

Implementing a Just and Sustainable Circular Economy in a Social Context

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ABSTRACT

The circular economy offers a new approach in creating a more sustainable production system by reducing waste and maximizing resource utilization. Its application in a social context requires special attention to the social disparities and inequalities that can arise from such transformation. Circular economy principles can be of great benefit in addressing social and environmental challenges if designed with inclusive and just policies. Engaging various parties, including the government, private sector, and societies, is needed to realize a just circular economy. By focusing policies on equal access to technology and infrastructure, and taking into account diverse social needs, the circular economy can become a pillar of social and environment sustainability. The public must be engaged in every stage of the policy so that the solutions are relevant and acceptable to various social strata. It is important to continuously monitor and evaluate policies to ensure the sustainable and inclusive circular economy.

INTRODUCTION

The sustainable circular economy has become one of the main topics in the global discussion on sustainable development. With the increasing awareness of the environment crisis, many countries have started to focus on a more sustainable economic model that does not rely on excessive linear production and consumption patterns. The circular economy model, which focuses on reducing waste, reusing and recycling materials, is expected to create a positive impact on the environment and society. The successful realization of this model inherently depends on realizing sustainability in public policy, which actively seeks to build a balance between economic, social, and environmental objectives (Mardikaningsih & Hariani, 2021). This process also engages changes in the way goods and services are produced and consumption patterns that are more conscious of sustainable practices (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017).

The implementation of circular economy principles in society still faces various challenges (Baccini & Brunner, 2012). Although many countries and large companies have adopted the principles, the adoption rate at the individual or community level is lower. This could be due to a lack of understanding, limited infrastructure that supports waste

management, and policies that have not fully supported the circular model (Coelho & De Brito, 2012). These systemic gaps often stem from a failure to adequately accommodate evolving social changes, which is crucial for creating sustainability policies that remain just and relevant to society's needs (Halizah & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Linking the circular economy to real social and environment needs is important for these principles to be more widely accepted and applied in society. In this context, local communities play an indispensable role, as their active participation is vital for the effective conservation of the environment and management of natural resources, which are the very foundations of a circular ecosystem (Ramle et al., 2022).

Although the circular economy can provide significant environment benefits, its impact on the social and economic structure of societies needs further attention. The implementation of circular economy should not only be effective in reducing waste, but it also needs to pay attention to social sustainability, including creating employment opportunities, reducing social inequality, and ensuring equal access to economic benefits. polydent opportunities, reducing social inequality, and ensuring equal access to economic benefits It is

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important to explore how the circular economy can be translated into policies that support a more inclusive and just society (Bocken et al., 2016). Part of this inclusivity involves re-evaluating consumption paradigms, as managing prosperity through a minimalist lifestyle presents significant social and economic implications that align with circular principles (Hardyansah et al., 2022).

One of the main problems faced in implementing a circular economy is the low societal awareness of the importance of changing consumption and production patterns. Although a lot of information is readily available, society's understanding of the positive environment and economic impacts of the circular economy is still limited. The lack of adequate education and training means that many individuals do not have enough knowledge to contribute to more efficient waste and resource management (Cossu & Williams, 2015). Without sufficient awareness, it is difficult to drive the behavioral changes needed to realize an effective circular economy (Murray et al., 2017).

Another issue that arises is the unpreparedness of infrastructure to support a circular economy. In many cases, facilities for recycling and processing used materials are limited or inadequate, especially in developing countries. Without an efficient system for collecting, processing and redistributing materials, the principles of the circular economy are difficult to implement widely. Companies that produce goods and services also often are unable to apply the principles of design for sustainable use, which causes the product lifecycle to still end in waste (Stahel, 2016).

Social constraints are also an issue that needs to be addressed. Although the concept of circular economy offers the potential to create new jobs through the management of used materials and recycled products, not all groups in society have equal access to these opportunities. Social inequality can arise if there are no policies that ensure the benefit of the circular economy can be enjoyed by all levels of society, especially those who are marginalized. Strengthening the direction and structure of social welfare policy through a robust legal system is fundamental to prevent such disparities and ensure equitable benefits (Marsal et al., 2021). Without inclusive policies, the circular economy may exacerbate existing social inequalities (Lieder & Rashid, 2016).

It is important to observe the application of circular economy in a social context as it is directly related to achieving overall sustainable development. By integrating circular principles into

social policies, we can create a more environmentally and socially sustainable society. Without paying attention to the social dimension in the circular economy, there is a risk that this model only benefits some groups of society, while others remain neglected. The principles of sustainable development, as seen in sectors like tourism, offer valuable policy directions for integrating economic activity with environmental and social stewardship (Tania & Sinambela, 2022). Observing and evaluating circular economy practices in a social context will ensure that the model can be applied more fairly and equitably.

Identifying and addressing issues that arise in the implementation of circular economy is crucial to accelerate the transformation towards a more sustainable system. By understanding the social barriers, infrastructure, and society awareness, we can develop solutions that better suit the needs of local society, as well as create more effective policies. The transformation to a circular economy requires collaboration between the public, private, and society sectors, which can only be achieved if there is a deep understanding of the challenges and potentials that exist in the social and environment context.

