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## PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AT THE STAGE OF DISPOSAL OF CONSUMPTION GOODS

Стаття присвячена узагальненню відомостей про етап позбавлення від товарів споживання у структурі споживчого циклу та аналізу психологічних особливостей поведінки споживачів на даному етапі, зокрема виявленню психологічних детермінант що обумовлюють вибір різних форм позбавлення від ужитого.

**Ключові слова:** споживча поведінка, позбавлення від товарів споживання, утилізація, накопичення.

The article is dedicated to generalization of information about the stage of disposal of consumption goods in the structure of the consumer cycle analysis and psychological characteristics of consumer behavior at this stage, including the identification of psychological determinants that govern the choice of different forms of disposal.

**Key words:** consumer behavior, disposal of consumer goods, utilization, accumulation.

**Formulation of the problem.** The problem of the clogging the planet is very urgent today throughout the world: an average European family of four people disposes a kilogram of food a day; each person gets rid of three to ten

kilograms of textile products per year. The lion's share of garbage disposed on the West Coast of the North and South America forms the so-called Great Pacific garbage spot a garbage collection that consists predominantly of a dense mass of plastic, which, according to the latest estimates, covers an area of 700,000 km<sup>2</sup> (which corresponds to the Texas area). The real scale of the clogging of the planet and the issue of nature and the distribution of garbage which are described in the work of the Norwegian anthropologist Thomas Gilland Eriksen «Garbage. Waste in a World of Side Effects» [1] are difficult to overestimate.

In a social aspect, this problem is exacerbated by the fact of spreading the tradition of culture of irrational over-consumption (oniomania) and irrationally excessive accumulation (syllogomyania).

In contrast, lately, social ideas of limited and ecological consumption are actively propagating. Anti-Consumption (anti-consumerism) is an ideology that opposes the identification of the level of personal happiness as a level of acquisition and consumption of material goods. Anti-Consumers stand for the idea of controlled consumption. Enoughism (from English «enough») calls for lower expenditures and limitation of demonstrative consumption. Representatives of the ecological aspect of consumption are the different streams of «greens». The main reason for their opposition to consumerism is the negative side of over-consumption, its consequences for the environment, for the animal and plant world.

In view of the above, there is interest in the study of psychological aspects of consumer behavior, not only in the process of consumption, but also in the process of disposal the consumed goods and identifying the potential causes of irrational behavior at this stage of the consumer cycle.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Different aspects of consumer behavior are the subjects of many studies. Basic studies of the psychology of consumption are presented in the works of such authors as Blackwell R. D., Engel J. F., Collat D. T., Miniard P. W., Solomon M. R., Hoyer V. D., McLeans D. J., Peter J. P., Olson J. C., Grunert K. G., Canuk L. and others. From the anthropological point of view, an interest in studying the process of disposal of consumed goods was showed by such scientists as Eriksen T. G., Douglas M., Thompson M. Consumer behavior analysis at the utilization stage was carried out in the works of T. Hilland. Motivation at the stage of getting rid of consumer goods was also investigated by Hawkins D. I., Best R. J., Horses K. A.

Among Ukrainian researchers this problem was studied by such scientists as Zozulov O. V., Larina Ya. S., Prokopenko O. V., Troyan M. Yu., Skibinsky S. V., Sorokin G. V.

Consumer behavior is characterized by a set of consumer actions that are related to the emergence and awareness of a need, the decision to make a purchase, the choice of the product, its usage or disposal. In this case, consumer behavior is often interpreted as a form of social action, characterized by the presence of subjective (reflects the internal attitude of people to the conditions, content and results of activities) and objective approaches (the complex of social relations in the area of consumption) [3; 11].

The process of disposal of consumed goods is part of consumption in general. This process is highlighted by many theorists in the field of consumer behavior, what evidences its cross-cutting nature.

The most popular model of consumer behavior – the EBC (named after its developers: Engel D. F., Blackwell R. D., Collat D. T. – puts «disposal» at the last, seventh link of the process of consumption. At this stage, the consumer has several options: complete disposal of goods; its utilization; remarketing.

