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YEŞİL FENOMENLERİN INSTAGRAM PAYLAŞIMLARI SIFIR ATIK
HAREKETİNİ NASIL TEŞVİK EDİYOR? TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ

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ÖZ

Sosyal medya platformları, sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışlarını teşvik etmede önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Günümüzde, çevresel kaygıların artmasıyla birlikte "sıfır atık hareketi" küresel çapta ilgi görmeye başlamıştır ve sosyal medya fenomenleri bu hareketin merkezinde yer almaktadır. Sıfır atık, sürdürülebilir üretim ve tüketim alışkanlıklarını teşvik eden ve kaynakların verimli kullanımını destekleyen döngüsel bir yaklaşımdır. Bu araştırma, yeşil fenomenlerin sosyal medya paylaşımlarında sıfır atık konusunda odaklandıkları temaları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, 1 Ekim 2023 - 1 Ekim 2024 tarihleri arasında yeşil mikro ve makro fenomenler tarafından yapılan 356 paylaşımı içerik analizi yöntemiyle incelemiştir. Analiz, sıfır atık felsefesi çerçevesinde geri dönüştür, azalt, reddet, yeniden kullan ve kompostlama temalarına odaklanmıştır. Bulgular, yeşil fenomenlerin sürdürülebilirlik ve sıfır atık konularında farkındalık yaratmaya çalıştığını ve en fazla azalt, geri dönüştür ve yeniden kullan temalarında paylaşımlar yaptıklarını göstermektedir. Reddetme ve kompostlama temaları ise daha az paylaşılmıştır. Sonuçlar, Türkiye'de geri dönüşüm ve yeniden kullanım bilincinin arttığını ancak bu alanlarda daha fazla bilgilendirme yapılması gerektiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Araştırma bulguları, Instagram'daki yeşil fenomenlerin sıfır atık hareketini tanıtmadaki rolünü ve pazarlamacıların sürdürülebilirliği teşvik etmede yeşil fenomenlerden nasıl faydalanabileceğini anlamalarına katkı sağlayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sıfır atık, sıfır atık hareketi, yeşil fenomen, eco-influencer, sürdürülebilirlik

HOW GREENFLUENCERS PROMOTE THE ZERO-WASTE MOVEMENT ON INSTAGRAM? EVIDENCE
FROM TÜRKİYE

ABSTRACT

Social media platforms have become crucial in fostering sustainable consumer behaviors. As environmental concerns continue to rise, the "zero-waste movement" has gained widespread global attention, with social media influencers playing a pivotal role in advancing this cause. Zero-waste is a circular approach that promotes sustainable production and consumption practices while supporting the efficient use of resources. This study explores the key themes highlighted by green influencers regarding zero-waste in their social media posts. The research involves content analysis of 356 posts made by green micro and macro-influencers between October 1, 2023- 2024. The study focuses on the themes of reduce, recycle, refuse, reuse, and compost within the framework of the zero-waste philosophy. The findings indicate that green influencers strive to raise awareness about sustainability and zero-waste, with the most frequent posts addressing the themes of reduce, recycle, and reuse. In contrast, the themes of refuse and composting were less frequently discussed. The results suggest that while awareness of recycling and reuse has increased in Türkiye, further information and education in these areas are still needed. The research findings will contribute to understanding the role of greenfluencers on Instagram in promoting the zero-waste movement and how marketers can leverage green influencers to promote sustainability.

Keywords: Zero-waste, zero-waste movement, greenfluencer, eco-influencer, sustainability

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INTRODUCTION

The impacts of human activities on climate change are increasing (Lewandowsky, 2021). In this context, the zero-waste movement is an important approach to minimizing waste generation and reducing environmental impact (Strasser, 2000). The zero-waste philosophy encourages individuals to lead more sustainable lives by carefully choosing the products they consume, recycling, reusing, and reducing waste. Many people widely adopt sustainable behaviors such as composting and waste treatment (Barles, 2014). The zero-waste movement is gaining increasing attention on a global scale. Consumers are adopting waste-free lifestyles or changing lifestyles to reduce waste by focusing on personal consumption choices to protect the environment (Murphy, 2019).

One effective approach to adopting sustainable lifestyles is leveraging social media as a communication tool (Sun & Wang, 2020). As environmental challenges become increasingly pressing, environmental communication plays a critical role in fostering sustainable behaviors (San Cornelio, Martorell, & Ardèvol, 2024). The rapid dissemination and widespread adoption of the zero-waste movement have been significantly facilitated by strong engagement on social media platforms. Content related to environmental issues and sustainable living is gaining substantial visibility across these platforms. For instance, on Instagram alone, the hashtag #zerowaste has been used in approximately 11.7 million posts, reflecting the growing interest in sustainability (October 1, 2024).

Today, many companies collaborate with social media influencers to promote sustainable living (Kapoor et al., 2022). In this context, social media influencers play an important role in promoting sustainable lifestyles through eco-friendly communication (Chwialkowska, 2019; Gheihman, 2021; Haenfler, Johnson & Jones, 2012). Influencers who promote products and practices that do not harm the environment and enable consumers to adopt eco-friendly habits are called greenfluencers (Pittman & Abell, 2021). Greenfluencers' social media posts often cover topics such as eco-friendly nutrition, sustainable travel, and eco-friendly cosmetics. These influencers play a crucial role in encouraging the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles (Chwialkowska, 2019) and intentions to engage in environmental activism (Knupfer et al., 2023; Yildirim, 2021).

Research has consistently shown that social media influencers play a pivotal role in shaping users' perceptions and behaviors (Hudders et al., 2021). Among them, greenfluencers have emerged as key advocates for promoting sustainable consumption and lifestyle choices on digital platforms (Breves & Liebers, 2022; Yildirim, 2021). Despite their growing influence, Cavazos-Arroyo and Melchor-Ascencio (2023) emphasize the need for further studies exploring the specific impact of greenfluencers on sustainable living. Similarly, Kumar (2016) and Meyers et al. (2000) highlight the significance of social media in encouraging environmentally conscious behaviors. Although the role of greenfluencers has gained attention, research examining their contribution to the zero-waste movement remains scarce (Johnstone & Lindh, 2018; Pittman & Abell, 2021).

As the zero-waste movement is still in its infancy, the literature on zero-waste is limited. Several studies on zero-waste have primarily explored the factors influencing waste reduction behaviors (Ertz et al., 2021; Minelgaite & Liobikien, 2019; Singh & Ambika, 2022). However, most of this research has been conducted in developed countries, where access to sustainable living practices and infrastructure is more readily available (Ertz et al., 2021; Minelgaite & Liobikien, 2019; Stancu et al., 2016; Von Kameke & Fischer, 2018). In contrast, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding zero-waste practices in developing nations, where sustainability challenges may be more pronounced (Sajid, Zakkariya, & Ertz, 2024). Although the zero-waste lifestyle is common in developed countries, it is not fully integrated into the cultures of developing countries (UNEP, 2017). Therefore, the adoption of a zero-waste lifestyle in developing economies is an important research topic in terms of sustainability. This study seeks to address a key research gap by examining how green influencers' Instagram posts contribute to promoting the zero-waste movement. In pursuit of this objective, the following research questions are addressed in this study:

RQ1: What are the key themes most frequently emphasized by greenfluencers on Instagram related to zero-waste?

