

How government eco-exemplarity influences sustainable consumption

Short Abstract:

Considering the need for greater collaboration between governments, citizens, and companies to curb climate deregulation, this research provides the first exploration of the influence of government eco-exemplarity on citizens' sustainable consumption. We argue that governments guide citizens through the demonstration of exemplar behaviors regarding their impact on the environment, and particularly through the dissemination of institutional norms, which establish what is right/wrong in terms of eco-responsibility within a country. Using a quantitative exploratory study, we show that that citizens' sustainable consumption behavior is positively influenced by institutional norms, intended as the expression of perceived government eco-exemplarity. This influence is hierarchically mediated by institutional norms, social norms, and personal norms; and in parallel by the ascription of responsibility. Findings allow to define the role of government's example in promoting sustainable consumption and lay the foundations for further in-depth studies.

Keywords: Sustainable consumption; Government eco-exemplarity; Institutional norms