For example, a person who wants to dispose the old car can give it to the landfill (complete disposal), or sell it to someone else (remarketing). The probability of utilization (recycling) of a product depends on the capability of utilization and environmental consciousness of consumers [4; 128–131].

Posipanova O. S., describing the stage of utilization, distinguishes two of its components: the choice before utilization and actual utilization. The pre-utilization option is the choice between keeping the product and continuing to use it, or utilizing it and in which way [2; 100].

The purpose of disposal of consumer goods was disclosed most successfully in the work of Hawkins D. I, Best R. J., Coney K. A. Authors distinguish the most common types of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumer goods: to recycle consumer goods in the most economical and environmentally friendly manner; to throw out used goods; to give away for use to other people; to exchange these goods for another; sell for financial reasons [5].

Basing on this model, we can divide the concept of «utilization» and «disposal» (discarding). Utilization is the use of consumed goods for the purpose of their processing, donations, exchange or sale (according to the etymology of the Latin word «utilis» – «useful»). «Disposal» also includes such a type of behavior as «throwing away», which does not involve repeated or prolonged use of consumable goods or their useful processing.

The reverse process of disposal of consumer goods is their storage or accumulation. Investigating non-pathological forms of the attraction to storage and accumulation of things Blackwell R. D., Engel J. F. and Miniard P. W. argues that this is due to the granting of a special, specific value for goods,

as in the minds of consumers is associated with the following categories of goods: collectibles and exchanges; achievement symbols (prizes, memorable gifts); peculiar fetishes of possession (prestigious cars, estates, purebred animals); goods connected with memorable places and special periods of life (gifts from close people, tourist souvenirs, trophies); religious and ritual items, etc. [4].

In its most vivid form, the irrational accumulation of goods flows into a pathological form, known as Messy syndrome (Plyushkin syndrome), or syllogomania a kind of obsessive behavior that consists of collecting and storing things that are not used in so many quantities that they interfere with the use of premises for direct purpose.

The tendency to one or another type of behavior at the stage of disposing of consumer goods is largely determined by external factors (culture, religion, national traditions, education and upbringing, etc.), but also significantly depends on personal factors: the propensity to demonstrative or socially acceptable behavior, degree of conformism of certain accentuations of character, etc.

For example, the propensity to demonstrative consumption that goes beyond the vital needs is inextricably linked with the accumulation of things that may be granted with irrational meanings, which leads to irrational behavior at the stage of disposal of goods.

The tendency to social desirability as a desire to meet the ideal patterns adopted in society, as well as reflection of a real altruistic tendency in human behavior can stimulate the desire to sacrifice consumed goods, exemplarily utilize them with maximum benefit. Social desirability is associated with the orientation not only of the formal fulfillment of generally accepted norms, but also of the value attitude to the world, which, of course, manifests itself in the tendencies of behavior, economic in particular.

However, in modern studies not enough attention was paid to the internal (individual psychological and socio-psychological) determinants of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumed goods, which was a topic of our scientific interest.

**The purpose of the article:** to characterize the psychological features of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumer goods and to distinguish individual and socio-psychological factors that influence the behavior of consumers at this stage of the consumer cycle.

**Presenting main material.**

Based on the results of the theoretical analysis, we developed a methodological scheme of a research, the main tasks of which were to:

- identify the groups of respondents, who are prone to rational or irrational accumulation and disposing of consumed goods;

– compare and identify the psychological characteristics of respondents, prone to different types of behavior on the stage of disposing of the consumed goods;

– identify and analyze the relationship of demonstrative consumption, orientation to social acceptance, personal characteristics of respondents with their behavioral features during disposal of consumed goods.

The following research methods were selected for the realization of the tasks: questionnaire «Tendency to demonstrative consumption» (O. S. Posipanova); Marlow-Kraning Scale to study motivation of approval; Oldhem-Morris personal questionnaire (translated by D. Ya. Rygorodsky in the adaptation of Yu. V. Shcherbatykh) and author's questionnaire to determine the degree of propensity to give irrational meanings for consumer goods, propensity to accumulation and predisposition to certain types of disposal of consumed goods.

