Ulf Schrader
Vera Fricke
Declan Doyle
Victoria W. Thoresen *Editors*

Enabling Responsible Living

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Editors
Ulf Schrader
Vera Fricke
Economic Education and Sustainable Consumption
Technische Universität Berlin
Berlin
Germany

Declan Doyle
School of Business and Humanities
Institute of Technology Carlow
Carlow
Ireland

Victoria W. Thoresen
University College of Hedmark
Elverum
Norway

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Berlin/Carlow/Hamar, March 2013

Ulf Schrader
Vera Fricke
Declan Doyle
Victoria W. Thoresen

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Contributors

Özden Bademci is a Researcher and Lecturer at Maltepe University (Turkey). She holds a degree in Psychology and wrote her Ph.D. on Service Provision for Street Children. Her main fields of professional interest are trauma, mental health services, childhood studies, and social responsibility. Her motto is: “Enabling Responsible Living is a gateway to democracy”.

Lívia Barbosa is a Brazilian Anthropologist. She received a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology and obtained a post doctorate at Tokyo University—Japan as well as a Master’s degree in Social Sciences. She is an associate professor at Fluminense Federal University. Her main fields of academic interest are Brazilian culture, consumption, and food. She is the coordinator, together with Fátima Portilho, of the Consumption studies group.

Jānis Brizga is a Head of the Board at the NGO Green Liberty in Latvia and Chair of NGO Network ANPED—The northern alliance for sustainability. Previously, he was the Environmental Policy Programme Director at WWF Latvia and the Executive Director at Coalition Clean Baltic Latvia’s office. He has received a Ph.D. in Geography, Environmental Science and holds a Master’s degree of Social Science in Public Administration. He works on issues about sustainable development, sustainable consumption, governance, and environmentally friendly behavior. His motto is: “Perhaps we cannot raise the winds. But each of us can put up the sail, so that when the wind comes we can catch it” (E. F. Schumacher).

Mella Cusack is currently working as Citizenship Studies Project Manager, a joint Trócaire/CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit initiative. Mella also works as a consultant with the National Council for curriculum and assessment, the Department of Foreign Affairs, and a range of Irish non-governmental organizations. She has experience of lecturing in initial teacher education, in continuing professional development for teachers and in adult education. Her current areas of interest include citizenship education, development education, education for sustainable development, social innovation, and active teaching/learning methodologies. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “Transform your world—transform the world.”

Arthur Lyon Dahl is a President of the International Environment Forum and a retired Deputy Assistant Executive Director of UNEP, with a Ph.D. in Biology and 40 years' experience in Sustainable Development. He is Visiting Professor at the University of Brighton working on values-based indicators of education for sustainable development. He represented the Baha'i International Community at the 1972 Stockholm conference, was in the Secretariat of the Rio Earth Summit, and participated in WSSD and Rio+20. His motto to enable responsible living is: "Be content with little" (Bahá'u'lláh).

Robert James Didham is a Policy Researcher and Educational Policy Specialist at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies in Japan where he leads international research projects in education for sustainable development and sustainable consumption. He has an interdisciplinary background focusing on social processes for sustainability and wrote his Ph.D. thesis on sustainable community development. His motto to enable responsible living is: "Always give more than you take, create more than you consume".

Declan Doyle holds a Vice Presidential position with responsibility for Research and Internationalisation at the Institute of Technology Carlow in Ireland. His degrees are in Marketing and Management. He is currently undertaking Doctorate Studies at the University of Bath. His research is in the area of policy formulation processes and policy analysis. His motto to enable responsible living is: "No snowflake in an avalanche ever feels responsible" (Voltaire).

Veranise Dubeux is full Professor at ESPM-Rio and PUC-RIO and is responsible for quantitative research carried out by "Centro de Altos Estudos at ESPM" (CAEPM) (Brazil). She is a specialist in mathematical modeling and applied quantitative analysis. Furthermore, she works on projects to better capture the transformations of contemporary Brazilian youth in consumer and social mobility areas. She graduated in Business Administration and holds a Master's degree in Civil Engineering. She wrote her Ph.D. in Mechanics Engineering. Her motto is: "A society that values science is able to consolidate a sustainable development model".

Monika Eigenstetter is full Professor of Industrial Psychology at the University of Applied Sciences Niederrhein (Germany). After working as a nurse, she studied Psychology and wrote her doctoral thesis on ethical decision making and responsible behavior. Her main interests in research are ethical decision making, responsible behavior, corporate social responsibility, ethical climate, energy consumption, and work safety. Her motto is: "Less is more".

Daniel Fischer is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Environmental and Sustainability Communication (INFU) at Leuphana University Lüneburg (Germany). He is a trained primary and secondary school teacher and holds a Master's degree in Educational Management and School Development. His Ph.D. research is situated in the field of sustainable consumer education and socialization in formal and informal school settings. His motto to enable responsible living is: “Consider yourself a human being, not a consumer”.