RQ2: Which aspects of the zero-waste philosophy (reduce, reuse, recycle, refuse, and compost) are frequently emphasized by greenfluencers on Instagram?"

In this exploratory study, the posts of greenfluencers in Türkiye on Instagram related to the zero-waste movement will be analyzed through the content analysis method. The findings of the study are intended to improve the existing literature on the role of greenfluencers in consumers' decision-making process toward sustainable consumption, as well as to fill the research gap on the role of greenfluencers in the adoption of the zero-waste movement.

This article is organized as follows: After the introduction, the second section presents a literature review covering the concept of zero-waste, the 5Rs principle, the zero-waste movement on social media, and greenfluencers. The third section outlines the research methodology, while the fourth section discusses the analysis and findings. Finally, the fifth section presents the conclusions of the study.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Zero-Waste

The increase in waste generation along with global population growth threatens ecosystems and wildlife by causing soil and water contamination when not disposed of properly (Ibor et al., 2020). Beyond ecological concerns, waste also contributes to problems such as resource depletion, deforestation, habitat destruction, and climate change (Holt & Berge, 2018). The global waste management market is estimated to reach USD 1.96 trillion by 2030 (Statista, 2024). As a solution to these problems, zero-waste approaches that aim to minimize waste generation have been developed (Zaman, 2022).

The desire for a world without plastics has become one of the most prominent consumer trends in recent years (Euromonitor International, 2019). The term "zero-waste" was initially introduced by Dr. Paul Palmer in 1973, referring to the process of reclaiming resources from chemical materials (Zaman, 2014). By 1995, the idea that the human race could reduce consumption, recycle or reuse its waste, and encourage manufacturers to design products in line with zero-waste goals was gaining traction (Connett, 2013). Zero-waste lifestyles and changes in consumption patterns are seen as the foundations of climate change mitigation strategies (Schanes et al., 2016). A zero-waste lifestyle encompasses a set of principles and practices designed to significantly reduce waste generation at the individual and household levels while striving for zero or near-zero waste (Zaman, 2022). This approach views waste as a valuable resource emerging throughout a product's production and consumption phases, emphasizing its potential for reuse rather than disposal through incineration or landfill (Zaman, 2016). In this framework, it is emphasized that waste should be included in the production process through methods such as reuse, recycling, recombination, resale, redesign, or reprocessing. In this way, zero-waste principles contribute to the circular economy (Pietzsch et al., 2017).

Zero-waste practices align with various other sustainable lifestyles, such as anti-consumerism (Black & Cherrier, 2010), voluntary simplicity (Lorenzen, 2012), and veganism (Gheihman, 2021). A zero-waste lifestyle emphasizes principles and actions that aim to minimize waste production by individuals (Zaman, 2022). This approach is largely based on the 5R principle: refuse, reuse, reduce, recycle, and rot (Johnson, 2013). Within this framework, refusing waste is considered the highest priority, while recycling is viewed as the least favored option (Balwan et al., 2022). Adopting an eco-friendly lifestyle involves incorporating sustainable practices and making deliberate efforts to minimize waste. Key actions include selecting products with minimal packaging, repairing and reusing items, composting food waste, and opting for reusable alternatives instead of single-use products (Wilde & Parry, 2022).

The zero-waste approach offers various benefits, such as reducing waste generation and environmental impacts, extending the life of sanitary landfills, reducing greenhouse gas

emissions, reducing energy consumption through eco-efficiency, strengthening environmental protection, and limiting the use of toxic substances. In addition, this approach provides businesses with advantages such as producing more with fewer resources, extending the life cycle through improved product design, increasing customer satisfaction, and promoting sustainable supply chains. For zero-waste practices to be effective, changes in consumption habits are required (Zaman & Lehmann, 2013). In this context, it is inevitable to conduct environmental education programs and campaigns to raise awareness and educate individuals about waste separation and proper disposal methods (Silva et al., 2017; Xanthos & Walker, 2017).

1.2. Zero-Waste and 5R Principle

The zero-waste movement is a comprehensive environmental strategy that aims to manage resources sustainably and minimize waste generation. Waste management needs to be handled hierarchically to prevent the depletion of natural resources, reduce environmental pollution, and maintain ecological balance (Zaman & Lehmann, 2011). In this context, the 5R principle (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot) provides a foundational framework for zero-waste practices by guiding individuals and communities in systematically reducing waste generation (Beitzen-Heineke et al., 2017). To prevent waste generation, it is first necessary to change consumption habits, reduce consumption, focus on reuse, and actively participate in recycling processes. In the final stage, biodegradable wastes are recycled into nature, creating a circular system.

Refuse: The most fundamental step in waste management is to reject unnecessary consumption and unsustainable products from the outset. Single-use plastics, unnecessary packaging, and low-quality and non-durable products are not compatible with zero-waste principles. By rejecting them, individuals can directly reduce waste generation and minimize environmental impact (Connett, 2013).

There are various ways to implement this step in daily life. For example, it is an effective approach to use cloth bags instead of plastic bags when shopping and to prefer products without packaging or with recyclable packaging instead of products with plastic packaging. Carrying reusable cutlery sets instead of plastic cutlery in restaurants and cafes, refusing disposable straws, and using bamboo or metal straws also reduce unnecessary plastic consumption. Likewise, refusing to accept free promotional products, brochures, and plastic-containing gifts helps businesses reduce unnecessary production. Small but conscious choices, such as not asking for plastic sauce packets and disposable napkins in fast-food restaurants, and not using disposable shampoos, soaps, and slippers in hotels, and carrying your care products, are also important in preventing waste generation. Also, requesting digital versions of receipts and invoices instead of paper ones helps to conserve natural resources by reducing unnecessary paper consumption. All these steps prevent waste generation on an individual level while supporting the transition to a more sustainable lifestyle in the long run.

Reduce: Every consumption leads directly or indirectly to waste generation. Therefore, avoiding buying products that are not needed and consciously managing consumption habits are important steps in the zero-waste movement (Leonard, 2010). Accordingly, adopting a minimalist lifestyle and buying only the necessary products, avoiding fast fashion consumption, and choosing fewer and better-quality clothes are effective methods to reduce waste generation. Furthermore, reducing energy and water use, for example, by using appliances that consume less water or avoiding unnecessary electricity consumption, can contribute to the conservation of natural resources.

