeopardizing food safety and public health. Thus, the negative

impact of the global food transportation system on environment and the impact of pesticides, used commonly in industrial agriculture, on public health will be eliminated (Seyfang, 2005, p. 300).

#### **5.3.5.1. Vegan and Vegetarian Ethics**

The main reasons that motivate the respondents in this study to have a vegetarian diet are their ethical considerations which target the issues of animal welfare and environmental effects of animal agriculture. In this study, only the respondent 2 and the respondent 3 defined themselves as vegetarians. Some participants stated that in the past they used to follow vegetarian diets but they could not maintain. However, they express their will to transform their eating habits and be vegetarian since they think it is an ethically right behavior.

One of the most important findings revealed in this study is that the respondents referred to meat-eating as an unsustainable practice which is most difficult to change. Participants stated that they can only reduce their consumption of meat because the conventional consumption system promotes meat eating and do not provide common alternative options.

I quit eating meat for the ethical concerns and for my desire not to harm the animals. But it was so hard to maintain this diet. Because, for example, we go to the business meetings and are expected to eat. But I always happen to starve during these meetings. And of course, you are most probably criticized by the people. Actually they tend to go through a cross-examination to you (respondent 14, from Ankara).

We try to stipulate vegetarianism as ethical concerns, not only for the sake of consuming meat. For example, during buying textiles, we pay attention to the labels referring to veganism and vegetarianism. We do not buy any textiles having been made out of leather easily (respondent 2, from Eskisehir).

Thinking about the environmental impact of the omnivorous diet directs some green consumers to change their eating habits. Some respondents stated that eating meat is absolutely an unsustainable behavior. However, some other respondents referred to eating meat as a sustainable behavior if animals were raised in local farms and healthy conditions.

Even though eating habit seems a self-interested issue, it can actually be related with wider social or political worries. The reason for refusing to eat meat could be moral or ethical considerations regarding animal welfare or the overuse of natural resources in animal agriculture and meat production. Even though two of my respondents currently follow vegetarian diet, all the respondents agreed on the idea that animal agriculture harms the nature. Therefore, as a solution to environmental crises, they suggested that people should quit eating meat or at least put some limits on meat eating.

On the other hand, two of the respondents (respondent 5 and respondent 16) claimed that there is not a necessary ethical reasoning about meat eating unless it is produced and consumed locally. Participants who advocated this stated that to have a sustainable living one does not have to follow a vegetarian diet. They claim that it is ethically right for them to eat meat unless it comes from local farms. Respondent 16 defines her eating habit as a climatarian diet and she claims that in comparison to a vegan diet, her diet is an environmentally preferable option since the aim here is reducing the carbon footprint by eating foods grown in your region.

As a result, although green consumers are specialized in reducing consumption and localization, they have developed different perspectives on meat consumption upon ethical sensitivities such as animal rights are expressed and health concerns are raised. Although all respondents consider meat production unsustainable due to the harm it causes on nature, they dissented from one another in terms of meat consumption.

### **5.3.6. Developing Sustainable Mobility Alternatives**

The issue of mobility is one of the most significant environmental concerns especially when we consider the urban environments where millions of people live together. Banister (2008) exemplifies the current situation that we see in most of the cities as follows: “Local public transport, cycle, and walking have become less attractive, and this, in turn, has resulted in the greater use of the car” (p. 73). In relation to this, respondent 11 illustrates the reasons of why she is obliged to use the car:

We have two cars as a family. But I need to appreciate my husband for his sensibility. He has a folding bicycle. He rides 34 kilometers to get to work. Even he takes it to bus rapid transit. But I get used to drive everywhere by car

by reason of my child and job. One of the friends of mine criticized me the other day for driving everywhere by car. I will not claim that I behave accordingly when it comes to carbon footprint (respondent 11, from Istanbul).

The policy regulations for the promotion of sustainable transportation alternatives like walking and cycling can reduce the levels of car use (Banister, 2008, p. 75). Respondent 5 is a bike activist and he illustrates his experience of the traffic in the cities as follows:

I started to attach importance on bicycle when I made a decision on adopting sustainable lifestyle. I have reduced the carbon emission through the air, and this decision helped me to weight off my mind in economic terms. Currently, I am providing education for kids in a village which is 3 kilometers away from Eskisehir. I ride 70 kilometers every day in total. But the roads are pretty dangerous for those who ride bicycles. For example, even in a city like Eskisehir, it is hard to find appropriate cycle tracks. In 2016, I was served with fine worth 237 Turkish Liras for riding bicycle on a road on which it is illegal to ride bicycles. But here, it is all municipality's fault. The cycle track starts at one point but is interrupted by the tram. The cycle track keeps going afterwards, yet there is no connection in between. As a result, you have to cross the tramline. And you are served with fine if you come across a policeman, just like I experienced (respondent 5, from Eskisehir).

Therefore, the development of sustainable mobility alternatives cannot be realized only through the efforts of urban residents. Policy-based measures are necessary to promote sustainable transportation alternatives which will increase the urban sustainability at the same time. When we look at the narratives of the respondents, it is possible to state that their practices concerning transportation act as a field of conflict for their sustainability habitus and the norms imposed by conventional life style, as it was the case for their cleaning practices.

#### **5.4. Lifestyle Scenarios of Green Consumers in Turkey**

There are two basic things that we can consider as respondents' lifestyle scenarios: moving to rural areas and transforming the urban environment. Some participants claim that they would not maintain a sustainable way of living in the urban environment and eventually, they will move to rural areas. Some stated that as long as they live in the city, they can reduce their ecological footprints only to a certain extent.

On the other hand, some respondents claim that in order to reduce overall consumption levels, the urban environments should be transformed. According to these respondents, since world population is considerably high, if everyone decides to move to rural areas with the aim of simple and sustainable living, we cannot guarantee the preservation of rural areas. Therefore, they claim that we have to develop structural solutions targeting the urban environment for the protection of both urban and rural areas.

#### **5.4.1. Reverse Migration**

The respondents who are planning to move to rural areas listed their motivations of moving as follows: in cities carbon footprint cannot totally be reduced because of the high use of motor vehicles, it is not always easy to find healthy foods, crowded urban areas and their influence on people's psychological well-being. These motivations can be extended based on the experiences of new people planning to do the same. However, apart from these, the main motivation of moving to the rural areas is due to the fact that it is difficult to maintain an alternative sustainable lifestyle in the urban environment and the city-life puts limits to their practices in terms of the difficulty in applying them.

Even though the respondents are quite similar in terms of their motivations to move to the rural areas, they differ from each other based on the living arrangements they planned for their rural life. For example, respondent 9 emphasizes her plan as being an organic producer in one of Artvin's villages to produce organic foods to sell them through food communities. Respondent 14 also mentions her will of producing her own foods in a small garden but she does not want to sell these organic products to others since she wants to keep away from this sort of trade relation. Instead, she claims that she wants to voluntarily share what she produces through a gift economy.

It can be emphasized that there can be several differences regarding the meaning of rural-living between the rural residents and latecomers. Respondent 13 states that she observed a contradiction between these two groups regarding ethical values and political ideologies.

For instance, I need to acknowledge that there is another sort of life when you go to rural areas. You are supposed to get accustomed to that life if you want to



put down roots instead of changing it. For example, you cannot get those people gathered in a room and do presentations explaining permaculture. You need to find another way to introduce the methods of natural farming to them (respondent 13, from Ankara).

Jones et al. (2003) refer to reverse migration as a green migration and based on the findings of the empirical studies from America they claim that this type of migration would lead to a “cultural clash” between long-lasting residents and newcomers. However, they also refer to the potential of this sort of encountering in terms of enriching the values of one another. They write that “Green migration can also gradually change the value structures of the receiving communities” (ibid, p. 226). It can be said that the same things can be observed in rural areas of Turkey too.