The author's questionnaire included three blocks of questions. The block of questions, related to the propensity to give products irrational meanings was developed based on factors, distinguished by Engel D. F., Blackwell R. D. and Minyard P. V. (propensity to purchase goods for exchange, demonstrative ownership, goods related to time periods and events, journey and collecting). For studying of the propensity to accumulate consumed goods in the second block we used scale of a mess (The Clutter-Hoarding Scale): 12 questions corresponding to non-pathological manifestations of clutter and accumulation. The third block included questions about identifying the dominant type of behavior at the stage of disposal of consumed goods and it based on the model of disposal of consumer goods by Hawkins D. I., Best R. J., Coney K. A.

The total sampling of the study was 213 people, of which were chosen 163 individuals of both sexes aged 18 to 58 years old with different levels of education and abundance, who formed a sampling that corresponded to normal distribution and could be considered representative for the further analysis.

Having analyzed and interpreted the results of the study, we identified a number of patterns that are related to the choice of different ways of consumed goods disposing.

It turned out that the most common forms of consumed goods disposing are donations (30.8 %), throwing away (24.6 %) and resale / remarketing (19.7 %). Only 13.5 % of respondents indicated an exchange as an acceptable form of disposal of consumed goods and only 11.5 % – actual utilization. This result indicates a low level of ecological culture and people's awareness, lack of awareness about the possibility of utilization of goods and what is probably related to the low level of utilization culture in Ukraine.

The conscious choice of utilization as a form of consumer behavior does not have statistically significant interconnections with the psychological types and characteristics of the individual. However, this type of consumer behavior clearly correlates with socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, especially age and education. People of mature age ( $r = , 180$ ) and people with completed higher education ( $r = , 309$ ) are more inclined to conscious choice of utilization, what is obviously related to development of ecological consciousness and necessary knowledge for understanding results of own acts for nature. This type of disposal of consumed goods is also more typical for men.

Exchange as a specific form of disposal of consumed goods, was more typical for personalities of the Dramatic type ( $r = , 166$ ). These data suggest that individuals of this type can use not only consumption, but also some forms of product disposal, such as exchange. The interactions between members of the barter are an integral part of it, and, therefore, in the process of exchange, considerable attention is paid to the person who conducts it. This is also confirmed by the fact that there is a significant correlation between the propensity to exchange and the demonstration of consumption ( $r = , 232$ ).

Interesting results were obtained in the analysis of the tendency to donate, as the type of disposal of goods. During the study, we found that there is a significant correlation between the choice of donation as a form of deprivation of consumed goods and a tendency to socially acceptable behavior ( $r = 193$ ). Noteworthy that the donation has both a negative significant correlation with demonstrative consumption as a way of attracting attention ( $r = - , 172$ ) and demonstrative consumption as self-affirmation ( $r = - , 248$ ). At the same time, the propensity to donate is much more observed in the female part of the sample. The results of the study also indicate that the willingness to make donations is characteristic of harmonious personalities, for whom such behavior is part of world perception and personal attitudes, and is not a compensatory behavior.

Separately we analyzed the probable factors of the desire to accumulate as a special form of consumer behavior, which is the opposite to disposal.

Clutter, as an extreme form of accumulating consumed goods, at the result of our study turned out as an inappropriate form of behavior. This is followed by a negative significant correlation between the propensity to socially acceptable behavior and the level of clutter. People who are prone to clutter often find themselves as asocial or inclined to nonconformism. Within our research, it was found that people of the Sensitive type ( $r = , 208$ ) and Reclusive type ( $r = , 187$ ) are the most prone to this type of behavior. To a lesser extent, the representatives of the Devoted ( $r = , 156$ ), Altruistic ( $r = , 163$ ) and Serious type ( $r = , 172$ ) also tend to the clutter.