Reuse: Extending the life cycle of a product is a critical step in waste management. Choosing long-lasting and durable alternatives to disposable products not only prevents the waste of resources but also significantly reduces the amount of waste (Geyer et al., 2017). For example, glass bottles and jars can be reused and used as storage containers, while cloth bags and nets offer a sustainable alternative to plastic bags for grocery shopping. In addition, unnecessary production and waste can be avoided by choosing second-hand clothes and furniture. Donating or exchanging unused but still functional items also contributes to this process. Encouraging

reuse prevents unnecessary consumption of resources, creates a sustainable consumption model without harming the natural cycle, and helps individuals reduce their environmental impact.

Recycle: Recycling is a process that comes into play when consumption is inevitable. Properly separating recyclable materials such as plastic, glass, metal, and paper and recycling them back into the production process is an important part of waste management (Hopewell et al., 2009). For example, disposing of used paper in recycling bins, collecting plastic and metal packaging in separate containers, and recycling glass bottles and jars contribute to the conservation of natural resources. However, recycling is not always the best solution because the process requires energy and water. Therefore, a more sustainable approach would be to reduce consumption (Reduce) and reuse products (Reuse) as much as possible first.

Rot: Food waste and other biological wastes can break down in nature and become nutritious for the soil. Composting allows this process to take place in a controlled manner, helping to reuse organic waste (Song et al., 2018). Vegetable and fruit peels, coffee grounds, and tea leaves can be composted to improve soil fertility and can also be used to produce natural fertilizer in gardens. Recycling food waste through methods such as worm composting or garden composting instead of directly throwing it away is an effective and eco-friendly solution to waste management. This process reduces methane gas emissions by preventing organic waste from being sent to landfills and contributes to the ecological balance by supporting sustainable agriculture.

1.3. Zero-Waste Movement on Social Media

The zero-waste movement has gained immense popularity in recent years, aiming to promote environmental practices to reduce waste generation (Bissmont, 2020). With increasing awareness of environmental sustainability and climate change, many individuals have become more aware of waste generation and other environmentally damaging behaviors. Despite this, many people still prefer single-use products that cannot be recycled, reused, composted, or are not biodegradable. To address this problem, social media influencers have started a zero-waste movement on social media. Influencers such as Bea Johnson and Lauren Singer have made a wide impact on social media platforms with blog posts, social media posts, and video content to spread the zero-waste movement (Kim-Marriott, 2021; Spiteri, 2021).

The role of social media influencers in the spread of the zero-waste movement is important, and the posts made on Instagram have been a decisive factor in the movement reaching large masses. Social media influencers' posts are highly effective in raising social awareness (Lu, 2024). In this context, social media posts and active online groups contribute to the rapid spread of the zero-waste movement. Millions of posts on Instagram and active zero-waste groups strengthen the online impact of the movement (Ramjaun, 2021; Spiteri, 2021). Social media platforms such as Instagram and X allow activists to plan to take action by setting common goals and motivations (Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015). Social media is considered a valuable tool to enable individuals to share their thoughts on a movement or ideology in their daily lives and to influence the social responsibility practices of companies (Kampf, 2018).

The zero-waste movement has gained a lot of traction on social media. Despite the practical importance of the topic, studies on the coverage of the zero-waste movement on social media are limited. Previous research has explored the rise of sustainability in X (Twitter) hashtags related to packaging waste under #zerowaste on Instagram (Ganczewski & Jemielniak, 2022) and activities under the hashtag #zerowaste on Instagram (Ramjaun, 2021). Noviyanti, Hidayat & Hidayat (2022) analyzed the social movement and environmental communication carried out by the zero-waste community on Instagram and found that the Instagram community created eco-friendly awareness and became a social movement awareness. Ramjaun (2021) analyzed user-generated content on Instagram in the context of a zero-waste lifestyle and found that 'consumer activists' play an educational and motivational role in the social media community.

Social media platforms offer valuable insights into examining message impact and creating effective content to promote sustainable products (Kapoor, Balaji & Jiang, 2023). In developing countries, consumers rely heavily on social media for information. In this context, social media content significantly influences the intention to purchase sustainable products (Saeed et al., 2019).

1.4. Greenfluencer

Consumers are becoming more aware of sustainability (Chen, 2012). However, many are still hesitant to adopt sustainable consumption habits. An effective strategy to promote sustainable behavior change is the use of social media (Byrne et al., 2017; Sun & Wang, 2020). In this context, the role of social media influencers is becoming increasingly important. Social media plays a critical role in raising environmental awareness, especially with content producers known as “greenfluencers” who promote sustainable lifestyles and environmentally responsible behaviors (Pittman & Abell, 2021). Green influencers contribute to the adoption of sustainable consumption habits by encouraging their followers to take action on eco-friendly behaviors (Yıldırım, 2021).

Greenfluencers are categorized into different categories depending on their number of followers, such as mega, macro, micro, and nano (Britt et al., 2020). (1) mega-influencers have over 1 million followers; (2) macro-influencers have between 40,000 and 1 million followers; (3) micro-influencers have between 1,000 and 40,000 followers; and (4) nano-influencers have less than 1,000 followers (Britt et al., 2020). This categorization determines the magnitude of influencers' power to create environmental change and the nature of their interactions. Micro-influencers, in particular, can have a stronger impact on encouraging green behaviors (Pittman & Abell, 2021).

Greenfluencers are individuals who typically raise awareness about environmental issues and advocate for eco-friendly products and practices. For example, popular greenfluencers such as Zata Shah, Greta Thunberg, and Lauren Singer promote green consumption by adopting lifestyles like “plastic-free” and “zero food waste” (Mahat et al., 2023; Pittman & Abell, 2021). By creating content that spreads eco-friendly practices, green influencers encourage their followers to adopt a more sustainable lifestyle (Yalcin et al., 2020) and act as pioneers of social change in promoting sustainable consumption habits (Sun et al., 2024). By guiding their followers toward eco-friendly lifestyles, green influencers enhance the credibility of sustainable products (Zhang et al., 2021) and raise environmental awareness (Dekoninck & Schmuck, 2022). Moreover, the trust that followers place in social media influencers can significantly impact their intention to purchase green products (Zhao et al., 2024). Previous studies have examined the influence of social media influencers on green consumption and found that they are particularly effective in promoting sustainable behaviors, such as organic food shopping and the use of green transportation alternatives (Minton et al., 2015). Lu and Miller (2019) found that the characteristics of a brand's Facebook posts, whether altruistic or egoistic, influence consumers' intentions to adopt eco-friendly behaviors. Furthermore, Pittman and Abell (2021) explored the difference between green and non-green influencers, revealing that green micro-influencers have a stronger impact on encouraging sustainable consumption compared to non-green influencers, as sharing eco-friendly content boosts consumers' intentions to make environmentally conscious purchases.