In reference to ecological living experience in rural areas, one of the respondents stressed how people romanticized the ecological living in rural areas and how they are shocked when they experience this kind of living experience for the first time. She states that:

I studied Organic Agriculture. I love dabbling with and being nested with the soil, and I know how to do that. Honestly, I must confess that some of my experiences in ecological farms were awful. Most recently, I have been to a farm in Antalya. Initially, what disturbs me there the most was the sexist division of labor. It seems as if women were supposed to work in the kitchen, while men work in the farm. I saw a paper about voluntary basis at the door saying that the workers must do their work for six hours a day. That was the reason why I escaped from the city. What is the point if I work here in accordance with a scheduled timetable? Maybe I do not want to work at all today, but I will work for 10 hours tomorrow and fulfill all the tasks. There were other volunteers with me. But they mainly preferred practicing yoga and picking tomatoes occasionally. Because the rural life was not like they had imagined and they could not be that active physically. Let alone all these, the worst thing was that a yoga group came over as a guest from Istanbul. It was more like a touristic activity. Their aim was to retire into seclusion. The farm owner put the food of the volunteer and the guest aside. The volunteer used to wake up six in the morning every day to eat something and worked there all day long. What I want to say is that you go there to experience rural life and learn new things, but the farm owner treats you like a slave and makes money thanks to you. Plus, one would think that that place is a farm. But they buy fish, chicken and yoghurt from a supermarket (respondent 13, from Ankara).

As this respondent mentioned some people moving to rural areas engage with touristic activities which carry the risk of affecting the social life in villages and the environment in that area negatively. However, respondent 6 mention that the issue of

eco-tourism is not always bad. In fact, it can make touristic activities economically and environmentally sustainable. She was writing her Master's thesis on the topic of eco-tourism at the time of the interview and she mentioned the misunderstanding of the concept of eco-tourism. Unlike the views that link eco-tourism with the pillage of the nature disguising as an eco-friendly touristic activity, she defends eco-tourism when it is applied in its sustainable form.

Eco-tourism is a kind of tourism which is engaged in with an effort to make the tourism sustainable and to help the rural areas to develop. Eco-tourism includes many different types of tourism such as agro-tourism, farming tourism, rural tourism, nature tourism, hunting tourism, et cetera. (...) Sustainable tourism can be regarded as a more different perspective. No matter what kind of touristic activity you engage in, it must be sustainable whether you stay in a five-star hotel or engage in speleological tourism. You need to convert your experience into good by doing no harm to nature, contributing to the economy and to the local society. Sustainable tourism is the top of all those other sorts of tourisms. All of the other kinds of tourism need to include sustainability. But, for example, we cannot talk about sustainability in hunting tourism (respondent 6, from Eskisehir).

To summarize, migration from urban areas to rural areas is driven by several motivations. Some respondents claim that they prefer to live in rural areas since they want to move away from the production-consumption cycles that dominate every relationship in the cities. On the other hand, some respondents express their will as living close to urban environments since they want to carry out their business and other responsibilities in the city.

Some of the respondents say that since they regard moving to the rural area as a real future plan, they are saving money to buy a small land. Furthermore, some respondents claim that since they feel quite motivated to experience this sort of lifestyle they are learning the principle of permaculture by attending trainings organized by NGOs or grassroots groups. There is an interesting point that while the respondents planning to move to rural areas talk about individual-based justifications, the respondents who aim to stay in city refers to collectively organized changes instead of talking about their individual changes.

The cities, the basic areas of encounter of townsmen and villagers due to the rural-urban migration started in 1950s, are replaced with villages as a result of the reverse

migration of urban green consumers. Movement from cities to rural areas made it possible to create a new ground of encounter between the villagers and the townsmen. Upper middle-class townsmen, as a reflection of the Western modernization period of Turkey, considered villagers, who does not aim to attain Western values, as "others" (Üstüner & Holt, 2007, p. 47). However, we can state that upper middle-class green consumers having a life style designed with ecological and environmental concerns glorify and even emulate the knowledge and experience of villagers on sustainability.

In our society, when you refer to something traditional, people tend to believe in that more. Whenever I utter ‘compost’, they say that they used to do it in their villages. They think urban people do it as well, but that also shows that they do it correctly. I told myself the archaic knowledge reveals itself. I try to draw attention of my family by means of that knowledge. Besides, I do not believe that we are in the era of extreme transformations, some people manage it step by step. This makes me feel incredibly good (respondent 10, from Istanbul).

Motivated by the understanding of sustainable life style, migration creates an area of encounter confronting the established culture conflict between the townsmen and villagers. For instance, evaluating the life practices of mothers who migrated from rural to urban areas Üstüner and Holt (2007, p. 48) stated that although it is possible to find cheap bread produced collectively, women who migrated from rural to urban areas continue to bake their own bread as a rural habit. However, making one's own bread is a desired practice for the sustainable consumers living in cities. Thus, it is possible to state that urban middle-classes consider class-based conflicts differently based on their effort for developing a sustainability habitus. Middle-class, coming to villages from cities, not only glorifies practices and life style of the villagers but also want to further improve them with a permaculture infrastructure. In other words, when urban middle-classes migrate to the rural areas, they want to maintain their own way of learning and implementing and even transform the rural accordingly.

Although there is no difference between urban middle class and villagers, who have different cultural capitals, in terms of the way they implement the sustainable life style -both groups can produce and sell organic food in rural areas- it can be said that they differ in terms of the meaning they attribute to their practices. In other words, sustainability habitus may ensure that both segments act for the purposes of protecting environment and ensuring the distribution of healthy food. However, the fact that their

cultural capitals will change the meaning they attribute to these practices. For instance, villagers prefer to take their products to farmers' market and sell them whereas green consumers and producers who came from cities may sell their products via food communities and try to become a part of the solidarity network established among consumers. This can be considered as their social capital, in other words, a reflection of the social networks they are in a relation with.

#### **5.4.2. Transforming Urban Environment Through the Maintenance of Sustainable Lifestyle**

Some of the respondents approached the city as a place of struggle in terms of transforming unsustainable infrastructures and changing the habits of the people in the city. Respondent 16 referred to these people as defenders who claim that individual accounts of sustainable consumption would not be enough to create the intended change, therefore, it is necessary to collectively act to transform the cities. They refer to organizing food communities, swap networks or sustainable living workshops as the main things that can be done in the first step.

Some respondents stated that we have to defend cities to take up a position in terms of sustainability. They refer to the importance of making their activities visible at least on social media. They are organizing events to make others learn and share the simple practices of sustainable living in the city. As it was mentioned before, some respondents are organizing sustainable consumption workshops. Based on their observation they gathered through the workshops they claim that they have participants from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, these workshops become a meeting point for sustainable consumers living in the city. Through the weekly activities organized by grassroots groups, they find a chance to meet other green consumers. One of the organizers of these workshops claims that people do not only practice sustainable living in these workshops, actually they learn how to organize everyday resistance and how to change the unsustainable practices of others around them.

I do not think leaving the cities and settling down in rural areas sound right. The cities should not be regarded as spaces we are supposed to leave, but to defend. We may really do some good, if we manage to change the preconceived idea of

consumption. Honestly, there is a vital point about sustainable lifestyle which is needed to be emphasized. Especially in some regions, for instance in Canakkale, there is a bunch of people saying that they practice permaculture, living for themselves, not engaging any political affairs, and not spending their energy on such things. This is not a point of view I agree with. Because you do not have a right to complain unless you engage in legal processes, let's say EIA processes, to protect the environment. Just because you are not there, or ignore it, the state does not suddenly disappear or the democracy gets better. We do not live in such country, in such conjuncture. When three people refuse to vote, nothing will change. In the ecological communities, this idea is pretty common. At this very point of view of the ecologists, I am too activist and too environmentalist. But actually, I am located in the middle of the both leagues. I am too ecologist for the group struggling for the environment, while I am too activist for the group dabbling with the ecology. I suppose there is no one beside me who remains at this level (respondent 16, from Istanbul).

Therefore, neighborhood collectivities and farming activities would also support the sustainable transformation of the cities. The respondents underlined the importance of local municipalities in terms of promoting sustainable living. The three of the respondents are taking part in the events organized by Tepebasi Municipality in Eskisehir. Although they criticize the lack of municipal services in terms of promoting a sustainable lifestyle, they state that they appreciate the efforts of Eskisehir Tepebasi Municipality to support grassroots groups in the city.

In comparison with other cities, Eskisehir offers so much when it comes to sustainable lifestyle. But as a person working for the municipality, I can say that the Municipality of Tepebasi and the Municipality of Nilufer hold the high ground in terms of sustainable town-planning. For example, our municipality enables areas for the small groups for their events and tries to make it possible for people to take advantage of the expensive trainings such as permaculture by reducing the prices (respondent 1, from Eskisehir).

