

Approaches to Improving Motivation of Environmentally Oriented Activity in the Consumer Society

VIKTORIA G. BORONOSⁱ, INNA V. TIUTIUNYKⁱⁱ, ZHANNA S. PRONIKOVAⁱⁱⁱ

The article reveals the essence of the “consumer society” concept, proposes a definition of this term, and considers the main types of consumption. The interrelation of rational consumption with possible socio-environmental and economic problems is studied. Much attention is paid to the motivation of environmentally oriented activities in the consumer society. The main emphasis is on the activation of a person's internal motivation for environmentally safe activities through the environmentalization of upbringing, education, and science and formation of a new type of personality – a “homo environmental”. The development of such an approach should be supplemented by economic incentives to reduce the anthropogenic burden on the environment.

Keywords: internal motivation, environmentalization of economic activity, consumer society, environmentally oriented activity, upbringing, education, science.

Abbreviations:

IM – internal motivation;
EM – external motivation;
NLP – neurolinguistic programming;
UN – United Nations;
GDP – gross domestic product

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Introduction. With the constant growth of the world's population and dynamic development of the world economy, there is an increase in the volume of consumption of goods and services. Consumption is a key and integral element of the functioning of any economic system. Growth of consumer demand usually leads to economic development and, accordingly, improvement of social standards of the population life quality. However, trends of ecological and economic development witness about essential disproportions in consumption of goods and services: some population groups are provided with an excess of high-quality products, while others suffer from acute shortages and have to consume products of low quality. Such a situation forms the preconditions for increased ecological and economic risks for the future generations. In this regard, countries and the world community must improve environmental policies, and introduce effective mechanisms for their implementation at the global, national and regional levels.

Problem statement. Significant research in the sphere of motivating the environmentally oriented activity and investigation of socio-ecological and economic aspects of consumer society were carried out by the following scientists: B. M. Danylyshyn [1],

ⁱ *Viktoria G. Boronos*, Dr. (Economics), Professor, Professor of the Department of Economics and Business-Administration, Sumy State University;

ⁱⁱ *Inna V. Tiutiunyk*, C.Sc. (Economics), Senior Tutor of Finance and Credit, Sumy State University;

ⁱⁱⁱ *Zhanna S. Pronikova*, Postgraduate Student of the Department of Finance and Credit, Sumy State University.

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M. A. Khvesyuk [1], L. Hr. Melnyk [2], O. V. Dobryden [3], Z. Bodriyar [4], K. Popper [5]. In spite of current scientific developments, the problem of forming an effective motivational mechanism of environmentalization of economic activity requires additional consideration. The reason is that there is the need to intensify internal motivation, which significance and role is often underestimated. In addition, the problem solution of improving the quality of life of the society by ensuring the safe consumption of goods and services has not been sufficiently highlighted in scientific papers.

The purpose of the research is to improve the approaches to the motivation of environmentally oriented activity under lack of financial resources in order to prevent negative socio-ecological and economic consequences of consumption processes.

Results of the research. Consumer society is a set of social relations, characterized by mass consumption of material goods and the formation of a system of values and attitudes. [6]. To better understanding of causation of consumption of goods and services and the quality of life of the society let's consider some basic types of consumption in more details (Fig. 1).