However, despite their positive contributions, greenfluencers are not without criticism. Greenwashing and the growing commercialization of sustainability-related content may undermine their perceived authenticity and impact (Sharma, 2024). This concern becomes particularly salient given that greenfluencers frequently participate in conventional influencer practices, such as forming paid brand partnerships and producing sponsored content. Although such activities are often framed through an environmentally conscious lens, they still operate within consumerist frameworks. This tension reveals a deeper ideological contradiction: while greenfluencers aim to challenge unsustainable market practices, they simultaneously participate

in—and derive benefits from—the very systems they seek to critique and transform (Blasbery, 2023).

1.5. Instagram and the Zero-Waste Movement Communication

Launched in 2010, Instagram is a widely used social media platform that enables users to share photos and videos. Users can capture and edit visuals, then share them with their followers, engage with others' posts through likes and comments, and post stories (Marwick, 2015). Unlike other platforms, Instagram emphasizes interactions through visual content rather than text or hashtags (Song et al., 2018). Due to Instagram's rapid growth, high user engagement, and its capacity to build communities around influencers and brands (Klostermann et al., 2018), there has been a growing academic interest in the platform (Jin et al., 2019). Instagram has great potential compared to Facebook (Nielsen Global Survey, 2014). Previous studies have shown that Instagram influencers influence their followers (Khan et al., 2021; Pittman & Reich, 2016). Accordingly, the influence of Instagram influencers on their followers has an important potential in terms of raising awareness on sustainability issues and directing individuals towards eco-friendly behaviors.

Instagram plays a crucial role in conveying sustainability goals and initiatives. It provides a platform for brands to foster environmental discussions and motivate individuals to adopt more sustainable behaviors (Zafar et al., 2021, p.4). Studies on sustainability communication through social media indicate that social media platforms can be more influential than traditional government or advertising eco-friendly practices (Goldsmith & Goldsmith, 2011).

Existing literature has focused on X (Twitter), YouTube, and Facebook as sustainability promotion tools (Colás-Bravo et al., 2023; Gerber, 2024; Martínez Lopez et al., 2020; Pilař et al., 2019; Saxton et al., 2019; Tao & Wilson, 2015). Although past research has proven Instagram's role in promoting sustainability, additional research is still needed. The reason for choosing Instagram as the social media platform analyzed in this study is that although the zero-waste movement is present on many social media platforms, Instagram is the most suitable platform to produce content on this topic. Instagram has the most active zero-waste communities. Similar to this study, previous studies on online zero-waste communities have also preferred Instagram as a social media platform (Spiteri, 2021; Pedersen, 2017). Although there are zero-waste content creators on other social platforms, Instagram stands out as a platform where most of the users are constantly active (Spiteri, 2021). Instagram is one of the world's most popular social media platforms, with 2.4 billion active users.

2. Method

For this study, a purposive sampling method was employed to identify the Instagram accounts of the greenfluencers, aligning with previous research that analyzed social media posts through content analysis (Boepple et al., 2016; Cohen et al., 2019; Conlin & Bissell, 2014). Purposive sampling enables a detailed examination of a small, homogeneous subgroup (Patton, 2014).

The sample consists of Instagram accounts from 5 macro-influencers in Türkiye. The inclusion of each account in the sample was based on five specific criteria: 1) The posts must be written in Turkish, 2) The account must be public, 3) Only individual users' posts are considered, excluding brands, companies, and other organizations, 4) The account must be active with regular posts.

To identify Instagram accounts to be included in the research sample, similar to Spiteri's (2021) method, a Google search was conducted with the keywords "top zero waste influencers on Instagram", "greenfluencer," "eco-influencer" and "green-influencer". The first two pages of search results for each keyword were analyzed, and accounts that did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded from the sample. While the list of greenfluencers in Türkiye was adopted, the Instagram accounts on the follow list were also added to the list. As a result, the final sample consists of Instagram accounts with posts between October 1, 2023, and 2024. Instagram stories were not included in the analysis. To answer the research questions, the Instagram posts of green influencers were analyzed through content analysis. The purpose of content analysis is to identify concepts to describe the collected data and the relationships between them (Kuckartz,

2014). Content analysis is widely used in a variety of marketing research, including research on websites (Naccarato & Neuendorf, 1998). In the content analysis process, Instagram posts were analyzed, themes and sub-themes were identified, and categories were created accordingly. The data obtained as a result of the analysis were analyzed by two members of the research team. To ensure validity, the member-checking method was applied, and it was evaluated whether the results obtained represented the reality (Creswell & Clark, 2004). To ensure the reliability of the study, the agreement between the coders was examined; after the researchers coded the themes, they discussed these themes and reached a consensus.

Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa coefficient (Cohen, 1960). The calculated Kappa value was 0.79, which falls within the range of 0.6 to 0.8, indicating a reliable level of agreement (Leiva et al., 2006, p. 523).

3. Findings

The account names, follower counts, themes of posts, and posting frequencies analyzed in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of Instagram Posts

Influencer name	Follower	Recycle	Reduce	Refuse	Reuse	Rot	Suggestion
cemresilaatilgan ¹	182 B	15	32	13	42	0	2
turkisiminimalizm ²	116 B	9	37	11	30	0	3
benutkuyilmaz ³	103 B	10	20	13	36	5	2
surdurulebilir_bir_yasam ⁴	94,8 B	20	46	13	65	0	9
dogala.donusum ⁵	62,9 B	4	39	21	27	10	2

The posts of the analyzed greenfluencers were evaluated within the framework of the five basic principles of the zero-waste movement: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, and Rot. The findings reveal how these content producers contribute to the zero-waste philosophy, which themes they emphasize more, and how sustainable consumption habits are shaped in Türkiye.

The analysis findings reveal that greenfluencers produce content that supports the zero-waste movement, but they focus more on certain topics. The most prominent themes in the posts are Reduce and Reuse. The Reduce theme consists of three sub-themes: waste prevention, minimalist living, and preventing overconsumption. Such as Dogala. donusum (31 posts), Cemresilaatilgan (27 posts), Türkisiminimalizm (26 posts), Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam (23 posts), and Benutkuyilmaz (20 posts) have produced active content on this topic. Shopping detoxes, simplification challenges, and conscious consumption recommendations are at the forefront.

The theme of reuse is strongly emphasized by Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam (53 posts), Benutkuyilmaz (32 posts), Cemresilaatilgan (29 posts), Türkisiminimalizm (25 posts), and Dogala. donusum (23 posts). In particular, slow fashion, capsule wardrobe practices, and suggestions for reusing old items are shared with followers. The habit of reusing items in Turkish culture is combined with the modern sustainability approach of the zero-waste philosophy. There are relatively fewer posts on Recycle. Benutkuyilmaz (8 posts), Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam (7 posts), Cemresilaatilgan (5 posts), Dogala. donusum (4 posts) and Türkisiminimalizm (4 posts) produced content on this topic. To increase recycling awareness, influencers should address this issue more.