All the members of Eskisehir Ecological Living Community also emphasized the emotional “values” that they attributed to the city they live in. Different from rest of the respondents, these three people I interviewed in Eskisehir claimed that they feel an attachment to Eskişehir and they are motivated to act for the well-being of the city. Furthermore, even though the other two respondents from Eskisehir did not mention anything about their feelings towards Eskisehir, they appreciated the facilities of the city particularly referring to the works of Tepebasi Municipality. As an important observation it should be noted that the feelings they emphasized towards Eskisehir actually comes from their experience of being an active citizen in the city. Since the

local government encourage the contribution of the urban residents to take part in the municipal services, green consumers can act as active citizens to transform their own neighborhoods with other people living in the same area. This sort of practices of active citizenship can be an effective way to increase the environmental commitment of people since this sustainable transformation directly affects their daily life.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **6. CONCLUSION**

In this thesis, the notion of sustainable consumption was analyzed through daily life practices of green consumers living in an urban environment in Turkey. Drawing upon the question of “How do daily life consumption practices create a field of sustainable consumption and transform lifestyles?” The transition from ecologically unsustainable lifestyles to sustainable lifestyles was discussed following the changes in daily life practices.

The notion of sustainable consumption has been examined in relation to the literature on ecology and environmentalism. For this purpose, the following approaches were emphasized: deep ecology, social ecology, permaculture, ecofeminism, and animal welfare. Thus, it is intended to develop new connotations for sustainability in order not to acknowledge it as the equivalent of the notion of development. Even though the notion of sustainable development has an environmental dimension, it is more characterizable by its economic and industrial growth-oriented connotations.

Sustainable consumption was analyzed through sociological perspectives to define its unique features both as a consumption pattern and as an area of academic inquiry. Thus, classical consumption theories were discussed with reference to Marx, Weber, Veblen, Simmel, Baudrillard and Bourdieu to locate sustainable consumption within the existing literature of sociology of consumption. By doing so, its opposition towards consumer culture (Gottdiener, 2000) was discussed by emphasizing its ideals of consuming less, simple living and locality.

The field of sustainable consumption is defined through Bourdieu’s notions of habitus and capital. Additionally, Giddens’ discursive consciousness debate was included into

the analysis to conceptualize green consumers as active agents within the field of sustainable consumption. Furthermore, by referring to Warde's emphasis on the importance of routines and habits in the formation of consumption patterns, this thesis uses the theories of practice as a main theoretical framework.

Emphasizing practices direct the focus of analysis into daily life, ordinary routines and habits. Therefore, Bourdieu's notion of habitus provided a fertile ground to discuss the lifestyle transformation experienced by green consumers through deliberate changes in consumption patterns. It is assumed that together with environmental capital, habitus of sustainability ensures the transition towards sustainable lifestyles. Therefore, through an emphasis on habitus of sustainability main motivations of green consumers leading them to take a response against their unsustainable practices is revealed. This achievement is significant because it conceives the difference of green consumers from other individuals who do not practice sustainable consumption in their daily lives.

Environmental capital is discussed as a hybrid form of capital which emerged through the constitution of social, economic, and cultural capitals (Karol and Gale, 2004). Therefore, it also coincides the class feature of the notion of capital that can be observed through the identification of green consumers. Environmental capital demands and entails a certain level of environmental knowledge and interest which eventually would lead to a habitus of sustainability. Therefore, environmental capital can be considered as the initial step towards an ecologically sustainable lifestyle change. Therefore, economic, social, and cultural sources contributing to the development of environmental capital are quite significant for the analysis of green consumers.

Environmental capital derives from the sensitivities about ecological and environmental issues. In its most common form it can be gained through environmental education during childhood (Karol and Gale, 2004). However, the content of this education and how it is practiced in daily life are significant to determine whether this environmental capital would necessarily end up with ecologically sustainable lifestyle change. For instance, the lack of courses targeting ecology and environment would prevent the development of environmentally sensitive



approaches among future generations. Green consumers in this study complain about the lack of information sources during childhood regarding the issues of ecology and sustainability. All respondents emphasize the necessity of education during childhood to make one learn the basics of ecological living like waste disposal and responsible energy use. Therefore, a characteristic of green consumers it should be mentioned that most of the respondents encountered with these notions during their adulthood. Therefore, environmental capital is discussed through an emphasis on their ecological interest during adulthood.

While defining the new middle classes, Keyder (2013) states that the new middle classes would be interested in the issues of individual freedom, environmental sensitivities, and repressive state. In a similar vein, it is observed that green consumers develop an interest in environment and ecology which base of their environmental capital. For instance, comparing to lower classes, middle class individuals have necessary economic means to attend permaculture trainings. Moreover, compare to upper classes, middle classes with environmental capital would be more interested in the environmental well-being instead of economic growth. Based upon this rough distinction among these three main social classes, this study approaches daily life consumption practices among green consumers as part of middle-class culture by keeping the intra-class fractions and conflicts in mind.

Green consumers cannot be considered as a homogenous category. Instead they differ from each other in terms of their value sources and economic, cultural, and social capitals. Since the field of sustainable consumption is not considered as a field of constant struggle, the connective aspect of the habitus of sustainability is emphasized. However, as an important finding of the study it is observed that although they all possess the habitus of sustainability, middle class green consumers differ from one another through the way they practice sustainable consumption and perceive their ecologically sustainable lifestyle. In other words, green consumers in the study define diverse practices as their consumption routine. However, as in the case of debates over eating meat green consumers differ from one another since some regard meat eating as an unsustainable practice, some others consider it as a sustainable consumption behavior as long as the meat comes from local networks. Therefore, by referring to the

discussion on cultural capital in the formation of green consumer identity, the respondents in this study can be differentiated from one another.

Besides emphasizing the role of education in the development of environmental and ecological commitment, Carfagna et al. (2014) emphasizes the importance of high cultural capital in the development of eco-habitus, as they named it. Carfagna et al. claim that the aggregation of environmental awareness, sustainability principles, and high cultural capital would end up with ecological habitus (ibid, p. 158). By high cultural capital, they refer to the valorization of “the local, material, and manual, while maintaining a strategy of distinction” and they consider high cultural capital as a resource to develop ecological sensitivities (ibid, p. 168).

In the case of sustainable consumption ecological sensitivities are regarded as part of habitus of sustainability and environmental capital that motivates green consumers to lead more sustainable lifestyles. However, the maintenance of sustainable consumption practices in an urban environment demands more powerful motivations that can be gained in a form of alternative hedonism. Green consumers in the study claimed that when they behave responsibly by considering the effect of their behavior on environment, they feel themselves at ease. This feeling is observed as the main benefit that green consumers can gain from the field of sustainable consumption. Thus, by referring to Bourdieu, alternative hedonism is linked to “*illusio*” or a feeling of being in the field.

To put it simply, the field of sustainable consumption is centered on daily life consumption practices. Together with environmental capital, habitus of sustainability determines the practices within the field and is determined by these practices at the same time. Furthermore, the changes in daily life consumption practices are followed by lifestyle change that can be observed through the analysis of sustainable consumer behavior. As Warde mentioned, practice theories emphasize routines and habits like in practical consciousness (Giddens, 1986) in relation to consumption (Warde, 2014, p. 292). They slightly refer to “discursive consciousness, deliberation and decision-making when advancing explanations” (ibid). On the contrary, this study emphasized discursive consciousness rather practical consciousness with the aim of emphasizing the perceptions of green consumers about their daily practices and also to inform the

readers about the fact that green consumers tend to critically evaluate their daily practices in a regular base to control their carbon footprints. This approach provides benefits to this study in order to display how alternative hedonism can be placed within sustainable consumption as a permanent source of motivation, making individual consumers maintain and popularize sustainable consumption pattern. On the other hand, an emphasis on discursive consciousness reveals how control mechanisms - latent networks of control and apparent networks of control- works by way of regular feedbacks among green consumers regarding the consumption practices of one another. Thus, habituation of practices is considered as not free from discursive consciousness and it is argued that in the field of sustainable consumption habits, routines, and ordinary practices of daily life necessitate a certain level of awareness regarding the effect of these practices on environment.

Everyday consumption practices were considered as a site for political participation by claiming that individual day-to-day acts are related to wider social and environmental issues (Foden, 2012; Micheletti, 2003). I analyzed this point by referring to the role of discursive consciousness in consumption choices. Since intentional and goal-oriented actions demand detailing discursive consciousness (Jackson, 2005, p. xi), green consumers act responsibly since they are aware of the social, political, and environmental effects of their consumption choices. Thus, they develop a self-checking behavior which keeps their practices under control.