The purpose of this research is to explore how circular economy principles can be adapted and applied in a social context that includes society's awareness, supportive infrastructure, and inclusive policies. The research aims to identify existing barriers and formulate solutions that can help realize a more just, relevant, and sustainable circular economy for all levels of society.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study is a literature study approach, which allows researchers to explore and analyze various relevant academic sources related to the application of circular economy principles in social contexts. Through the literature review, the researcher was able to understand various theories, concepts, and previous findings regarding the challenges and opportunities that exist in integrating circular economy into social policy. This approach provides a deeper insight into the application of circular economy principles in various societies and identifies effective ways to improve sustainable practices through supportive policy design. By exploring relevant publications, researchers can build a comprehensive picture of circular economy concepts and best practices that can be applied socially (Korhonen et al., 2018).

The literature review approach also helps

researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of policies that have been implemented in different countries and analyze how those results can be applied or adapted in a more local context. By looking at various studies conducted in the field of circular economy, researchers can understand the differences and similarities in the application of circular economy that affect social policies at the society level. This method also allows researchers to identify existing knowledge gaps and areas that need further research. Based on the existing literature, researchers can build a deeper understanding of the relationship between the circular economy and social inequality, as well as ways to support sustainable development by engaging all levels of society (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The application of circular economy principles in a social context has attracted widespread attention in an effort to create a more sustainable and just system. Amidst the great challenges faced by many countries related to social inequality and environment degradation, the circular economy offers a comprehensive approach. Optimizing resource use, extending product life cycles, and reducing waste are at the core of this paradigm. For this principle to be accepted and effectively implemented in society, relevant and inclusive policies need to be developed. Societies should not only be the implementers, but also an integral part in designing solutions that suit their needs (Lipych et al., 2022). The formulation of such policies requires navigating regulatory uncertainty and complex managerial challenges, making robust business sustainability strategies a critical component of successful implementation (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2021).

Social changes, such as urbanization and globalization, bring their own challenges to the implementation of circular economy. One of the main challenges is how to ensure that every layer of society, including marginalized groups, benefit equally. If the circular economy is only applied to certain segments, the existing social gap could widen. The implementation of this principle must be carefully designed, taking into account the existing social, economic and cultural conditions in different regions. This necessitates the implementation of value-based management within organizations, a crucial approach for multinational entities and large-scale projects facing diverse cultural and operational landscapes (Hariani & Mardikaningsih, 2021). Developing policies that include society empowerment through just access to circular economy technologies and facilities is very important

(Ilić et al., 2022).

Cross-sector collaboration that engages the government, private sector, and societies is required to create just and relevant policies. The government has a strategic role in facilitating the development of infrastructure that supports the circular economy, while the private sector plays a role in developing more sustainable business models. Societies, as the main actors in this process, should be engaged at every stage, from planning to implementation. The foundation of this collaboration must be built on strong ethical principles in business decision-making, which directly shape corporate sustainability and trust in relationships with all external stakeholders (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). In this case, education and awareness-raising on the importance of circular economy are key to achieve holistic sustainable development (Mies & Gold, 2021).

The application of circular economy principles in a social context is important to ensure sustainable and just distribution of benefits across society. The circular economy principle, which focuses on waste reduction, efficient resource utilization, and product life cycle extension, seeks to create a more sustainable system than the traditional linear economic model. In a social context, this principle should be integrated with policies that support equal access, empower society, and reduce social inequalities (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). To create relevant and sustainable solutions, it is very important to identify the specific needs and challenges faced by local societies, and ensure that every aspect of circular economy policy is accessible to the whole society. Practical application of these principles can be seen in sectors like construction, where a focus on material quality and economic efficiency in concrete use reflects core circular economy values of durability and resource optimization (Djaelani et al., 2022).

One way to apply circular economy principles in a social context is to take into account the social and economic diversity in society. This means creating a model that focuses not only on environment and economic aspects, but also on social needs. The circular economy needs to be adapted to include policies that support equality, such as society empowerment through skills training programs, employment opportunities, and access to sustainable technologies (Korhonen et al., 2018). In this regard, it is important to design policies that take into account the diverse social and economic conditions in different regions, and facilitate a just transition for all.

The implementation of a circular economy

must also take into account the active participation of the society, especially marginalized groups. For example, in waste management, society needs to be given a role in the recycling process and natural resource management. This not only helps to reduce the burden on the environment but also provides economic opportunities to disadvantaged groups. This approach ensures that circular economy principles are applied inclusively, with benefits felt by the whole society, including those who are usually marginalized (Bocken et al., 2016). One successful example of the application of circular economy in a social context is a recycling program engaging societies in urban and rural areas, which creates new jobs and increases environment awareness.

To ensure that circular economy principles can be effectively applied in a social context, collaboration between the government, private sector, and society is needed. The government should develop policies that support the development of infrastructure needed to support the circular economy, such as recycling facilities, as well as provide incentives for companies that implement circularity principles in their business models. The private sector also needs to adopt sustainable and circularity-based business models, which not only think about short-term profits, but also long-term social and environment impacts (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2015).