The sub-theme of refusing single-use plastics related to the Refuse theme is less common in influencer content. Benutkuyilmaz (10 posts), Dogala.donusum (7 posts),

1 <https://www.instagram.com/cemresilaatilgan>

2 <https://www.instagram.com/turkisiminimalizm>

3 <https://www.instagram.com/benutkuyilmaz>

4 https://www.instagram.com/surdurulebilir_bir_yasam

5 <https://www.instagram.com/dogala.donusum>

Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam (4 posts), Türkisiminimalizm (3 posts), and Cemresilaatilgan (2 posts) shared on this topic. Rejecting plastic packaging and suggesting eco-friendly alternatives is an important issue in terms of developing sustainable consumption habits. Rot (Composting) stands out as the least common theme among influencers. Dogala. donusum (4 posts), Benutkuyilmaz (2 posts), Cemresilaatilgan (0 post), Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam (0 post), and Türkisiminimalizm (0 post) covered this topic. Since composting awareness is not widespread in Türkiye, this issue needs to be supported more through social media content.

The findings show that the analyzed influencers addressed zero-waste principles within the framework of different themes and encouraged their followers to develop conscious consumption habits. The themes and sub-themes that emerged as a result of the analysis are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Theme and Sub-themes

Influencer	Theme	Number of Posts	Sub-themes
cemresilatilgan	Reduce	27	Reducing the use of natural resources and preventing shopping
	Reuse	29	Capsule wardrobe, sustainable fashion
	Recycle	5	Recyclability of paper, plastic, and other packaging materials
	Refuse	2	Refusing single-use products, changing consumption habits
	Rot	0	Composting is not a widespread habit
turkisiminimalizm	Reduce	26	Minimalist lifestyle, conserving natural resources by consuming less
	Reuse	25	Slow fashion, 75-day no-shopping wardrobe challenge
	Recycle	4	Posts promoting awareness about recycling
	Refuse	3	Rejecting single-use plastics, raising awareness about plastic bag fees in Türkiye
	Rot	0	No composting-related posts, indicating a lack of cultural awareness
benutkuyilmaz	Reduce	20	Raising awareness about waste prevention and reducing unnecessary consumption
	Reuse	32	Emphasizing the importance of reusable and durable alternatives to single-use products
	Recycle	8	Spreading awareness about recycling and how it helps conserve natural resources
	Refuse	10	Rejecting environmentally harmful products and single-use plastics
	Rot	2	Indicating the growing awareness of composting, with potential for further education in Türkiye
surdurulebilir_bir_yasam	Reduce	23	Encouraging a sustainable lifestyle by preventing waste and reducing consumption. Covers topics such as energy and water conservation and maximizing the use of everyday items.
	Reuse	53	Highlighting reuse as a key pillar of the zero-waste movement. Posts focus on repurposing old clothes and items, opting for durable alternatives, and avoiding unnecessary consumption. Raises awareness about the environmental and economic benefits of reusing.
	Recycle	7	Promotes recycling by discussing the importance of processing waste materials like plastic, glass, and metal to reduce environmental impact and support the zero-waste movement.
	Refuse	4	Encourages rejecting single-use products such as plastic bags, straws, and packaging. Though limited in number, these posts contribute to shaping consumer habits and fostering eco-conscious choices in Türkiye

	Rot	0	No posts yet on composting, indicating that awareness of this practice is still growing in Türkiye. Future content on composting could educate followers on managing organic waste and its benefits for soil health.
dogala.donusum	Reduce	31	Strong emphasis on simplifying life. Features a 15-day, 1-hour-per-day decluttering challenge to highlight the importance of minimalism and reducing shopping frenzy. Encourages sharing unused items.
	Reuse	23	Promotes reusing old items, reinforcing a well-established habit in Turkish culture. Highlights the reuse as a fundamental part of the zero-waste movement.
	Recycle	4	Raises awareness about proper waste management and sorting, emphasizing that correctly separated waste can be repurposed rather than burdening the environment. Encourages active participation in the recycling process.
	Refuse	7	Advocates are rejecting single-use plastics, plastic bags, and harmful packaging. Supports sustainable product choices and educates followers on adopting more conscious consumption habits.
	Rot	4	Highlights the importance of composting and organic waste management. Raise awareness about returning kitchen and plant waste to the soil as a nutrient source, inspiring followers to adopt composting.

The content of influencers such as Cemresılaatılğan, Türkisiminimalizm, Benutkuyilmaz, Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam, and Dogala. donusum is shaped around topics such as questioning consumption habits, sustainable fashion, reuse, and waste management. Cemresılaatılğan focuses on sustainable living and consumption habits, covering themes such as “overdraft”, “slow/sustainable fashion,” and “second-hand product market” in her posts. This content offers a critical perspective on consumer culture and encourages individuals to develop more conscious consumption habits.

Cemresılaatılğan emphasizes minimalist consumption by rejecting the need for constant shopping, advocating for versatile clothing choices over fast fashion, and promoting sustainable practices such as plastic-free routines and avoiding single-use products, such as:

"We don't constantly need something new; a few pieces that match our style and body and can be combined in various ways are enough."

"I no longer say I have nothing to wear because with a few basic pieces, I can combine everything and choose based on my style rather than what fast fashion dictates."

"As consumers, we must eliminate single-use products—especially plastic—from our lives."

Similarly, Türkisiminimalizm promotes a minimalist lifestyle through themes such as “slow fashion” and “get free by simplifying,” and takes a stance against the culture of excessive consumption. Its posts guide followers toward a sustainable lifestyle by offering ways to consume less, make more conscious choices, and live a meaningful life, such as:

"Running a washing machine for a single item of clothing is harmful to both the environment and your wallet. The key is to run full loads without overdoing it."

"The idea of a capsule wardrobe may seem boring to some, but with small adjustments, it's possible to create endless outfit combinations."

"Aluminum is highly valuable because it can be recycled infinitely. Recycling aluminum requires 95% less energy compared to producing it from raw materials, which significantly reduces carbon emissions."

Benutkuyilmaz, on the other hand, highlights eco-friendly alternatives with content that encourages the use of natural and organic products and emphasizes the reshaping of consumption habits through themes such as "reuse" and "living less." This content not only supports environmental sustainability but also aims to promote a healthy lifestyle by encouraging individuals to use natural and sustainable products, such as:

"How do I get my detergents plastic-free? I take my containers to Kadıköy Municipality's Zero Waste Store to refill items like dish detergent, liquid soap, and stain remover."

"I'm packing my holiday bag with plastic-free, sustainable, and refillable cosmetic products. Are you ready to go plastic-free for a whole month?"

Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam focuses on eco-friendly lifestyles and waste reduction, highlighting themes such as "sustainable fashion," "reuse," and "recycling." This content not only informs its followers about environmental issues but also provides inspiration and practical advice to make more sustainable choices, such as:

"I contribute to sustainable living by giving my favorite clothes a second chance. My favorite approach within the sustainable living movement is reuse."