As a collective aspect of sustainable consumption, it is observed that green consumers living in an urban environment necessitate establishing solidarity networks. These networks among consumers not only contribute to the development of new practices but also make the maintenance of current practices easier. For instance, through the established networks, green consumers organize stuff exchange systems by way of exchange groups. In addition, through food communities they develop an alternative food systems that favor sustainable lifestyle in an urban environment in two ways. First, these food communities support the local farmers applying organic farming methods as in the case of community supported agriculture (CSA) system. Second, the method of bulk buying used by food communities contributes to green consumers' intent of reducing their carbon footprint.

This study pays attention to green consumers own interpretations regarding the sustainability of their practices. The points that make green consumers differ from one another are discussed with particular reference to weak and strong sustainable consumption practices and their moral and political values. Some of the most important findings (based on the interviews) are shortly summarized in the following table:

**Table 4. An Overview of The Findings**

The Sources of Motivations	Current Sustainable Consumption Practices	Current Unsustainable Consumption Practices	The practices that are easily changed	The practices that are hard to change	Future expectations regarding sustainable living
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Images and videos about the influence of climate change</li> <li>-Feeling responsible for environmental hazards</li> <li>- the idea of holism (Feeling spiritually attached to all living things)</li> <li>-Feeling guilty about eating animal products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Use of cloth bags instead of plastic bags</li> <li>-Saving electricity and water use</li> <li>-Self-produced cleaning products</li> <li>-Growing food</li> <li>-Waste disposal</li> <li>-Recycling</li> <li>-Composting</li> <li>-Cycling</li> <li>-Upcycling</li> <li>-Clothe exchange</li> <li>-Preparing and carrying food</li> <li>-Eating organic food</li> <li>-Home cooking</li> <li>-Vegetarian diet</li> <li>-Climaterian Diet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Smoking</li> <li>-Drinking Alcohol</li> <li>-Drinking Coffee</li> <li>-Not consuming local food</li> <li>-Shopping at supermarkets</li> <li>-Car driving</li> <li>-Meat eating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Plastic bag use</li> <li>-Saving electricity and water use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Meat eating</li> <li>-Shopping for unnecessary items such as extra clothes</li> <li>-Eating out</li> <li>-Using cosmetics products</li> <li>-Overstocking (cannot dispose unnecessary stuff)</li> <li>-Not shopping from ecological market (due to high-cost)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Moving to a rural area to practice more sustainable and simple living</li> <li>-Living in the city and organizing activities popularizing sustainable consumption</li> <li>-Having a vegetarian diet (no one mentioned vegan diet)</li> <li>-Building own home in a rural area</li> <li>-Living in a tiny house</li> <li>-Establishing an eco-farm</li> <li>-Living in an ecological community in country side</li> </ul>

	-Taking part in urban agriculture activities  -Implementing project 333				
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This table is created based on the narratives of respondents and it represents daily life practices that they emphasize in relation to their preference of sustainable consumption pattern. It should be noted that this categorization does not directly correspond to each narrative. As it was explained previously, the respondents in this study differ from one another in terms of their views regarding the sustainability of particular practices. Therefore, while preparing this table, to make it understandable I preferred to include all the practices if it is acknowledged by a respondent. The table can include inconsistencies since I did not use member check technique by asking the opinions of other respondents about a particular practice that one respondent mentioned as sustainable.

To conclude, for future studies on sustainable consumption practices, some suggestions can be made. Since the scope of this study is limited to the experiences of the respondents living in an urban environment, the same topic can be studied with rural residents. In fact, the findings of these two researches can be compared to present a wider analysis of sustainable consumption practices and lifestyles. As a second suggestion, it should be noted that this study did not deal with the urban environment as a focal point. In order to keep the focus on daily practices and lifestyles, this study, e.g., did not evaluate the services of the local municipalities. I mentioned the municipal services only if the respondents mentioned them in their narratives. However, the findings of this research revealed that in order to make a far-reaching analysis, the services of local governments should be included in the study. Thus, the same topic can be studied in relation to services provided by green offices of municipalities. As a

result of such study, the municipal services can be enhanced to provide better services regarding the environmental sustainability of the cities. Nevertheless, I believe that this study presented significant information regarding the individual's experience of sustainable living in an urban environment. Therefore, the findings of this study can be used to define daily life consumption practices of green consumers to develop projects or eco-innovations in order to find out new ways of popularizing sustainable living. Besides, the findings of the study can also be used to develop a new social policy encouraging sustainable lifestyles and consumption practices on the national scale at least in urban areas.

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## APPENDICES

### A: TURKISH SUMMARY/TÜRKÇE ÖZET

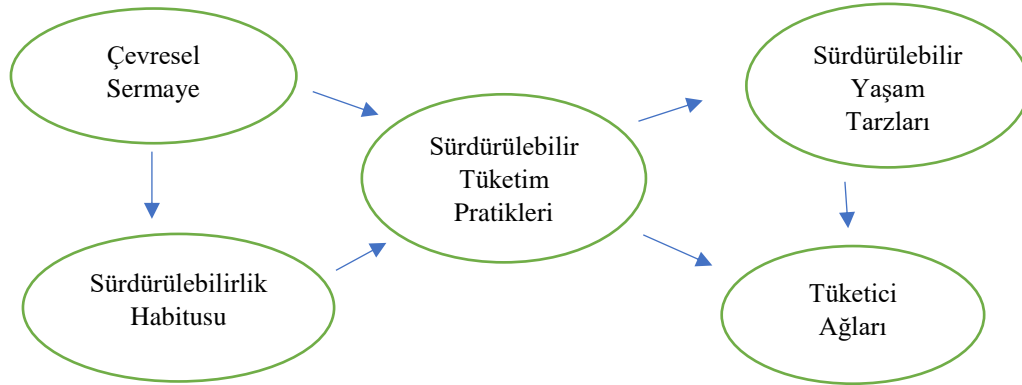
Bu tez şehirde yaşayan yeşil tüketicilerin, ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir bir yaşam tarzına sahip olmak amacıyla gündelik hayat tüketim pratiklerinde yapmış oldukları değişimi analiz etmektedir. Bu değişimin bireysel olduğu kadar kolektif bir boyutu olduğunu vurgulayan bu çalışma, sürdürülebilir tüketimin bireyselleşmiş bir kolektif eylem (Micheletti, 2003) olduğunu iddia etmektedir. Yeşil tüketiciler, çevresel sermaye ve sürdürülebilirlik habitusu doğrultusunda ekolojik olarak daha sürdürülebilir olan bir yaşam tarzı oluşturabilmek amacıyla özellikle gündelik tüketim pratiklerinde bilinçli değişiklikler yapmaktadırlar. Bu değişiklikler yalnızca yeşil tüketicilerin tüketim alışkanlıklarını ve rutinlerini değiştirmekle kalmaz aynı zamanda konvansiyonel tüketim sistemine alternatif olabilecek bir pratikler alanı oluşturur.

Yeşil tüketicilerin gündelik hayatlarında yapmış oldukları değişimler, sürdürülebilir tüketimin bireysel boyutu olarak ifade edilmiştir. Ayrıca, sürdürülebilir tüketimin kolektif boyutu vurgulanmış ve bu amaçla çalışma içerisinde taban örgütlerinin oluşturduğu alternatif tüketici ağları ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarının (STK) faaliyetleri değerlendirilmiştir. Ancak, tezin odaklandığı konunun yarattığı sınırlılık sebebiyle Türkiye’de bu alanda çalışmalar yapan pek çok grubun içerisinden yalnızca İstanbul, Ankara ve Eskişehir’de faaliyet gösteren ekoloji temelli taban örgütleri ve STK’larda çalışan kişiler çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bilgi toplama sürecinde bahsi geçen şehirlerde yaşayan ve gündelik hayatlarında sürdürülebilir tüketim pratiklerini uygulayan 17 katılımcı ile derinlemesine görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Ayrıca, katılımcıların bileşeni olduğu gıda topluluğu ve ekolojik yaşam toplulukları gibi taban örgütlerinin etkinliklerine katılarak katılımcı gözlem yöntemi ile sürdürülebilir

tüketimin kolektif boyutu analiz edilmiştir. Böylece sürdürülebilir olmayan tüketim pratiklerinin ve yaşam tarzlarının dönüşümünde kolektif faaliyetlerin etkisi ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışma gündelik hayat tüketim pratiklerinin sürdürülebilir tüketim alanını nasıl oluşturduğu sorusunu araştırmaktadır. Bu amaçla, yeşil tüketicilerin yaşam tarzlarında ve tüketim pratiklerinde yaşanan dönüşümün analiz edilebilmesi için öncelikle bireyleri tüketim davranışlarını değiştirmeye yönelten temel faktörlerin belirlenmesi hedeflenmiştir. Pratik teorilerinin kavram setinden yararlanılarak gündelik hayat rutinlerinin ekolojik hassasiyetler çerçevesinde bilinçli olarak dönüşümü Bourdieu, Giddens ve Warde’ın çalışmalarından yararlanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Bourdieu’nun (2015) alan, sermaye ve habitus kavramları ve Giddens’in (1986) söylemsel bilinç kavramı bu çalışmanın kavramsal yaklaşımının temelini oluşturmaktadır. Ayrıca, Warde’ın (2017) pratik teorilerinin tüketim çalışmalarına uygulanması sırasında rutinlerin ve sıradan aktivitelerin analize dahil edilmesi gerektiği vurgusu dikkate alınmıştır.