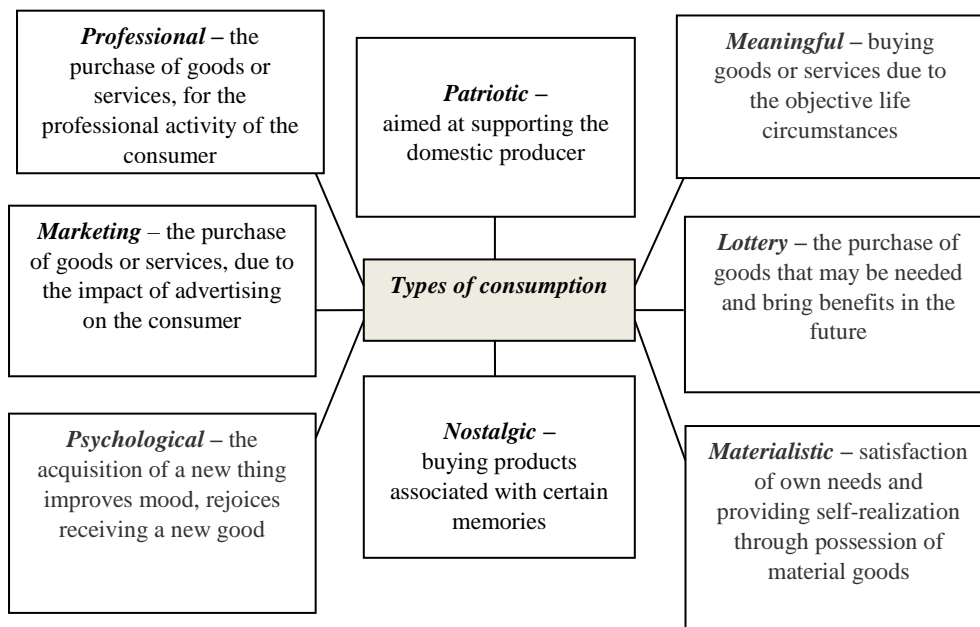


Figure 1. Types of consumption [7]

Since the beginning of the XX century, the volume of construction materials output in the world has increased 34 times, extraction of ores and minerals – 27 times, fossil fuels – 12 times, and biomass – 3.6 times. According to the UN estimation, the current growth rate of resource use can have tripled by 2050. Such tendencies are beginning to cause concern among the world's scientists from different realms. In particular, Professor of the Environment and Society Department at the University of Essex, Julse Prettie proposes to abandon the use of GDP as the main indicator of countries' economic development. In his view, it is necessary to

develop other indicators that assess natural capital – goods and services – complimentary in nature [8].

It should be noted, however, that the consumer society is referred to as a society in which the consumption processes exceed the processes of creating benefit in terms of volume.

It's common knowledge, that a reduction in incomes significantly changes the structure of consumption, therefore, a particular socio-ecological and economic danger is caused by the thoughtless consumption on the territories with a low standard of living. Satisfaction of needs under any conditions, even if such a consumption is harmful to the environment or to the human health, becomes important for the consumer society.

As for Ukraine, the domestic commodity market is oversaturated with polymer products. As a result, the volumes of hazardous garbage being accumulated in the landfill sites, illegal dumping, forest plantations, water reservoirs and in the open environment decompose within 80–100 years. Studies of domestic and foreign scientists show that polymers and plastics are one of the most dangerous and the most likely sources of pollution for the human environment. The problem of cars utilization is crucial in Ukraine. Because of the high cost of equipment, automobile plastic is not taken for its recycling. An increase in import of the secondhand cars into Ukraine enhances the already existing problems. Thus, we ourselves contribute to the development of ecological colonialism in Ukraine, enlarging the risk of turning its territory into a world garbage dump.

The main wealth of any nation is certainly its human and natural capital. The basis of human capital is the health of the population, which largely depends on the food. Under the conditions of extensive biotechnology programming and the active creation of genetically modified organisms, food control becomes an actual issue. Such a system should be based on the molecular, microbiological and hygienic examination of food products at the production stage as well as at the stage of goods circulation.

Another important task is to control the information space in order to reduce the level of information pollution. Amid the decline in spirituality and the media imposing of living standards, there has been a change in consumption patterns. Advertising forms desire, fashion, and norms of behavior, interests, and spiritual values. As a result, a new type of a person has been formed, the one who no longer views consumption as a process of satisfying basic needs, but as his self-realization through the possession of material goods. Therefore, advertising should be checked for NLP, which may combine the most effective psychological models and technologies of consumer impact.

Today, a consumer feels safe, because he does not fully understand the ultimate effects of excessive consumption, which could reveal itself in decades. However, a society that functions in the paradigm of a consumer attitude to life is not able to convey to the future generations either spiritual values or a preserved environment.

Therefore, recently, there has been an acute need in the solution of the issue of developing new approaches to motivating environmentally oriented business entities, which are aimed at forming ecological and economic security of consumption processes.

From the point of view of psychology, the sources of influence on the formation and activation of motives are distinguished into internal and external motivation.

The needs, attractions, interests, desires of a person without any external pressure determine internal motivation (IM). In economic terms, it is leaning towards certain activities, satisfaction with the process or results of this activity, and understanding of its social utility. IM is believed to be the source of human development, the basis of its self-motivation.