Observing the types of personality, prone to accumulation, we can notice, that they all belong to the so-called «brake circle». This testifies that in the pathological manifestation of their characteristics, people in this group become locked in their inner world, experiencing social exclusion and isolation and they tend to attach irrational significance to objects surrounding them, thereby compensating for the social deprivation in which they find themselves.

The tendency to accumulate also correlates with a certain list of socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Less propensity to accumulate unused things is found in people of mature age ( $r = -, 220$ ) and those who have a higher monthly cost of themselves ( $r = -, 240$ ). Obviously, the reason for clutter due to the accumulation of unused things is therefore uncertain financial situation and an uncertainty about the possibility of acquiring a new thing in the future.

Also certain patterns of consumer behavior at the stage of disposing of consumed goods in different types of personality, basing on the Oldham-Morris method, were revealed,

The Conscientious type people is characterized by anxiety and uncertainty because of something may be needed in the future, they are prone to irrational accumulation of goods even if they are obviously no longer needed.

Dramatic, and, to a lesser extent, Self-confident personality types were most prone to demonstrative consumption, and hence to irrational patterns of behavior at the stage of disposing of consumer goods. Such individuals use consumption as a factor in attracting attention to themselves, self-affirmation, as an indicator of status and revealing their creative part. They are not characterized by excessive accumulation, but both types, according to the results of the study, show the ability to give irrational value to goods and inclined to not dispose these goods for a long time, especially if they are the status goods or things related to journey.

For an Aggressive type of personality, the desire was to highlight its leadership position by demonstrative consumption of status and prestigious goods and, accordingly, demonstrative possession (storage).

Adventurous personality type is characterized by the simultaneous desire for demonstrative consumption in order to distinguish its individuality and demonstrative consumption in order to follow the fashion. Certain trend types of product disposal, such as remarketing, can capture this type of personality and consequently affect its consumer behavior at the final consumption stage.

**Conclusions.** The results of the study allowed to perform a deeper analyze of the peculiarities of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumer goods and identifying the factors that determine the choice of

certain forms of disposal of consumed goods (utilization, donation, exchange or sale) or accumulation of unused goods. Among the demographic factors, the influence of age and educational level of respondents were significant. There are also some gender differences that related to the choice of certain forms of behavior at the stage of disposal of the consumed goods.

Among the socio-psychological factors that determine the peculiarities of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumed goods, the propensity to demonstrative consumption and the motivation for approval have a significant impact. In addition, certain features of behavior at the stage of disposal of consumed goods in different types of personalities were revealed. The obtained results can become the basis for the development of social programs aimed at motivating rational forms of consumer behavior, in particular, the environmental disposal of the consumed goods, which are certainly relevant to the Ukrainian society.

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## Abstract

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### PSYCHOLOGICAL FEATURES OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AT THE STAGE OF DISPOSAL OF CONSUMPTION GOODS

The process of disposal of consumed goods is part of a complete consumer cycle. At this stage the consumer has several variants of behavior: complete deprivation from the product (disposal), its utilization (recycling), donation or remarketing (exchange or resale). The reverse process of disposal of consumer goods is their storage or accumulation, which may be due to the special sense for goods associated with collecting, memorable places and special periods of life, etc.

Behavior at the stage of disposing of consumer goods is largely determined by external factors (culture, religion, national traditions, education and upbringing, etc.), but also significantly depends on personal factors.

The results of the study allowed to perform a deeper analyze of the peculiarities of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumer goods and identifying the factors that determine the choice of certain forms of disposal of consumed goods or accumulation of unused goods. Among the demographic factors, the influence of age and educational level of respondents were significant. There are also some gender differences, which related to the choice of certain forms of behavior at the stage of disposal of the consumed goods.

Among the socio-psychological factors that determine the peculiarities of consumer behavior at the stage of disposal of consumed goods, the propensity to demonstrative consumption and the motivation for approval have a significant impact. The obtained results can become the basis for the development of social programs aimed at motivating rational forms of consumer behavior, in particular, the environmental disposal of the consumed goods.

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