### Sürdürülebilir Tüketim Alanı



Yukarıdaki şekilde ifade edildiği gibi Bourdieu’nun alan kavramından yola çıkarak sürdürülebilir tüketimi bir sosyal alan olarak ele alabiliriz. Bu çalışmada tüketim pratikleri merkezî önemde değerlendirilmiştir. Benzer bir şekilde Warde (2017), Bourdieucu anlamda alanın nasıl işlediğini tartışırken alanın içeriğini oluşturan ögenin pratikler olduğunu ifade etmiştir. Bu yaklaşımdan yola çıkarak bu çalışmada, gündelik

hayat tüketim pratikleri doğrudan ilişkide olduğu çevresel sermaye ve sürdürülebilirlik habitusu kavramları üzerinden analiz edilmiştir.

Bourdieu'nun analizinde, alan kavramı, daimi bir çatışma ortamı olarak ifade edilmiştir (Ward, 2017: 120). Ancak bu çalışma, sürdürülebilir tüketim alanı içerisinde çatışma yerine ortaklık ve birlikteliklerden bahsedilebileceğini ifade etmektedir. Bunun en önemli sebebi sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun bu alan içerisinde hareket eden bütün yeşil tüketiciler tarafından paylaşıldığının düşünülmesidir. Bu habitus bireylerin gündelik hayat tüketim pratikleri sırasında bilinçli ve sorumlu hareket etmelerini sağlayan en önemli faktör olarak değerlendirilmiştir.

Çevreye duyarlı pratiklerin rutinleşmesinin bireylerin çevreye olan etkilerini azaltmalarını sağlayacağını ifade eden Haluza-DeLay (2008: 206), böylece ekolojik hassasiyetleri ön plana çıkaran bir yönelim yani 'ekolojik habitusun' ortaya çıktığını ifade etmektedir. Örneğin, gündelik hayatta bireylerin yapmış oldukları geri-dönüştürme pratikleri gibi gündelik hayat çevreciliğinin bir kolektif hareketin parçası ya da rasyonel hesaplamaların sonucu olmaktan öte ekolojik habitusun bir tezahürü olduğunu ifade etmiştir (ibid:208). Böylelikle ekolojik habitusun ya da bu çalışmanın isimlendirdiği şekliyle sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun yaygınlaşması durumunda ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir toplumsal bir dönüşümden bahsetmek olanaklı olacaktır. Ancak Haluza-DeLay'den farklı olarak bu çalışma sürdürülebilirlik habitusunu bilinçli ve amaçlı eylemlerle ilişkilendirmiştir.

Habitus bireylerin tüketim pratiklerini doğrudan etkilemektedir. Bir habitus olarak sürdürülebilirliğin, bireylerin tüketim pratiklerinin daha sürdürülebilir hale gelmesinde doğrudan etkisi olduğu ifade edilebilir. Bu etkinin kaynaklarını ele almak için bakılması gereken noktalar aslında bize sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun özgül kaynaklarını verecektir. Bourdieu'nun kavramsal araçlarından yararlanarak sürdürülebilirlik habitusu kavramının ilişkili olduğu çevresel sermaye ve sürdürülebilir tüketim alanının tanımlanması önem arz etmektedir. Böylelikle, gündelik hayat tüketim pratiklerinin bu kavramsallaştırma içerisinde nasıl bir analiz düzeyi sunduğu ortaya çıkarılacak ve yeşil tüketiciler olarak adlandırılan tüketici grubu orta sınıf kavramıyla ilişkili olarak ele alınacaktır.

Orta sınıfların kültürel, ekonomik ve sosyal pozisyonlarının sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun gelişebilmesi için diğer toplumsal sınıflardan daha uygun, daha verimli bir alan oluşturduğunu ifade edebilmek mümkündür. Toplumun üst kesimlerinin, toplumsal sistemin yeniden üretilmesi noktasındaki sorumlulukları ile toplumun alt kesimlerinin toplumsal sistemin dönüştürülmesi için gerekli olan siyasi katılımı sağlayacak ekonomik ve kültürel sermayeden yoksun olmaları sebebiyle, orta sınıfların pozisyonu -kendi içsel çelişkileri olmakla beraber- ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir bir toplumsal dönüşüm sağlanması noktasında daha fazla hareket imkanı sunmaktadır. Türkiye’de yeni orta sınıfı tanımlanırken Keyder (2013) eğitim, beceri, bilgi gerektiren işler yapan yani zihinsel emekleriyle çalışan gruplar olarak ifade etmiştir. Ayrıca, burjuvazinin günümüzde dönüştürücü potansiyelini yitirdiğini ve bu yeni orta sınıfın bildiğimiz ekonomik ve politik gündemin sınırları dışında taleplerle ortaya çıktıklarını dile getirmiştir (ibid). Pekala, sürdürülebilir tüketim Keyder’in işaret etmiş olduğu yeni taleplerden biri olarak kabul edilebilir ve yeşil tüketiciler de sınıfsal olarak bu yeni orta sınıf ile ilişkilendirilebilir.

Bu çalışmada, sürdürülebilirlik kavramı ilişkili olduğu çevre ve ekoloji literatürlerinden yola çıkılarak ele alınmıştır. Böylelikle sürdürülebilir tüketim kavramına yeşil düşünce literatüründen beslenen felsefi ve teorik bir alt yapı oluşturulması hedeflenmiştir. Bu tez içerisinde, bireylerin tüketim pratiklerinin ayrıntılı analizi yoluyla tanımlanmış olan sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışı kavramı, yeşil tüketicileri salt bir tüketici grubu olmasının ötesinde yeşil düşüncenin bir parçası olarak değerlendirmiştir. Bu sebeple, gündelik hayat sürdürülebilir tüketim pratiklerinin analizi yapılırken derin ekoloji, sosyal ekoloji, permakültür, ekofeminizm ve hayvan refahı tartışmalarına yer verilmiştir.

Sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışına pratik teorilerinden yola çıkılarak kurulmuş olan kavramsal çerçeve ve yukarıda bahsedilen yeşil düşünce yaklaşımları temel alınarak oluşturulmuş olan felsefi arka plan, tüketim pratiklerinin analizinden yola çıkılarak tüketicilerin aktif politik aktörler (Jacobsen and Dulsrud, 2007) olarak ele alınmalarını olanaklı kılmıştır. Böylece, Bourdieu’dan farklı olarak bu çalışmada kullanılan sürdürülebilirlik habitusu bilinçli eylemlerle ilişkilendirilmiş ve Giddens’in söylemsel bilinç kavramından yola çıkılarak gündelik hayat pratiklerinde sürdürülebilirlik odaklı bilinçli değişimlerin nasıl yaşandığı analiz edilmiştir.

