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Human Behaviour and Adequacy of Satisfiers in the Light of Sustainable Development

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For thousands of years mankind sought to create a harmonious society, and this dream was embodied in the concept of sustainable development.

Sustainable development is the model of the society's activity that is oriented on meeting the main human needs and improving the quality of life of the current and the future generations without inflicting serious damage to the environment (United Nations General Assembly 1987).

In the success of the achievement of this stage of economic and social development the leading role belongs to the man, who by force of his intellect is capable to do a planetary scale transformation (Вернадский 1993). As the wind is created by the movement of air masses, consisting of billions of molecules, the activity of individual lies in the core of the society's activity. Sustainable development is actually feasible on the conditions that behaviour of a human is adequate to such development. Therefore, it is very important to study the human motivation as the forces that initiate the behaviour of a person.

The human behaviour has been studied by scientists of various countries and periods with a help of different approaches. One of the varieties of theories of cognitive motivational approaches is to consider the human behaviour through the needs, as did an American psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1940s (Maslow 1943). He developed a self-actualization theory, where he classified and organised the human needs into hierarchal structure. The base of the structure are the most fundamental needs, which are physical needs, such as food, water, shelter etc. Next levels are the needs of safety, love/belonging, esteem and the top of the structure are the needs for self-actualisation. The needs higher in the hierarchy won't be met unless the needs of the previous level are to be satisfied. According to the self-actualization theory of Abraham Maslow, the individual is motivated by the hierarchy of needs. When the lowest level of needs is adequately satisfied, it directs the behaviour on the next higher level and the motivation to meet this level activates.

Later a Chilean economist Manfred Max-Neef proposed the new model of the classification of fundamental human needs and the concept of "satisfiers" of these needs (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992). In Max-Neef's opinion there are nine fundamental needs which are not hierarchical: Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Creation, Leisure, Identity and Freedom. He divided the concepts of satisfiers and economic goods. A satisfier is "...the way in which a need is expressed..." (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992 p. 202)

and not an economic good. Satisfiers can be forms of organization, political structures, social practices, values and norms, types of behaviour etc.

Max-Neef emphasizes that it is important to distinguish between needs and satisfiers. The fundamental human needs are not infinite, can be classified and they are the same for all times and nations. The satisfiers can be altered and they depend on the place, time and circumstance.¹ They have no exact corresponding with the needs and can satisfy several needs at the same time or on the contrary several satisfiers are required for one need. Max-Neef views the human needs not only as a deprivation, but also as a potential, which has a power of motivating and influencing people (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992).

According to Max-Neef, "...any fundamental human need that is not adequately satisfied, reveals a human poverty" (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992 p.200), moreover, poverties generate pathologies: unemployment, hyperinflation, fear, violence and others (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992). It is necessary to bear in mind that human poverty can be not only economical, but also a moral-intellectual, for example, as a result of poor quality of education, the poverty of understanding stems, which leads to pathology of ignorance and self-humiliation. Consequently, in order to avoid pathologies it is necessary to have adequate satisfiers for each of the fundamental needs.

And here arises the main question "What is an adequate satisfier?" For this we can also use the approach of Amartya Sen, a Nobel Prize laureate, to define poverty "...in terms of capability deprivation;..." (Sen 2001 p. 87), that is the absence of the freedom of the people to be able to satisfy their necessary ends. Therefore, in order to avoid poverties and pathologies it is necessary to have an actual capability to receive a necessary satisfier.

Max-Neef was warning about the risk of using an inhibiting satisfier. For example, a commercial television by satisfying the need of Leisure prevents the satisfaction of Understanding, Creation and Identity. Also in our opinion for the satisfier to be adequate, the balance between the interest of an individual and a society should be kept, according to Max-Neef's Human Scale Development concept (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992).

Considering the aforesaid we can suggest the following definition of an adequate satisfier: it is a satisfier that one has an actual capability to reach without violating moral and legal norms of a society and is a result of a balance of personal and social interests and is not an inhibiting.

The evaluation of the adequacy of a satisfier from the sides of individual and society may not match. If this happens, it can lead to the social tension, social conflicts and in this way it is possible to receive inadequate behaviour, which leads to a social degradation.

At present there is an extreme need in the research in the area of adequacy of the satisfiers and creation of various motivators (stimuli)² for the regulation and the correction of the human behaviour, because quite often out of objective reasons (wars, natural disasters, insufficient level of economic development, economic crisis etc.) it is not possible to adequately satisfy the fundamental needs. It is important for the transition economy countries, especially for those that expressed their will to achieve a sustainable development, and therefore are in need

for a sustainable human behaviour. An example of such countries can be Republic of Moldova, which became one of the countries presenting National Reports to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (United Nations General Assembly 2010).

Currently, the most significant resources of Moldova are forests and soil, as the country is not rich with other natural resources (Spoială et al. 2011). The rational usage and preservation of these resources, economic and social transformations depend on the human and his behaviour (Вернадский 1993). Therefore for Moldova the human resources are exceptionally important, and the youth is a special and the most dynamic part of it. The youth more willingly acquires and creates new social experience, easily becomes proficient in a new technology and more effectively raises level of education. In time, it will replace the older generation and take the main positions in economics, politics, social and spiritual spheres of the society. Therefore, the future development of the society on the whole is dependent on the effectiveness of the socialisation of youth, on its understanding of the tasks of sustainable development and on sustainable behaviour.