External motivation is conditioned by external factors, influence, circumstances in order to form or strengthen the necessary motive. External motivation is not considered to stimulate proper development and transforms any activity into a necessity. By orientation (sign), external motivation is divided into external negative motivation (ENM) and external positive one (EPM) (Fig. 2).

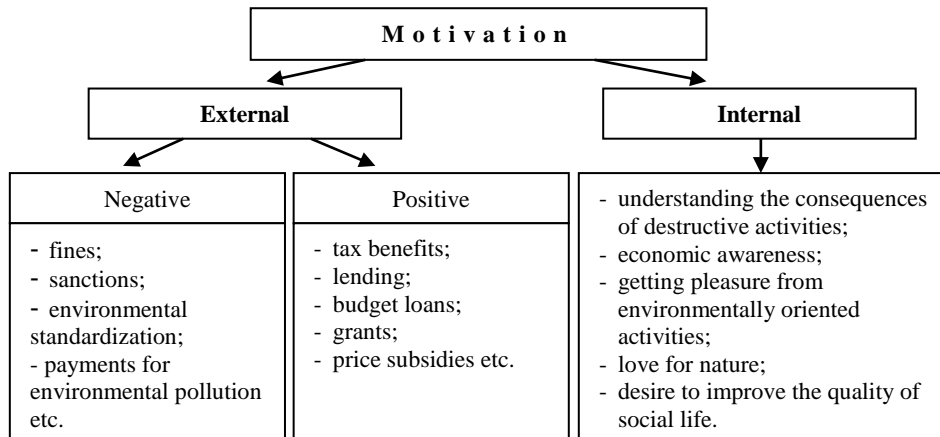


Figure 2. Types of motivation for environmentally oriented activities [9]

As numerous sociological studies show, the relationship between the three types of motivation is the most favorable for the high efficiency of any activity: $IM > EPM > ENM$ [9]. It means that the person's tendency to certain activities has a greater motivational significance than the incentive for it, and the latter – greater significance than coercion. Thus, both EPM and ENM in comparison with IM have less stability and lose their stimulating power quickly. Successful companies in developed countries have long been using motivational mechanisms based mainly on internal and external positive motives of IM and EPM (Japanese experience). Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of domestic managers are convinced that the most effective are economic methods of motivation, and the IM only strengthens their effect. This is because the activation of the EM is a difficult and long-lasting task. When choosing the behavior, a person is guided by his own developed motives, and it takes some time to alter them.

In the field of environmental management economics, the mandatory group of economic methods is widespread (Fig. 2). However, it needs to be substantially improved. Economic legislation of Ukraine declares that the production of environmentally hazardous products will cost the producer too much and, as a result, he will lose competitive advantage. However, practice shows the reverse: unfortunately, in most cases, it is more profitable for commodity producers to make fiscal ecological payments rather than to spend money on environmental protection measures. Moreover, the managers of enterprises often use “personal contacts”. Thus, they do not pay full amount of set environmental fine or even do not pay at all.

The mandatory group of economic methods stimulating environmentalization of economic activity is exemplary in Western European countries. It is aimed at the introduction of environmentally friendly technologies. There are more than 200 distinct mechanisms for the implementation of environmental legislation in the EU countries, almost 150 kinds of

environmental taxes are applied, the structure and tariff rates of which are approved by national parliaments. In Germany, for example, the strategy of ecologically oriented management and environmental entrepreneurship is developed and implemented, which is an important direction of economy environmentalization. It is obligatory for all enterprises to be under the environmental audit based on the accepted national standards regulating it. The side effect of such regulation is the spread of “environmental colonialism” – that is allocating ecologically harmful, high-waste and resource-intensive industries outside the country.

In order to stimulate the growth of investments in environmentally oriented production, it is necessary for the economic efficiency of such projects to be higher than the efficiency of the environmentally destructive ones. Therefore, the environmentally oriented producers should be provided with the tax benefits, price subsidies for environmentally friendly goods, manufacturing loans, grants, preferential lending, and budget financing. Such measures are stipulated in Article 48 of the Law of Ukraine “On Environmental Protection”, though the mechanism of their implementation in practice remains ineffective. This is primarily due to the lack of funds for environmental protection measures, which are distributed on a residual basis.