Habitus kavramı Bourdieu'nun (2015) kullandığı anlamı ile doğrudan sınıf pozisyonu ile ilişkili olarak ele alınmaktadır. Bu çalışma içerisinde de sürdürülebilirlik habitusu kavramı orta sınıf tüketim kültürünün bir parçası olarak değerlendirilmiştir. Sürdürülebilirlik habitusu ve çevresel sermayenin oluşması için gerekli olan kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik sermaye orta sınıflar ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun ortaya çıkmasının başlıca motivasyonu olarak değerlendirilen çevresel sermaye, kültürel, sosyal ve ekonomik sermayenin birleşiminden oluşan bir hibrid form olarak ele alınmıştır (Karol & Gale, 2004). Örneğin, çevresel sermayenin gelişiminde itici faktör olan çevre bilincinin, eğitim yoluyla orta sınıflarda geliştiğini ve ekonomik sermayelerinin desteği ile orta sınıfların organik ve ekolojik ürün kullanma gibi pratikleri gerçekleştirmek açısından daha avantajlı olduklarını ifade etmek mümkündür. Sermaye kavramı, Bourdieu'nun (2015) analizinde habitusu oluşturan temel unsurları belirleyebilmek için kullanılmıştır. Bourdieu ekonomik, kültürel, sosyal ve sembolik olmak üzere dört temel sermaye biçimi tanımlamıştır. Bu çalışmada kullanılmış olan çevresel sermaye kavramı, Bourdieu'nun analiz etmiş olduğu ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel sermaye kavramlarının hepsi ile ilişkili olarak ifade edilmektedir. Çevresel sermaye kavramı, bireylerin sürdürülebilirlik habitusuna ulaşabilmeleri için temel arz etmektedir. Aslında bu kavram, sürdürülebilir tüketim pratikleri ve yaşam tarzının yeşil tüketiciler tarafından nasıl geliştirildiğini açıklamaktadır. Bu açıklama girişimi, çevresel sermayenin ve sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun ilişkili olduğu sınıfsal pozisyonu değerlendirme imkânı sağlamıştır.

Yeşil tüketicilerin gönüllü sadeliği yaşam biçimi olarak tercih ettiklerini ifade etmeleri, onların orta sınıf pozisyonunun tekrar vurgulanmasını zorunlu kılmaktadır. Arslan'ın (2012) ifade ettiği gibi, “kentli orta sınıflar” ya da “yeni orta sınıflar” yaşam tarzları ve tüketim alışkanlıkları vurgulanarak tartışılan kategoriler haline gelmiştir. Buradan yola çıkarak yeşil tüketicilerin ekonomik sermayelerinin desteğiyle sahip olabilecekleri yaşam tarzlarını bilinçli ve istekli olarak reddettiklerini söylemek mümkündür. Daha önce ifade edildiği gibi sosyal, kültürel ve ekonomik sermayenin birleşimiyle gelişen hibrid bir form olan çevresel sermayenin yeşil tüketicileri gönüllü sadelik anlayışıyla geliştirilmiş bir yaşam tarzının uygulayıcılarından olmaya yönelttiği söylenebilir.

Aslında gönüllü sadeliği yaşam tarzı olarak belirleyen yeşil tüketicilerin her konuda azaltma ve sadeleşme yaptıklarını ifade etmek mümkündür. Sadeleşme daha çok boş vakit yaratabilmek amacıyla daha az kazanma ve daha az tüketme şeklinde gerçekleşen bir yaşam tarzı değişikliğine yol açmaktadır (Kennedy et al., 2013: 765). Kennedy ve arkadaşlarının yapmış oldukları araştırmaya göre sadeleşme evde geçirilen zamanı arttırdığı için -gönüllü sadelik örneğinde olduğu gibi- hane içi tüketimde çevreci pratiklerin oluşmasını sağlamaktadır (Kennedy et al., 2013: 777).

Hane içinde geçirilen zamanın sürdürülebilir tüketim pratikleri üzerine olan olumlu etkisi bu çalışma içerisindeki yeşil tüketiciler tarafından da vurgulanmıştır. Katılımcıların çoğu hane içerisinde geçirdikleri zaman arttıkça yaşam tarzlarını dönüştürebilmek adına daha farklı pratikleri denemeye açık olduklarını ifade etmişlerdir. Böylece hane içi, sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun etkili olduğu önemli bir alan olarak kavramsallaştırılabilir. “Kendin yap” (Do-it-yourself) etiğinin etkili olduğu hane içi tüketim pratikleri yeşil tüketicilerin yaşam tarzlarını dönüştürme faaliyetleri açısından en önemli alanı oluşturmaktadır. Bu çalışmadaki yeşil tüketiciler, hane içi tüketim pratikleri açısından en çok değişimin yaşandığı pratiklerin temizlik alışkanlıklarıyla ilişkili olduğunu belirtmişlerdir. Katılımcıların anlatılarına baktığımızda ulaşım ile ilgili pratiklerinin temizlik ile ilgili pratiklerinde olduğu gibi sürdürülebilirlik habitusları ile konvansiyonel yaşam tarzının dayattığı normların bir çatışma alanı olduğunu ifade etmek mümkündür.

Bu çalışmada, sürdürülebilir tüketim habitusunun gündelik yaşam tüketim pratikleri üzerinde nasıl bir etkisi olduğu açıklanmıştır ve sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışı hane içi tüketim pratikleri, alışveriş pratikleri, yeme-içme pratikleri ve ulaşım pratikleri üzerinden değerlendirilmiştir. Aynı zamanda, “kendin yap” etiğinden yola çıkılarak, ‘türetici’ (prosumer) kavramı tanımlanmıştır. Böylece, “kendin yap” anlayışının gündelik hayat tüketim pratiklerinin oluşmasındaki dönüştürücü etkisi tartışılmıştır. Bu etki tartışılırken sürdürülebilir tüketim pratiklerinin zayıf ve güçlü yönleri vurgulanmıştır.

### Zayıf ve Güçlü Sürdürülebilir Tüketim Pratikleri

Zayıf Sürdürülebilir Tüketim Pratikleri	Güçlü Sürdürülebilir Tüketim Pratikleri
Süpermarketlerden organik ürün satın almak	Kendi sebzesini yetiştirmek
Doğal etiketli temizlik ürünleri satın almak	Kendi temizlik ürünlerini üretmek
Çöp ayrıştırmak	Kompost yapmak
Toplu taşıma araçlarını kullanmak	Bisiklet sürmek

Bu çalışmadaki katılımcıların anlatılarından yola çıkılarak oluşturulmuş olan bu tablo, yeşil tüketicilerin gündelik hayat tüketim pratikleri arasındaki ayrımı belirgin hatlarıyla ifade etmektedir. Yukarıdaki tabloda ifade edildiği gibi zayıf ve güçlü sürdürülebilir tüketim pratikleri arasındaki temel fark, tüketici olmak ve ‘tüketici’ olmak üzerinden anlamlı hale gelmektedir. Yeşil tüketiciler, kullandıkları ürünlerin ve tükettikleri gıdaların üretim sürecinde yer almayı kendin-yap etiğinin bir parçası olarak deneyimlemektedirler. Warde’ın (2017) belirttiği gibi tüketimi bir pratikler bütünü olarak değerlendirirsek sürdürülebilir tüketimin, tüketicilerin aktif oldukları pratiklerle oluşturulduğunu ifade etmek mümkündür. Yani zayıf ya da güçlü sürdürülebilir tüketim pratikleri uyguluyor olduklarına bakılmaksızın yeşil tüketiciler için konvansiyonel tüketim sistemi içindeki tüketicilere kıyasla aktif aktörler/ajanlar olduklarını ifade etmek mümkündür.

Bourdieu’nun teorisinde politik eylem, habitus tarafından üretilmektedir (Haluza-DeLay, 2008: 205). Temel teorik çerçeveyi sürdürülebilirlik habitusuna dayandırdığımız zaman, bireylerin tüketim pratiklerindeki değişim aynı zamanda onların politik olarak eylemliliği şeklinde ifade edilebilecektir. Yeşil tüketicilerin alternatif tüketim sistemleri aracılığı ile politik olarak faaliyette bulunduklarını ifade etmek mümkündür. Özellikle şehir ortamında alternatif tüketim sistemlerini deneyen ve bunları yaymaya çalışan kişilerin çabaları hem bireysel hem de toplumsal seviyede değişikliğe neden olabileceği ifade edilebilir. Tüketim kültürü imgesi kentli yaşam tarzı ile ilişkilendirilmiş durumdadır (Featherstone, 2013). Bu nedenle özellikle şehirde yaşayan yeşil tüketicilerin gündelik hayat pratikleriyle konvansiyonel,

sürdürülebilir olmayan tüketim sistemine meydan okuyabileceğini ifade etmek mümkündür.

Sürdürülebilir tüketim olgusunu sosyolojik bir perspektifle ele alan bu çalışma özellikle sosyoloji literatürü içerisinde bu olguya nasıl yaklaşılabileceği ile ilgilenmiştir. Klasik sosyoloji teorilerinden yola çıkılarak sürdürülebilir tüketimin ayırt edici yönleri tanımlanmıştır. Marx, Weber, Veblen, Simmel, Baudrillard ve Bourdieu'nun tüketim ile ilgili çalışmalarına atıfta bulunularak klasik tüketim teorileri ele alınmıştır. Konvansiyonel ve sürdürülebilir olmayan yaygın tüketim anlayışına karşıt olarak sürdürülebilir tüketimin ayırt edici yönleri vurgulanmıştır. Sürdürülebilir tüketim daha az tüketmeyi, basit yaşamayı ve yerelliği ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Bu nedenle bu tüketim modeli konvansiyonel tüketimden farklı gündelik hayat pratikleri gerektirmektedir.