At present Moldova in connection with a certain economic situation has a problem of the shortage of work places. This forces the citizens of Moldova to seek for a job outside the country. Therefore wellbeing of a considerable part of population of Moldova depends on labour migration and remittances of the relatives. The economy of Moldova also depends to a large extent on remittances of migrants. In this way in 2007 it accounted for US\$ 1.5 Billion, which makes up approximately 36 per cent of Moldova's GDP. The majority of migrants are from the rural area, where there is especial shortage of work places. In 2006, 67 per cent of the total amount of migrants was from this area, over 37 per cent of migrants were below the age of 30, i.e. youth and 44 per cent planning to migrate were also youth. A particular problem is that migrants, who more or less successfully got a job, are not in a hurry to return home in order not to lose a work place (Maddock and Ramguttee).

The article of Maddock and Ramguttee allows us to make an assumption that the most active and initiative part of labour resources of Moldova can stay outside of the country and the labour migration can transform into emigration, with the result that it can lead to the breakup of migrants' families and asocial behaviour, the weakening the basis of the society and impedes sustainable development.

It is possible to illustrate this with an example of a Moldovan family from a rural area described in the article of Maria Lungu and Viorica Cojocaru, the Moldovan psychologists (Лунгу and Кожокару 2008). Using a real family story we are trying to analyse the labour migration as a satisfier via the concept of Max-Neef and proposed by us the definition of adequacy. The article reflects the situation that after experiencing long troubles to find the source of means of Subsistence for the family, the mother migrates outside the country to work in Italy, while a husband and four children stay in Moldova. The mother sends money for the maintenance of the family and for the education of the children, however she doesn't come home and rarely phones the family. The labour migration forcedly became for this family the main satisfier of the need of Subsistence, but this satisfier is destroying the family. The father starts to drink hard and loses the mutual understanding with the members of the

family. The younger children study poorly and unwillingly at school and gradually become asocial. Lungu and Cojocaru stress that the youth of this family took this way of life as ordinary: the husband of the eldest sister is also a labour migrant and lives away from the family; the middle sister, who is studying at the institute of higher education, after graduation wants to leave and work abroad, that is also to become a labour migrant. In case of this family the labour migration became an inhibiting satisfier, as by satisfying the fundamental need of Subsistence, it is not allowing satisfying the fundamental needs of the family of Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Identity and Freedom, therefore this satisfier cannot be acknowledged as adequate.

The Moldovan government by being concerned by such problems of the society took a number of serious steps among which it is possible to single out a “Plan to encourage the return of Moldovan migrant workers from abroad” (Правительство Республики Молдова 2008) that provides the strengthening of the ties with Moldovan diaspora, expanding capabilities for business and informing migrants about work places and opportunities for the opening and development of the own business in Moldova. If this plan is successfully brought to reality, it will become a synergic satisfier for the number of the fundamental needs that couldn't be satisfied, because of the usage of such inhibiting satisfier as forced labour migration. The degree of the adequacy of the satisfier “Plan to encourage the return of Moldovan migrant workers from abroad” will be evaluated independently both from the side of individual and from the side of the Moldovan society.

The example above illustrates the possibility of researching the causes of asocial behaviour through the adequacy test of a satisfier. Similar research provide results that are accessible to understanding of the general public, which is especially important for the creation of the mutual understanding and harmony in society. The evaluation of the adequacy of the satisfier will give a society an opportunity to apply efforts in the necessary direction avoiding the unnecessary costs. A special role is assigned to the government, which has at its disposal various institutions capable of conducting such research. The governments that desire a sustainable development for their countries and a forming of an adequate behaviour of citizens should participate in creation of synergic satisfiers (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992) and motivators, to support a positive behavioural change (Gardner et al. 2011).

In conclusion, it should be noted that at present, due to the difficult economic situation in a whole number of countries, there is an increase in the necessity to intensify the efforts on both parts of governmental and public organisations regarding the encouragement of sustainable behaviour, especially in the youth environment, and regarding the sponsorship of the research in this area. However, it is necessary to warn that substitution and mix up by the researchers of the concepts of needs, satisfiers and economic goods can lead to a deprivation of the capability of choosing adequate satisfiers of fundamental human needs, as a consequence can generate poverty, pathology and inadequate behaviour.

Notes

1. According to Max-Neef concept the fundamental human needs are not hierarchical and there is a multitude of satisfiers. Therefore we can presume that a person constantly has to make a choice of which needs are to be satisfied, in what order and which satisfiers should be selected for this. In this way a choice of a person can be viewed as a preference: a person prefers to choose one alternative (satisfier) rather than the other one, to choose the order of needs.

The human needs fall not only into economic categories, where the choice of a person is affected by the economic reasoning, but also fall into social categories, where the choice is also affected by person's social surrounding, his desires, beliefs, and feelings. Therefore it can be considered that the choice of person lies outside of utilitarian and revealed preferences.

Based on this we can believe that the choice of a person more likely would be a lexicographic, which is influenced by various motivating factors (Spash 2011).

2. The term motivator that was mentioned in our article was adopted from the Motivation-Hygiene Theory so-called the Two factor theory of Frederick Herzberg, where the motivators are factors (for example recognition, responsibility, achievement etc.) that give, in our case additional, positive satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman 1993). In case of individual's lexicographic choice of the alternatives (satisfiers), the presence of an additional factor-motivator will make it possible to interest an individual in choosing just that alternative (a satisfier) which would balance the interests of both society and individual.

It should be noted that the motivators (stimuli) can be monetary and non-monetary. The monetary motivators (monetary bonus and subsidies etc.) might have less value in the progress of the sustainable behaviour of a person than non-monetary motivators, for example recognition, self-esteem and praise by others, as the non-monetary motivators do not depend on the availability of economic capabilities, engage with human behaviour on a more high moral and ethical level, working within a person and help to stimulate altruism and social conscience, qualities that are truly needed for the sustainable behaviour in a society.

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