"Can we take more responsibility? Can we be more conscious?"

"Did you know that the paper cups we think are harmless are actually coated with plastic and therefore cannot be recycled?"

Dogala.donusum, on the other hand, has a strong emphasis on the themes of living simply and reusing, with a particular focus on the reuse of old items. Although their recycling posts are limited, their content raises awareness of waste management and emphasizes that properly sorted waste can be reused without creating environmental burdens, such as:

"Now that the countertop, fridge, pantry, and freezer are all organized, it's time to simplify the remaining areas of our kitchen."

"Simplifying is not a destination but an ongoing journey. Take a small step today to begin your path toward simplicity."

"We all take care of our clothes, but what about nature? Let's protect nature while also extending the life of our garments."

Table 3 provides a comparative summary of each greenfluencer's content format, the primary motivations behind their posts, and the most frequently used hashtags associated with those motivations.

Table 3. Greenfluencers' Content Formats, Motivations, and Hashtags Used

Influencer name	Content Format	Motivation	Hashtags used
cemresilaatilgan	Video	Promotional	collaboration, cosmetic, menstrual cup, clothing

	Video	Informative	slowfashion, climatechange, recycling, upcycling, sustainableliving
	Video	Educational	Diy(do-it-yourself), slowfashionstyle, slowfashion, reuse, secondchance, sustainability, circulareconomy, sustainable fashion, secondhand
	Video	Educational, Informative	sustainableliving, slowfashion, greenwashing, zerowastekitchen
turkisiminimalizm	Video	Educational	sustainability, food waste, minimalism, waste management, recycling
	Static image	Educational	minimalism, simple living, washable baby diaper, simplicity
	Video	Informative	recycle, fast fashion, sustainable living, waste-free home, sustainable cleaning, sustainable fashion, minimalism
benutkuyilmaz	Video	Informative	sustainable food, sustainable living, menstrual cup, simplicity, ecological life in the city, sustainability, sustainable wardrobe, sustainable kitchen, carbon food print, diy, upcycle
	Video	Educational	recycle, plastic, zero-waste, ecological life in the city, personal care, plastic free, cruelty free, sustainable cosmetics, energy saving, microplastic
	Video	Promotional	ecological life in the city, sustainable food
surdurulebilir_bir_yasam	Video	Informative	Plastic-free, sustainable lifestyle, sustainable life, waste-free, sustainable fashion
	Video	Promotional	collaboration, World Day, sustainable living, sustainable life, sustainable lifestyle, sustainable fashion
	Static image	Informative	sustainable living, sustainable lifestyles, sustainable life, sustainable living, sustainable fashion, climate action, waste-free living, don't waste, upcycle
	Static image	Educational	secondhand, sustainable life, sustainable lifestyle, capsule wardrobe, conscious consumer, diy

dogala.donusum	Video	Informative	sustainability, sustainable living, waste, food waste, minimalism, minimalist life, sustainable nutrition
	Static image	Educational	compost, sustainability, ecological life
	Video	Educational	Zero-waste life, sustainability, waste-free living, ecologic life, waste-free kitchen, sustainable agriculture, recycling, recycling project
	Video	Promotional	hair dye

Cemresilaatilgan primarily shares video content, with a strong emphasis on informative and educational posts. In her promotional content, she focuses on the advertisement of cosmetics, menstrual cups, and clothing. The hashtag #slowfashion is frequently used across her posts.

For Turkisiminimalizm, both video and static image formats are utilized. Her content also centers on informative and educational themes, with the hashtag #minimalism appearing most frequently.

Benutkuyilmaz exclusively shares video content. Her informative and educational posts commonly focus on the themes of ecological life in the city, sustainable food, and sustainable living. Promotional posts are associated with hashtags such as #ecologicallifeinthecity and #sustainablefood.

Sürdürülebilir_bir_yaşam shares a combination of static images and video content. The account features mainly informative and educational posts, frequently using hashtags such as #sustainableliving, #sustainablelifestyle, and #sustainablefashion. Promotional content often highlights sustainable fashion brands, predominantly using the #sustainablefashion hashtag. Finally, dogala.donusum also uses both video and static image formats. In promotional content, natural hair dye is a recurring theme. The hashtags #ecologicallife and #sustainability are frequently used across various posts.

Overall, the content shared by the greenfluencers reflects a strong emphasis on educational and informative messaging, with video being the dominant format across most accounts. While promotional content is present, it often remains aligned with sustainable values, such as eco-friendly products and sustainable fashion. Hashtag usage further reinforces each influencer's thematic focus, ranging from #slowfashion and #minimalism to #sustainableliving and #ecologicallife, which serves to both categorize their content and enhance visibility within environmentally conscious communities. These patterns highlight the influencers' role in not only promoting products but also in shaping sustainability discourse through strategic content curation.

CONCLUSION

The findings show that influencers' tendency to produce content on zero-waste principles is shaped around certain themes and that they contribute to social sustainability awareness. The 5R principles, which are the basis of the waste philosophy, aim to minimize waste generation and contribute to the circular economy by transforming individuals' consumption habits (Connett, 2013). In this context, greenfluencers on Instagram have a significant impact on altering consumption habits. However, it is observed that influencer content primarily focuses on the themes of reduce and reuse, while recycle, refuse, and especially rot are discussed in a more limited manner.

The most effective solution in the zero-waste approach is to prevent waste from occurring in the first place (Leonard, 2010). The greenfluencers analyzed in the study focus on questioning consumption habits and adopting a minimalist lifestyle with this awareness. In particular, Cemresilaatilgan and Turkisiminimalizm offer a critical perspective on the culture of overconsumption and emphasize issues such as sustainable fashion, reducing shopping frenzy,

and being a conscious consumer. The minimalist lifestyle not only saves resources at the individual level but can also contribute to the transformation of consumption-oriented economic models in line with sustainability principles (Fletcher & Tham, 2019). Promoting sustainable consumption through influencers on Instagram paves the way for individuals to make more conscious decisions in their daily lives. Reuse, which is one of the cornerstones of the zero-waste movement, refers to the use of products for as long as possible and for different purposes to prevent waste (Geyer et al., 2017). The majority of the influencers analyzed in the study produce content that emphasizes the importance of reuse. In particular, *Surdurulebilir_bir_yasam* and *Benutkuyilmaz* focus on the reuse of old items and second-hand clothes, encouraging individuals to avoid fast consumption and support the circular economy.

Traditionally, in Turkish society, reusing and recycling objects is a common habit. Today, greenfluencers combine this cultural heritage with a modern understanding of sustainability. Accordingly, influencer content not only creates individual awareness but also influences consumers from a social sustainability perspective. Recycling, an important component of the zero-waste movement, is considered the final stage of waste management (Hopewell et al., 2009). However, this study reveals that influencers address recycling in a more limited way. For example, although *Dogala.donusum* and *Benutkuyilmaz* share content emphasizing the importance of recycling processes. In general, influencers' posts focus on reducing waste generation and promoting reuse. However, raising individual and social awareness is of great importance for the effective implementation of recycling processes (Zaman & Lehmann, 2011). For this reason, influencers' emphasis on waste segregation, recyclable materials, and circular economy may contribute to strengthening waste management policies and raising sustainability awareness in Türkiye.