Pratik teorilerinin kavramsal çerçevesinden yola çıkmak sürdürülebilirlik habitusu ile motive edilmiş olan yaşam tarzı dönüşümünün nasıl kalıcı hale geldiğinin de incelenmesine olanak sağlamıştır. Yeşil tüketicilerin davranış değişikliğinin temel motivasyon kaynağı olan çevre sorunlarının devamlı hale gelmesi aslında ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir bir toplum yaratabilmek için temel ve daimi bir motivasyon olarak görülebilir. Bu çevresel krizlerle ilişkili olarak ortaya atılmış olan sürdürülebilir kalkınma anlayışı toplumsal bir değişim için gerekli olan değişim aktörlerinin kimler olduğu ve nasıl hareket edilmesi gerektiğini tartışmaya açmıştır.

İklim değişikliği, genetiği değiştirilmiş ürünlerin yaygınlaşması, gıda güvensizliği, çevre kirliliği, artan nüfus, doğal kaynakların aşırı kullanımı gibi küresel ölçekte etki eden sorunlar, sürdürülebilirliği uluslararası önemde bir gündem haline getirmiştir. Türkiye, sürdürülebilirlik kavramına politika alanında yer veren ülkelerden biridir ve tarafı olduğu uluslararası anlaşmalar neticesinde sürdürülebilirlik kavramı ulusal eylem ve kalkınma planları içerisine dahil edilmiştir.

Türkiye'de politika alanında çevre konusuna olan ilginin 1970'li yıllarda başladığını ifade etmek mümkündür. 2000'li yıllarda Avrupa Birliği uyum programları kapsamında o zamana kadar ikinci planda kalmış olan çevre konusuna merkezi politikalarda yer verilmeye başlanmıştır (Çokgezen, 2007: 106). Sürdürülebilirlik kavramının ulusal politika alanına girişi Birleşmiş Milletler sözleşmeleri aracılığı ile



gerçekleşmiştir. Türkiye 1992 yılında Rio Zirvesi'nde BM Biyolojik Çeşitlilik Sözleşmesi'ni imzalamıştır. Bu sözleşmenin tarafı olunması oldukça önemlidir çünkü bu sözleşmedeki Gündem 21 aracılığı ile sürdürülebilir tüketim kavramı ilk defa uluslararası politika alanında ele alınmıştır (Seyfang, 2005: 292). 2004 yılında BM İklim Değişikliği Çevre Sözleşmesi ve 2009 yılında Kyoto Protokolü'nü imzalayan ülkelerden biri olan Türkiye böylelikle sürdürülebilirlik kavramının ulusal politika ajandasının bir parçası haline gelmesini sağlamıştır (Binboğa, 2017: 208).

Türkiye'nin de imzacı olduğu bu protokoller ve sözleşmeler neticesinde çevre sorunları konusunda uluslararası düzeyde kalıcı adımlar atılması hedeflenmiştir. Bu kapsamda öncelikli olarak karbon salınımını azaltan uygulamaların yaygınlaştırılmasının hedeflendiği ifade edilmiştir (Binboğa, 2017). Bu sözleşmeler ve raporlar öncelikli olarak devlet politikalarında ve büyük şirketlerin üretim sistemlerinde değişikliğe gidilmesini hedeflemiştir. Ancak, bir taraftan tüketicilerin de hedeflenmesi gerektiği ve tüketicilerin tüketim alışkanlıklarında yaratılacak değişimin uzun süreli sürdürülebilirlik hedeflerini gerçekleştirmeyi sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir (OECD, 2008). Diğer bir ifadeyle, çevre sorunlarının artması ve olumsuz etkilerinin kalıcı hale gelmesi sebebiyle sürdürülebilir tüketim hem politika hem de gündelik uygulamalar açısından önem kazanmıştır. Sürdürülebilir tüketimin teşvik edilmesi bahsi geçen sorunlar açısından bireysel düzeyde uygulanabilecek davranış değişikliklerine işaret etmektedir ve doğrudan tüketicileri hedefleyen politikalarla desteklenmektedir. Sürdürülebilir kalkınma, sürdürülebilir üretim ve tüketim kavramlarının politika alanında görünür hale gelmeleri bu kavramlara bağlı ortaya çıkan yaşam tarzı değişikliğini de gündeme getirmiştir. Tüketiciler sürdürülebilir kalkınmanın itici gücü olarak kabul edilmiş ve çevreye zarar vermeyen uzun süreli ekonomik büyümenin sağlanması konusunda tüketicilerin de sorumluluğu olduğu vurgulanmıştır (ibid).

Sürdürülebilir tüketim, uluslararası önemde bir politika konusu olmanın yanı sıra akademik çalışmaların yapıldığı bir alandır. İşletme, pazarlama ve psikoloji disiplinlerinin ağırlıklı olarak çalışma yaptıkları bir alan olan sürdürülebilir tüketim, daha çok tüketici davranışı ve pazar araştırmalarının bir parçası olarak çalışılmıştır (Atrek & Madran, 2017; Ergen, 2016). Özellikle gösterişçi tüketime karşı gönüllü sadelik anlayışının benimsendiği yaşam tarzları ve bu yaşam tarzlarının uygulayıcıları olan yeşil tüketiciler bu çalışmaların ana konusu haline gelmiştir. Bu çalışmalarda,

tüketicilerin daha sürdürülebilir ve daha yeşil ürünlere yönelmesinin gerekçesi olarak çevre konusundaki endişeleri vurgulanmıştır. Doğal kaynakların aşırı kullanımı, çevre kirliliği ve iklim değişikliği konuları sürdürülebilir tüketim ile ilişkili olarak ele alınmış ve bu konularda oluşacak çevre bilincinin tüketici davranışları üzerinde yaratacağı olumlu değişimin altı çizilmiştir (Bener & Babaoğlu, 2008; Atrek & Madran, 2017).

Tüketicilerin çevre bilinci kazandırılması amacıyla eğitilmeleri, literatürdeki mevcut çalışmaların yoğunlaştığı başlıca konulardandır (Karalar & Kiracı, 2011; Hayta, 2009). Aslında, sürdürülebilirlik konusunda tüketicilerin eğitilmesi onların alternatif tüketim sistemleri hakkında bilgilendirilmesini içermektedir (Hayta, 2009: 144). Böylece tüketicilerin kendi ihtiyaçlarını karşılarken çevre üzerindeki etkilerini analiz edebilmeleri sağlanmış olmaktadır.

Çevre bilincinin oluşturulması için tüketicilerin eğitilmesi fikrinin yanı sıra yurttaşlık kavramının altı çizilerek bu alanda yapılacak muhtemel sosyal politikaların teşvik edilmesi, işletmelerin sosyal sorumluluk programlarına dahil edilmesi önemli görülmüştür (Atrek & Madran, 2017: 4). Tüketicilerin daha sürdürülebilir ve yeşil ürünlere yönelik talepleri arttıkça bunun piyasa üzerinde dönüştürücü etki yaratması beklenmektedir. Böylelikle yeşil tüketicilerin talepleri doğrultusunda gelişen bir yeşil pazarlama (green marketing) anlayışının ortaya çıktığını ifade etmek mümkündür (Boztepe, 2016).

Yurttaşlık kavramı sürdürülebilir tüketim ile ilişkili olarak ekolojik yurttaşlık şeklinde ele alınmıştır. Seyfang, Dobson'ın (2003) kullandığı anlamda ekolojik yurttaşlık kavramının karbon ayak izinin azaltılması amacıyla kişinin tüketim faaliyetinin etkilerini dikkate alması anlamına geldiğini ifade etmiştir. Seyfang'a göre, kişi ekolojik yurttaş olarak hareket ettiği taktirde tüketim faaliyetlerinin hem çevre hem de diğer insanlar üzerindeki etkisini dikkate alacaktır (2005: 291). Buradan yola çıkarak alternatif sürdürülebilir tüketim perspektifinden bahsedilebileceğini söyleyen Seyfang, bu anlayışın daha küçük ölçekli yerel ekonomik ilişkilerin güçlendirilmesi ve yerel organik gıda üretimini destekleyecek gıda zincirlerinin kurulmasını içerdiğini ifade etmiştir (a.g.e).