The role of the government is very important in ensuring the successful implementation of the circular economy, by creating policies that are based on inclusive and fair principles. For example, through policies that support the use of recycled materials and green technologies across industry sectors, the government can encourage companies to adopt circular economy practices. The government should also ensure that these programs do not only focus on the better-off, but also provide equal opportunities for poorer or marginalized groups. The effectiveness of such social welfare-oriented policies is strengthened when grounded in a coherent juridical foundation and social welfare theory, ensuring they are sustainable and legally robust (Rizky & Udjari, 2021). Without just policies, efforts to implement a circular economy will risk exacerbating social inequalities (Stahel, 2016).

One of the challenges often faced in implementing a circular economy is inequality access to resources. In many countries, access to green technologies, recycling facilities, and infrastructure that support the circular economy is still limited, especially in poor and remote areas. For

this reason, policies that support infrastructure development and society empowerment in these areas are essential. Society empowerment, including skills training in recycling and renewable energy industries, can create new economic opportunities and raise awareness about the importance of sustainability (Murray et al., 2017).

Effective implementation of a circular economy requires a deep understanding of the social dynamics present in a region. This includes understanding the local culture, social structure, and economic and social needs of the community. Circular economy policies that do not consider these aspects are likely to fail in creating relevant and just solutions for societies. It is very important to prioritize local context-sensitive approaches in designing inclusive and effective circular economy policies (Kirchherr et al., 2018).

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of circular economy policies is very important to ensure that they are successful in achieving social and environment goals. Programs that focus on waste reduction and resource reuse need to be measured for their effectiveness in improving society's well-being, especially vulnerable groups. This will allow policymakers to adjust their policies to be more effective in addressing social inequalities and improving a sustainable society (Zhu, 2014).

Society's engagement in the planning and implementation of circular economy policies is also very important. Society should be empowered with the knowledge and skills to participate in this process, so that they feel they have control over the solutions implemented in their society. The success of a circular economy relies heavily on society's awareness and active participation in every stage, from planning to policy evaluation (Behrens et al., 2007). It is important for the policies implemented to include education and awareness-raising aspects on the importance of circular economy for sustainable development.

Efforts to create relevant, just, and sustainable solutions through the circular economy also require collaboration between various sectors, including industry, education, and civil society. At the industry level, companies should innovate with more circular business models, while the education sector should create curriculums that support the development of relevant skills to support a circular economy. This collaboration will accelerate the transition to a more sustainable and inclusive economy (Lacy & Rutqvist, 2015).

In the final analysis, it is important to understand that implementing circular economy principles in a

social context is not an instantaneous process. It requires in-depth policies and active participation from all elements of society to create solutions that are acceptable to all social strata. With the right policies, circular economy can reduce social inequality and improve society's quality of life, especially for the vulnerable.

Through the effective implementation of circular economy, it can create better changes in various aspects of society, both socially and environmentally (Arora et al., 2017). With principles that emphasize waste reduction, resource reuse, and more efficient production, the circular economy can help reduce social inequality. Without inclusive and collaborative policies, the goal of achieving just sustainable development for all will be difficult to achieve. It is important for all parties to work together to create solutions that not only benefit the economy but also provide just benefits for all elements of society.

To realize a fair circular economy, greater attention should be paid to the aspects of society empowerment, inequality reduction, and access to green technology. Society's participation in the decision-making process will also ensure that the policies implemented will be more relevant to their needs. By engaging society, the transition process towards a sustainable circular economy will be easier to accept and adopt. Policies that are inclusive and based on social equality and environment sustainable will make a big contribution in facing the big challenges that exist today.

To achieve optimal results, policies that support the circular economy must be continuously monitored and adjusted. Continuous evaluation of these policies will ensure that the processes implemented provide real benefits to society at large. With concerted efforts, we can create just and relevant solutions that support future social and environment sustainable. The circular economy, if implemented well, has the potential to become a key pillar in sustainable development that benefits future generations.

CONCLUSION

The application of circular economy principles in a social context offers a great opportunity to create solutions that are sustainable, just and relevant to society. By focusing on reducing waste, reusing resources, and optimizing production processes, it can reduce social inequality and improve people's well-being. Its implementation requires cross-sector collaboration, engaging the roles of the government, private sector, and society. Inclusive policies based on social and environment sustainable are key to

ensure that every level of society can equally benefit from the circular economy. In this context, society's education and awareness on the principles of circular economy is also very important so that sustainable can be achieved holistically and effectively.

Policies that support the circular economy should be designed to facilitate just access to green technologies and the needed infrastructure. It is important to pay attention to social disparities that may arise from the implementation of a circular economy to avoid discrimination against marginalized groups. It is important for existing policies to be continuously monitored and adjusted in line with social and economic developments. With a joint commitment from various parties, the circular economy can be a long-term sustainable solution that provides just benefits for the entire society, while creating social and environment sustainable.

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