In the zero-waste movement, the rejection of single-use and environmentally harmful products (Refuse) allows individuals to make permanent changes in their consumption habits (Beitzen-Heineke et al., 2017). However, this study reveals that influencers cover this topic to a lesser extent. Although the abandonment of plastic bags, single-use packaging, and plastic straws is included in influencer content, there is a need to increase awareness in this area. Emphasizing the Refuse theme more may contribute to individuals changing their daily consumption decisions towards making eco-friendly choices. If greenfluencers increase their content on this topic, it will help consumers reduce their plastic consumption and turn to sustainable alternatives.

Similarly, composting stands out as one of the least covered topics of the zero-waste movement. However, composting organic waste is of great importance in terms of improving soil quality and reducing carbon emissions (Song et al., 2018). However, it was observed that this issue was not sufficiently addressed among the influencers analyzed in the study. For example, only *Dogala.donusum* and *Benutkuyilmaz* make limited posts on this issue. Just like reducing plastic consumption, increasing the number of posts on the theme of composting will contribute to the proper utilization of organic waste and the adoption of sustainable living practices. In this context, influencers producing more content on both refuse and composting can help expand the impact of the zero-waste movement and strengthen environmental awareness.

Since composting awareness is not widespread enough in Türkiye, increasing influencer content in this area can create critical awareness in terms of reintroducing organic waste to nature. Green influencers raising awareness among their followers on home composting and sustainable waste management will contribute to reducing the carbon footprint at the individual level. To this end, social media influencers can produce more content on recycling, refuse, and Rot. need to be addressed more. In particular, producing content on composting and refusing single-use products will increase awareness of sustainability. In addition, for influencers to contribute more to the zero-waste movement, collaborations with recycling companies, sustainable fashion brands, zero-waste initiatives, and environmental NGOs should be increased. Such collaborations can reach more people and spread zero-waste awareness.

Greenfluencers can increase their followers' knowledge in these areas by producing more educational content on waste sorting, composting, and sustainable living habits. The proliferation of such content will contribute to strengthening environmental awareness at the individual level. It is important for influencers not only to produce content but also to increase individual awareness by interacting with their followers. For example, live broadcasts on zero-waste challenges, recycling workshops, and eco-friendly living practices can be organized.

As with any study, this study also has limitations. This research examined the contributions of green influencers on Instagram to the zero-waste philosophy only within the framework of the 5R principles (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse, Rot). The second limitation is that the study focuses only on posts shared between October 1, 2023, and October 2024. However, the study only focused on social media influencers who produce content on Instagram. Future studies can examine and compare the zero-waste posts of influencers on different social media platforms (YouTube, TikTok, X).

The third limitation of this study is the relatively small number of greenfluencers included in the sample. Future research could benefit from expanding the sample size to include a broader and more diverse range of greenfluencers across different social media platforms and geographic regions. In addition, this study employed content analysis as its primary methodological approach. Future studies may enhance the depth and scope of findings by incorporating complementary analytical methods. For example, analyzing caption tags or conducting backlink analysis could offer more nuanced insights into the visibility, audience engagement, and network dynamics of sustainability-oriented content.

Within the scope of the study, only Instagram posts were analyzed. Elements such as follower interactions, comments, and shared stories were not analyzed. Future research could conduct surveys or in-depth interviews to measure the behavioral changes of influencers' content on their followers. Finally, posts about the zero-waste movement were only analyzed in the Turkish context. Since cultural factors are known to shape influencers' content strategies, future research could compare the content of green influencers in different countries to analyze how zero-waste awareness differs globally.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

YEŞİL FENOMENLERİN INSTAGRAM PAYLAŞIMLARI SIFIR ATIK HAREKETİNİ
NASIL TEŞVİK EDİYOR? TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ

Sosyal medya platformları, sürdürülebilir tüketici davranışlarını teşvik etmede önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Günümüzde, çevresel kaygıların artmasıyla birlikte "sıfır atık hareketi" küresel çapta ilgi görmeye başlamıştır ve sosyal medya fenomenleri bu hareketin merkezinde yer almaktadır. Sıfır atık, sürdürülebilir üretim ve tüketim alışkanlıklarını teşvik eden ve kaynakların verimli kullanımını destekleyen döngüsel bir yaklaşımdır. Bu araştırma, yeşil fenomenlerin sosyal medya paylaşımlarında sıfır atık konusunda odaklandıkları temaları incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma, 1 Ekim 2023-2024 tarihleri arasında, yeşil mikro ve makro fenomenlerin yaptığı 356 paylaşımı içerik analizi yöntemiyle değerlendirmiştir. Analiz, sıfır atık felsefesi çerçevesinde geri dönüştür, azalt, reddet, yeniden kullan ve kompostlama temalarına odaklanmıştır.

Bulgular, influencer'ların sıfır atık ilkelerine yönelik içerik üretme eğilimlerinin belirli temalar etrafında şekillendiğini ve toplumsal sürdürülebilirlik bilincine katkı sunduklarını göstermektedir. Sıfır atık felsefesinin temeli olan 5R modeli, bireylerin tüketim alışkanlıklarını dönüştürerek atık oluşumunu en aza indirmeyi ve döngüsel ekonomiye katkı sunmayı amaçlamaktadır (Connett, 2013). Bu bağlamda, Instagram'daki green-influencer, tüketim alışkanlıklarının değiştirilmesi konusunda önemli bir rol üstlenmektedir. Ancak, influencer içeriklerinin ağırlıklı olarak Reduce ve Reuse temalarına odaklandığı; Recycle, Refuse ve özellikle Rot konularının ise daha sınırlı şekilde ele alındığı görülmektedir.

Sıfır atık yaklaşımında en etkili çözüm, atığın en baştan oluşmasını engellemektir (Leonard, 2010). Çalışmada incelenen influencer'lar, bu bilinçli tüketim alışkanlıklarının sorgulanması ve minimalist bir yaşam tarzının benimsenmesi üzerine yoğunlaşmaktadır. Özellikle Cemresilaatılğan ve Türkişiminimalizm, aşırı tüketim kültürüne eleştirel bir perspektif sunarak sürdürülebilir moda, alışveriş çılgınlığını azaltma ve bilinçli tüketici olma gibi konuları ön plana çıkarmaktadır.