Seyfang'ın bahsettiği anlamda alternatif sürdürülebilir tüketim anlayışının Türkiye'de geliştiğini ifade etmek mümkündür. Bu anlayışın sosyal politika alanında değil daha çok taban örgütleri ve sivil toplum kuruluşlarının faaliyet alanlarında gerçekleştiği söylenebilir. Diğer bir deyişle, Türkiye'de sürdürülebilir tüketim konusunda mevcut politikaların uygulanmasında yaşanan alt yapı yetersizlikleri sivil toplum ve taban örgütü faaliyetlerini ön plana çıkarmıştır. Bu nedenle Türkiye'de sürdürülebilir tüketim alanında yapılan çalışmalar ele alındığında Buğday Ekolojik Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği, Yuva Derneği ve Yeryüzü Derneği gibi sivil toplum kuruluşlarını, başlıcaları İstanbul'da bulunan gıda topluluklarını, özellikle kırsal alanlarda ekolojik yaşam tarzını ve sürdürülebilir tüketim anlayışını geliştirmeyi ve yaygınlaştırmayı hedefleyen ekoköyleri ve ekolojik çiftlikleri ele almak önemlidir.

Taban örgütlerinin çalışmaları özellikle organik ve doğal gıdaya ulaşılması konusunda öne çıkmaktadır. Kırdan yaşayan üretici ile şehirde yaşayan tüketiciyi buluşturan alternatif gıda sistemleri taban örgütlerinin faaliyetleri ile sağlanmaktadır. Böylelikle ulaşılması pahalı ve zor olan gıdalar şehirde yaşayan ve sağlık, çevre koruması gibi kaygılarla motive olmuş orta sınıf tüketici için kolay ulaşılır hale gelmektedir. Örneğin, Buğday Derneği'nin öncülüğünde organize edilmiş olan %100 Ekolojik Pazarlar, organik ürün üretimi yapan üretici ile tüketiciyi buluşturmaktadır. Ayrıca, Türkiye'de sivil toplum kuruluşlarının çabaları sayesinde sürdürülebilir tüketimin teşvik edilmesi konusunda çocuklar ve yetişkinler için ekolojik okur yazarlık eğitimleri düzenlenmektedir. Yuva Derneği Türkiye'de bu alanda öncü çalışmaları yapan kurumlardan biridir ve Dünya Vatandaşlığı Programı kapsamında doğa ile nasıl daha uyumlu yaşanacağına dair ekolojik okur yazarlık eğitimleri düzenlemektedir. Yeryüzü Derneği ekoloji alanında faaliyet gösteren bir diğer sivil toplum kuruluşu olarak tohum takas etkinlikleri, permakültür eğitimleri ve kent bahçeleri kurma gibi etkinlikler organize etmektedir. Bunlara ek olarak, ekoloji konusunda gönüllülüğün ön planda olduğu bir başka taban örgütü faaliyeti olan Ekoharita'dan bahsetmek gerekmektedir. Türkiye'de ekoloji konusunda yapılan güncel etkinlikler ve eğitimlerin duyurulması amacıyla kurulmuş olan interaktif ekolojik harita sistemi sanal bir ekolojik ağ oluşturulmasını sağlamıştır.

Ancak her ne kadar sürdürülebilirlik habitusuna sahip olmaları sebebiyle yeşil tüketicilerin alternatif tüketim pratikleri geliştirdiklerini ifade etmiş olsak da onların

gündelik hayat pratiklerinin sürdürülebilir olmayan boyutları olduğunu da ifade etmek gerekir. Başka bir ifadeyle, şehirde yaşayan yeşil tüketiciler kendi sürdürülebilirlik habituslarının talep ettiği ekolojik olarak sürdürülebilir yaşam tarzları ve konvansiyonel, sürdürülebilir olmayan tüketim sisteminin dayattığı normlarla belirlenmiş yaşam tarzı arasında sıkışmışlardır.

Özetlemek gerekirse, bu çalışma şehirde yaşayan ve gündelik hayatında sürdürülebilir tüketim pratiklerini uygulayan yeşil tüketicilerin yaşam tarzlarını dönüştürme süreçlerini pratik teorilerinin kavramsal çerçevesinden yola çıkarak analiz etmiştir. Böylece, tüketim pratiklerinin güçlü ve zayıf yönleri, bireysel ve kolektif boyutları tartışmaya açılmıştır. Sonuç olarak, sürdürülebilirlik habitusunun gündelik hayat pratiklerinin dönüşümünde temel bir rolü olduğu ve gündelik hayat tüketim pratiklerini dönüştürdüğü ifade edilmiştir. Ayrıca, şehir ortamında sürdürülebilir yaşam tarzının devamlılığının sağlanabilmesi için tüketici dayanışma ağları aracılığıyla oluşturulmuş olan örtük ve açık kontrol ağlarının var olduğu ve bu ağların tüketiciler arasında dayanışmayı sağlamasının yanı sıra birbirlerinin pratiklerini kontrol etme ve yönlendirmelerine olanak sağladığı iddia edilmiştir.

## **B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **Part I: Background Information**

1. Age
2. Education
3. Monthly Income
4. Residence
  - 4.1. How long have you been living in ....?

### **Part II: Sustainable Lifestyle and Everyday Consumption Practices**

1. Sustainable Lifestyles
  - 1.1. Would you please begin with telling when you have started to practice sustainable lifestyle? What was your motivations at the beginning? How did your family and friends react to the change in your lifestyle?
  - 1.2. What were the main difficulties that you have confronted with in the process of changing your lifestyle and consumption habits?
  - 1.3. What do you think of the trends (voluntary simplicity, slow food, permaculture, reducing the carbon footprint etc.) that suggest sustainable lifestyle? Do you think your lifestyle fit into one or more of these trends?
2. Household Consumption Practices
  - 2.1. What are the strategies you applied for energy and water saving?
  - 2.2. Do you carry out methods like recycling and reusing? If yes, how?
  - 2.3. How do you manage your household waste?
  - 2.4. Do you produce your own products (cleaning products, cosmetic products) at home? If yes, how?
  - 2.5. Do you grow your own vegetables? If yes, how?

### 3. Shopping Practices

- 3.1.What factors do you consider while purchasing goods? (price, production process, ethical/moral concerns, taste, appearance etc.)
- 3.2.Do you have a shopping habit like purchasing products with organic or green labels?
- 3.3.Do you pay attention to the chemicals in the products while purchasing?
- 3.4.Do you know if there is an ecological market in your city? How often do you go to ecological market? Would you compare the foods in ecological markets with the foods in other markets and grocers stores? What kind of differences you observe?
- 3.5.Do you know if there is a food community in your neighborhood? Do you purchase goods via that community? If yes, how often do you purchase goods? If no, why?
- 3.6.Do you use second hand products?

### 4. Eating Practices

- 4.1.How would you define your eating habits and preferences? Do you have an eating diet like vegan or vegetarian? If yes, why do you prefer this diet?
- 4.2.Do you cook food at home? How frequently?
- 4.3.How often do you eat out? Are you a frequenter of any eating place? What are the features you pay attention when you searching an eating place?

### 5. Transportation Practices

- 5.1.What is your initial preference of transportation for intra-city transportation? Why?
- 5.2.If you have a bike, how often do you cycle to work or school?

## **Part III: Eco-communities, Collective Activities**

### 1. Group Practices

- 1.1.Are you a member of any ecological/sustainable/green lifestyle or consumption communities and collectivities? If yes, how long have you been taking part in that community?

1.2. Could you give information about the content of the events that you organized or attended?

1.3. Have you ever attended any paid-courses like permaculture education?

2. City Experience

2.1. Would you evaluate the city you live in based on your experience of sustainable living?

2.2. Do you think that the city is welcoming your practices of sustainable lifestyle?

2.3. Does the local government implement projects related to sustainability?

3. Country Experience

3.1. Do you see any difference between your practices in the city and your practices in the country?

3.2. Have you ever attended eco-tourism activities?

3.3. Do you know TaTuTa network? Have you ever taken part as a volunteer in farming activities?

3.4. Are you interested in organic farming and permaculture? If yes, how did you learn these methods?

**Part IV: Sustainable Future**

1. Do you think that the spread of sustainable consumption practices could be a solution for climate change and food crisis at the global or local level?

2. Can sustainable consumption practices be an alternative to conventional consumption practices?

3. Do you think that sustainable consumption practices are effective and sustainable?

## C. ETİK KURUL ONAY

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