Considering the disadvantages of applying mandatory and incentive methods of motivating environmentally oriented activities, it is worthwhile to draw attention to internal motivation in current conditions. The internal motivation is believed to be the “key” for solving environmental problems, as well as the basis for the formation of environmental culture.

Today there is no understanding that the needs for clean air, drinking water, food are dependent on the state of the environment since the effect of environmentally destructive behavior shows up with time. A person feels safe because he does not fully understand the ultimate consequences of eco-destructive activity and unlimited needs.

According to the member of the Roman Club D. Meadow, reducing the negative impact on the environment is possible only through the change of personal and social values [10]. It is possible to change existing values through the formation of population environmental culture. Creation of high environmental culture can be provided through the change of human consciousness and the formation of a new type of personality – “homo environmental”, who is characterized by the following features:

- the transition from an anthropocentric type of environmental consciousness (the greatest value in the world is a human, and nature must meet its needs) to the opposite one – the harmonious development of man and nature, which are the elements of a common system;
- a new philosophy of life – the determination of a reasonable threshold for satisfying personal needs (restricting consumer instincts);
- the principle of “advance reflection”, according to which, the human mind is constantly assessing the possible consequences of his interference with nature.

To apply these principles it is necessary to create the conditions, or rather the environment of environmentally conscious consumers, which can be represented as a triad: education, science, and upbringing.

There are well-known historical examples of successful environmentalization of education and upbringing. Thus, Nepluevske Brotherhood was functioning in the Sumy region a century ago. Its experience proves that it is not necessary to exhaust the natural potential and pollute the territory in order to achieve the economic result. Spiritually pure people were able to see, understand and put on the service of man the inexhaustible natural forces and to ensure their fair use and extensive reproduction. Spiritual and environmental values in the Brotherhood were preferred to the economic ones [11].

The main objective of environmental education is to form the environmental culture of individuals and the society in general, fundamental environmental knowledge and consciousness. The solution of these issues should ensure the formation of a “new” environmental thinking, which is quite necessary for enterprises, industries, regions, and the country as a whole to make environmentally sound decisions. To fulfill its purpose, the environmental education should be based on the following principles:

- large scale – the advancement of environmental education to the citizens of all categories, age groups, and activity;
- complexity – training should be based on the causes and effects of the “human-nature” system;
- sustainability which assumes that at each stage of the person's development the environmental knowledge is extended and supplemented;
- functional purpose – each stage must ensure the performance of the set tasks. If they are not performed, then the transition to the next level will not give the desired effect from the environmental education.

However, the domestic system of environmental education has not yet been properly organized and managed, which results in the slight awareness of the global environmental problems of humanity, rather than in their practical solution. Therefore, the national system of education requires deep environmentalization of its content.

Each stage of environmental education interrelates with a certain level of environmental maturity. Unfortunately, for most Ukrainian citizens, it remains an initial one.

To solve the problem of environmental upbringing is much more difficult than to improve the system of environmental education. Environmental upbringing has much more complex content: in addition to environmental knowledge, it covers a wide range of diverse human qualities and characteristics, moral, legal, social principles, and norms. Environmental upbringing contributes to the formation of environmental consciousness, especially of the younger generation. It occupies the leading place among the constituent principles of the foundation of the ecological safety of Ukraine. The effectiveness of environmental upbringing depends on the harmonization of all its directions, elements and means, integrity, and sustainability.

Teaching is difficult, turning knowledge into a conviction is even more difficult, but the hardest thing is to make beliefs a standard of living. The things a person knows, comprehends and performs do not coincide. A particular danger is a gap between environmental knowledge and environmental behavior. The ecological behavior of business entities can be active (awareness of the subject of their environmental activity and possible consequences, and thus minimizing the negative effect on the nature), conformist (everybody does so, and do I) and marginal (environmentally oriented actions of a person for fear). The main task of environmental education and upbringing is the formation of the first two types of behavior.

