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UDC 330

GREEN LIFESTYLE AND WAYS TO ENCOURAGE IT IN BELARUS FROM STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE

A. V. LUKASHENKA

Scientific supervisor – I. V. Martynova, senior lecturer
School of Business of Belarusian State University
Minsk, Belarus

The topic under consideration is life of the society in terms of green economy and governmental encouragement of green policies. Since sustainable development embraces three areas – economy, society and environment – green economy is inseparable from green lifestyle and turning all citizens into green advocates.

The object of the research is green lifestyle. The subjects are Belarusian students' behavior towards green issues and their awareness about governmental green economy policies. The aims are to find out the students' attitude to green tendencies and their expectations from the government in order to popularize “green” responsibility in the country; the task is to find ways via which the government can engage people in participation of green economy.

The work is relevant as the issue of social responsibility and governmental engagement in social life is vital for understanding how people act in the time of the increasing gap between our development and safety of the environment. Nowadays environmental issues are becoming more popular and discussed, and the phrase “green lifestyle” appears almost everywhere in our life.

To achieve the aims, we have used the following methods of study: the analysis of secondary sources, the analysis of empirical data collected via distributing a questionnaire.

The research question is to figure out by which means the government stimulate people to follow “green” rules, to analyses the attitude of students to this encouragement and to find out if they are aware of the actions provided by the

government. To collect answers, we have made a questionnaire via Google Forms, which was taken by 75 students. The questions were as follows:

1. Do you follow any “green” rules?
2. Why do you / don’t you follow these rules?
3. Which rules do you follow?
4. Should the government motivate people to observe such rules?
5. How, in your opinion, can the government do it?

The analysis shows that 89.5 % of the respondents follow “green” rules; moreover, approximately all who observe these rules do it because they feel responsibility and are concerned about the future of our planet. The common reasons for those who do not follow such rules are the lack of motivation and necessary equipment. As our statistics show (Fig. Popularity of green rules among students), the most popular rules that the respondents follow are electricity saving and collection of waste paper (50 students’ answers to each point); the second place is battery recycling (44 respondents) and the less common rule is separated waste collection. The answers make obvious that the rules observed are not numerous and the students can be motivated to broaden their green lifestyles habits.

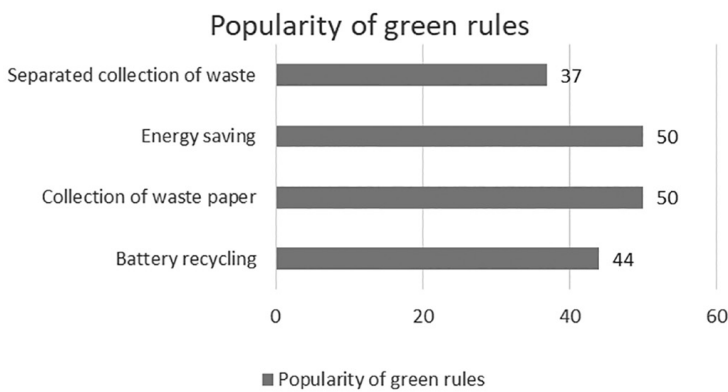


Image 1. Popularity of green rules among students

The answers to the fourth question were quite the same: all the respondents think that the government need to motivate its citizens to follow “green” rules. The answers to the last question reveal that the majority (36 out of 69) prefers encouragement for observing rules, another part (25) consider fees as a more effective way to control people. Still others say that the government should provide people with different programs aimed at popularization of such rules. What is more, some answers show that the respondents are not familiar with different

opportunities provided by the government: there are cash rewards for recycling paper, bottles and other recyclable stuff [1], therefore, the government support entrepreneurs who take into consideration these issues [2]. All this information can be found on governmental websites.

It is necessary to underline that our study is not universal and the results are limited to a small group of young people. However, we may suppose that they are typical representatives of their generation.

I would like to underline that people and the government should consider and widely implement the following measures:

1. People should get acquainted with all the opportunities which are provided by the government.

2. Parents should teach their children the basics: not to throw rubbish on the road, turn off lights when you do not need it etc.

3. The government should provide people with all the necessary information and make advertisings to popularize green lifestyle.

4. It is necessary to organize more festivals connected with green lifestyle; moreover, there is a need to make social programs at school for children in order to learn about the importance of our planet, environment, and sustainable development.

5. Fees can change the situation; more law can be adopted, which will regulate the ecological sphere with fees.

To conclude, our society develops, we build houses, factories and develop infrastructure, we try to make our life more convenient. On the contrary, we sometimes do not take into consideration the importance of the nature, which we destroy. We forget about responsibilities that come with inventions. That is why people need to follow some rules and not to be indifferent in order to make not only ours, but also our children's life better. In case we do not want to do it due to negligence or lack of knowledge about this problem, the government can help or even stimulate us to follow green lifestyle using available tools.

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