Minimalist yaşam tarzı, yalnızca bireysel düzeyde kaynak tasarrufu sağlamakla kalmayıp, tüketim odaklı ekonomik modellerin sürdürülebilirlik ilkeleri doğrultusunda dönüşmesine de katkı sağlayabilir (Fletcher & Tham, 2019). Instagram'daki influencer'lar aracılığıyla sürdürülebilir tüketimin teşvik edilmesi, bireylerin günlük hayatlarında daha bilinçli kararlar almalarına zemin hazırlamaktadır.

Sıfır atık hareketinin temel taşlarından biri olan Reuse (Yeniden Kullanmak), atıkların oluşmasını önlemek için ürünlerin mümkün olduğunca uzun ömürlü kullanılmasını ve farklı amaçlarla değerlendirilmesini ifade etmektedir (Geyer et al., 2017). Çalışmada incelenen influencer'ların büyük çoğunluğu, yeniden kullanımın önemini vurgulayan içerikler üretmektedir. Özellikle Sürdürülebilir_bir_yasam ve Benutkuyılmaz geri eşyaların ve ikinci el kıyafetlerin yeniden değerlendirilmesi üzerine yoğunlaşmakta, bireyleri hızlı tüketimden kaçınmaya ve döngüsel ekonomiyi desteklemeye teşvik etmektedir.

Türk toplumunda geleneksel olarak eşyaların yeniden kullanımı ve değerlendirilmesi yaygın bir alışkanlıktır. Günümüzde yeşil etkileyicilerin bu kültürel mirası modern sürdürülebilirlik anlayışıyla birleştirdiği görülmektedir. Bu doğrultuda, influencer içerikleri yalnızca bireysel farkındalık yaratmakla kalmayıp, toplumsal sürdürülebilirlik perspektifinden de tüketicileri etkilemektedir. Sıfır atık hareketinin önemli bir bileşeni olan geri dönüşüm, atık yönetiminin son aşaması olarak değerlendirilmektedir (Hopewell et al., 2009). Ancak, bu çalışma influencer'ların geri dönüşüm konusunu daha sınırlı ele aldığını ortaya koymaktadır. Örneğin, Dogala.donusum ve Benutkuyılmaz geri dönüşüm süreçlerinin önemini vurgulayan içerikler üretse de, genel olarak influencer'ların paylaşımlarında atık oluşumunu azaltma ve yeniden kullanımı teşvik etme konularının ön planda olduğu görülmektedir. Bununla birlikte, geri dönüşüm süreçlerinin etkili bir şekilde yürütülmesi için bireysel ve toplumsal farkındalığın artırılması büyük önem taşımaktadır (Zaman & Lehmann, 2011). Bu nedenle, influencer'ların atık ayrıştırma, geri dönüştürülebilir malzemeler ve döngüsel ekonomi konularına daha fazla yer vermesi, Türkiye'de atık yönetimi politikalarının güçlenmesine ve sürdürülebilirlik bilincinin yaygınlaşmasına katkı sağlayabilir.

Sıfır atık hareketinde, tek kullanımlık ve çevreye zarar veren ürünlerin reddedilmesi (Refuse), bireylerin tüketim alışkanlıklarında kalıcı değişiklikler yapmalarına olanak tanımaktadır (Beitzen-Heineke et al., 2017). Ancak, bu çalışma influencer'ların bu konuyu daha sınırlı işlediğini ortaya koymaktadır. Plastik poşetlerin, tek kullanımlık ambalajların ve plastik pipetlerin terk edilmesi influencer içeriklerinde yer alsa da bu alandaki farkındalığın artırılması gerektiği görülmektedir. Refuse temasının daha fazla vurgulanması, bireylerin günlük tüketim kararlarını çevre dostu seçimler yapma yönünde değiştirmelerine katkı sağlayabilir. Yeşil etkileyicilerin bu konudaki içeriklerini artırması, tüketicilerin plastik tüketimini azaltmalarına ve sürdürülebilir alternatiflere yönelmelerine yardımcı olacaktır.

Benzer şekilde, kompost yapımı da sıfır atık hareketinin en az işlenen konularından biri olarak öne çıkmaktadır. Oysaki organik atıkların kompostlaştırılması, toprak kalitesinin artırılması ve karbon salınımının azaltılması açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır (Song et al., 2018). Ancak, çalışmada incelenen influencer'lar arasında bu konunun yeterince ele alınmadığı gözlemlenmiştir. Örneğin, yalnızca Dogala.donusum ve Benutkuyılmaz bu konuda sınırlı paylaşımlar yapmaktadır. Tıpkı plastik tüketimini azaltmada olduğu gibi, kompost teması üzerine yapılan paylaşımların artırılması, bireylerin organik atıklarını doğru şekilde değerlendirmelerine ve sürdürülebilir yaşam pratiklerini benimsemelerine katkı sağlayacaktır. Bu bağlamda, influencer'ların hem reddetme (Refuse) hem de kompost yapımı konularında daha fazla içerik üretmesi, sıfır atık hareketinin etkisini genişletmeye ve çevre bilincinin güçlenmesine yardımcı olabilir.

Türkiye'de kompost bilincinin yeterince yaygın olmaması nedeniyle, influencer içeriklerinin bu alanda artırılması organik atıkların doğaya yeniden kazandırılması açısından kritik bir farkındalık oluşturabilir. Yeşil etkileyicilerin, takipçilerini evde kompost yapımı ve sürdürülebilir atık yönetimi konusunda bilinçlendirmesi, bireysel düzeyde karbon ayak izinin azalmasına katkı sağlayacaktır. Buna yönelik olarak sosyal medya influencer'ları Recycle, Refuse ve Rot konuları ile ilgili daha fazla içerik üretebilirler. daha fazla ele alınması gerekmektedir. Özellikle kompost yapımı ve tek kullanımlık ürünleri reddetme konularında içerikler üretilmesi sürdürülebilirliğe yönelik farkındalığı artıracaktır. Bunun yanı sıra influencer'ların sıfır atık hareketine daha fazla katkı sağlayabilmesi için geri dönüşüm şirketleri, sürdürülebilir moda markaları, sıfır atık girişimleri ve çevre STK'ları ile iş birlikleri artırılmalıdır. Bu tür ortak çalışmalar, daha fazla kişiye ulaşarak sıfır atık bilincini yaygınlaştırabilir.

Yeşil etkileyiciler, atık ayrıştırma, kompost yapımı ve sürdürülebilir yaşam alışkanlıkları konusunda daha fazla eğitici içerik üreterek takipçilerinin bu alanlardaki bilgisini artırabilir. Bu tür içeriklerin yaygınlaşması, bireysel düzeyde çevresel farkındalığın güçlenmesine katkı sağlayacaktır. Influencer'ların yalnızca içerik üretmesi değil, aynı zamanda takipçileriyle etkileşim kurarak bireysel farkındalığı artırmaları önemlidir. Örneğin, buna yönelik olarak sıfır atık meydan okumaları (zero waste challenges), geri dönüşüm atölyeleri ve çevre dostu yaşam pratikleri hakkında canlı yayınlar düzenlenebilir.

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