Thus, in order to provide socio-environmental and economic security in the consumer society, the human consciousness and thinking should be altered. It is possible due to the formation of a “homo environmental” which not an easy though extremely important task is.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. In modern social realities, some population groups are provided with excessive high-quality products, while others suffer acute shortages and are forced to consume products of low quality. Such a situation forms the preconditions for increased environmental and economic risk for the generations to come. In this regard, it is necessary to create an effective system of motivation that would restrict

excessive ill-considered consumption of goods and services and would motivate business entities to conduct environmentally oriented activities. Under the unstable financial condition in Ukraine, it is advisable to give priority to internal motivation methods, to create an environment for the development of a new type of personality – a “homo environmental”, performed in a triad: education, science, and upbringing. It is important to build a spiritual and intellectual society that comprehends that future generations will pay for our current unlimited consumption and eco-destructive behavior. To form such a society, environmental consciousness and intellectual capital should be developed.

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Подходы к усовершенствованию мотивации экологически направленной деятельности в обществе потребления

ВИКТОРИЯ ГЕОРГИЕВНА БОРОНОС^{*},
ИННА ВЛАДИМИРОВНА ТЮТЮНЫК^{},**
ЖАННА СЕРГЕЕВНА ПРОНИКОВА^{*}**

^{} доктор экономических наук, профессор, профессор кафедры экономики и бизнес-администрирования Сумского государственного университета, ул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, г. Сумы, 40007, Украина, тел.: 00-380-542-335774, e-mail: vg.boronos@gmail.com*

*^{**} кандидат экономических наук, старший преподаватель кафедры финансов и кредита Сумского государственного университета, ул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, г. Сумы, 40007, Украина, тел.: 00-380-542-335383, e-mail: i.karpenko@finance.sumdu.edu.ua*

*** аспірант кафедри фінансов и кредита Сумського державного університета,
ул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, г. Сумы, 40007, Україна,
тел.: 00-380-542-335383, e-mail: zpronikova @ gmail.com

В статье раскрыта сущность понятия «общество потребления», предложено собственное определение данного термина, рассмотрены основные виды потребления. Исследована взаимосвязь необдуманного потребления с возможными социо-эколого-экономическими проблемами. Значительное внимание уделено мотивации экологически направленной деятельности в обществе потребления. Основное внимание уделено активизации у человека внутренней мотивации к экологически безопасной деятельности с помощью экологизации воспитания, образования, науки и формирования нового типа личности «человек экологический». Развитие такого подхода должна дополнить экономические методы стимулирования к снижению антропогенной нагрузки на окружающую среду.

Ключевые слова: внутренняя мотивация, экологизация хозяйственной деятельности, общество потребления, экологически направлена деятельность, воспитание, образование, наука.

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**Підходи до удосконалення мотивації екологічно спрямованої
діяльності у суспільстві споживання**

ВІКТОРІЯ ГЕОРГІВНА БОРОНОС*,
ІННА ВОДОДИМИРІВНА ТЮТЮНИК**,
ЖАННА СЕРГІВНА ПРОНІКОВА***

* доктор економічних наук, професор, професор кафедри економіки та бізнес-адміністрування
Сумського державного університету,
вул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, м. Суми, 40007, Україна,
тел.: 00-380-542-332223, e-mail: vg.boronos@gmail.com

** кандидат економічних наук, старший викладач кафедри фінансів та кредиту
Сумського державного університету,
вул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, м. Суми, 40007, Україна,
тел.: 00-380-542-335383, e-mail: i.karpenko@finance.sumdu.edu.ua

*** аспірант кафедри фінансів та кредиту Сумського державного університету,
вул. Р.-Корсакова, 2, м. Суми, 40007, Україна,
тел.: 00-380-542-332223, e-mail: zpronikova @ gmail.com

У статті розкрито сутність поняття «суспільство споживання», запропоновано власне визначення даного терміну, розглянуто основні види споживання. Досліджено взаємозв'язок необдуманого споживання з можливими соціо-еколого-економічними проблемами. Значну увагу приділено мотивації екологічно спрямованої діяльності у суспільстві споживання. Основну увагу приділено активізації у людини саме внутрішньої мотивації до екологічно безпечної діяльності за допомогою екологізації виховання, освіти, науки та формування нового типу особистості «людини екологічної». Розвиток такого підходу має доповнити економічні методи стимулювання до зниження антропогенного навантаження на довкілля.

Ключові слова: внутрішня мотивація, екологізація господарської діяльності, суспільство споживання, екологічно спрямована діяльність, виховання, освіта, наука.

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