Freecycle - Community Participation in Recycle and Its Possibilities of Being Replicated in the Industry

Authors : Ananya Banerjee

Abstract : Context: This research focuses on the concept of freecycle, which is based on the idea that one person's trash can be another person's treasure. The study explores community-based freecycle through a social media group and examines the potential for replicating this model in the industry to enhance reuse and recycling efforts. Research Aim: The aim of this study is to understand the impact and community appetite for reuse through freecycling. Additionally, it aims to explore the feasibility of replicating this model in the industry to promote reuse and recycling. Methodology: The research employs a case study methodology, which involves collecting data from a social media group engaged in freecycling. Both quantitative inputs, such as participation data, and qualitative observations are gathered over a period of one hundred and twenty-five days. The study then transitions to qualitative methodology through systematic enquiry to investigate the current practices of freecycling and explore future possibilities. Findings: The study found that recycling through freecycle was highly efficient for both categorized and uncategorized goods within a small community of approximately twenty-five thousand members. Active community participation in reuse and recycling was observed, indicating a strong appetite for this approach. The findings also suggest the potential for replicating this model in the industry to facilitate a more sustainable economy. Theoretical Importance: This research contributes to the understanding of the efficacy of community-based freecycle initiatives in promoting reuse and recycling. Furthermore, it highlights the theoretical significance of replicating this model in the industry, potentially leading to reduced industrial and household waste. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures: Data for this study were collected by gathering group participation data from the social media freecycle group. Quantitative inputs, such as the number of goods recycled, were analysed to assess the efficiency of freecycle. Qualitative observations were made to understand community behaviour and attitudes towards reuse and recycling. The data were then systematically analysed to identify insights and patterns. Questions Addressed: This study addresses two main questions: 1) What is the impact and appetite for reuse in the community through freecycling? and 2) Is it possible to replicate this model in the industry to enhance reuse and recycling? Conclusion: The research concludes that community-based freecycle initiatives have a significant impact on recycling and reuse. The findings suggest that replicating this model in the industry can contribute to a more sustainable economy by increasing reuse and reducing waste. Implementing sustainability champions within organizations may facilitate the adoption of freecycling practices and make the reuse process more efficient. As a result, both societal and industrial efforts towards recycling and waste reduction can be strengthened. Overall, this study highlights the potential for freecycling to be a valuable tool in promoting sustainability at various levels.