Vera Fricke is Researcher and Lecturer at Technische Universität Berlin (Germany). She holds a degree in Geography and writes her Ph.D. on Corporate Communication for Consumers’ Social Responsibility. Her main areas of research are corporate social responsibility, consumers’ social responsibility, sustainable consumption, and consumer policy. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “Be the change you want to see in the world” (Gandhi).

Ilgın Gökler-Danışman is teaching at the Psychology Department at Bahçeşehir University (Turkey). She holds a Ph.D. degree in Clinical Psychology. Her main areas of professional interest are family systems and systemic family therapy, trauma psychology, and child and adolescent psychopathology and psychotherapy. She has been actively involved in community-based psychosocial services for disadvantageous groups. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “I am response-able for creating a better response”.

Christoph Harrach is a well-known German Sustainability Blogger and Researcher at Technische Universität Berlin (Germany). He holds a degree in Business Administration and writes his Ph.D. on Empowerment of Employees Living a Sustainable Lifestyle. His main areas of research are corporate social responsibility, human resource management, and empowerment. His motto to enable responsible living is: “Do good with your money”.

Gerjo Kok is full Professor of Applied Psychology at Maastricht University (The Netherlands). From 1998 to 2006, he was Dean of the School of Psychology and Neuroscience there. His publications concern the application of social psychological theory to planned behavior change. His motto to enable responsible living is: “Let us overcome self-interest and instead emphasize concern for others and nature as our motivation for acting”.

Elīna Līce writes her Ph.D. at the Department of Environmental Management, University of Latvia. Her main research interests are household sustainable consumption, alternative food networks, household food self-provisioning, and sustainable consumption governance. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “It is not enough to be busy. So are the ants. The question is: What are we busy about?” (Henry David Thoreau).

Helen Maguire is a Lecturer in the Home Economics Department at St. Angela’s College, Sligo, Ireland with responsibility in the areas of textiles, fashion and design, Family resource management, and initial teacher education. She is a Home Economist holding a B.Ed. Home Economics and postgraduate qualifications in Education. Her research interests include: education for sustainable development, home Economics, initial teacher education, and responsible consumerism particularly in relation to fashion and textiles. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “Our community, our world, our problem, our solution”!

Pim Martens holds the Chair Global Dynamics and Sustainable Development at Maastricht University (The Netherlands) and Leuphana University (Germany). He is an Honorary Professor at Stellenbosch University (South-Africa). Martens is the Director of the International Centre for Integrated Assessment and Sustainable Development (ICIS). His motto to enable responsible living is: "Sustainable living is like playing a game: the more you play, the more fun it becomes. The more fun you have, the greater your value to yourself and to your society".

Amanda Mc Cloat is a Head of Home Economics Department and Lecturer at St. Angela's College, Sligo, Ireland. She is a Home Economist having graduated with a B.Ed. Home Economics Honours degree; an M.A. (Education); and M.Sc. (Food Policy). She started her career as a post-primary teacher before lecturing in third level on initial teacher education programmes and postgraduate degree programmes. Her areas of research and professional interests include Home economics education, teacher education, education for sustainable development, food education, and active teaching/learning methodologies. Her motto to enable responsible living is: "You can make a difference if you think you can".

Viola Muster is Researcher and Lecturer in home economics at Technische Universität Berlin (Germany). She writes her Ph.D. on sustainable consumption of employes. Her research intererests are sustainable consumption, "green" Work-Life-Balance, and Home Economics. Her motto to enable responsible living: "Actions speak louder than words."

Miriam O'Donoghue is a Deputy Director of the CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit (Ireland). She qualified originally as a Home Economics Teacher and taught for many years before moving to teacher education and teacher support services. Her postgraduate studies focused on educational leadership, teaching and learning, and teacher professional development. Her main fields of professional interest are active teaching and learning methodologies, sustainable consumption, consumer education, and home economics. Her motto to enable responsible living is: "Saying and doing are two different things".

Fátima Portilho is Sociologist and holds a Ph.D. in Social Sciences. She is professor and researcher at CPDA (Social Sciences Graduate Program on Development, Agriculture and Society—Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro—UFRRJ/Brazil). Together with Lívia Barbosa, she is coordinator of the Consumption Studies Group. Her main fields of academic interest are environmental sociology, sociology of consumption, consumers movements, food sociology, and sociology of risk. Her motto to enable responsible living is: "Know and consider the cultural aspects of the society you want to change, in order to make your action more responsible and effective".

Ulf Schrader is full Professor of Economic Education and Sustainable Consumption at Technische Universität Berlin (Germany). He studied business administration, economics, political science, and sociology. He did his Ph.D. in marketing and his post-doctoral degree (Habilitation) on social responsibility and transparency. His main fields of professional interest are sustainable consumption, consumer policy and consumer education, corporate social responsibility, and sustainability marketing. His motto to enable responsible living is: “Be self-critical and enjoy being more part of the solution and less of the problem”.

Jeanine Schreurs is an Expert in Consumer Behaviour Change—Sustainability. She was a Research Fellow at Maastricht University (The Netherlands) and Visiting Scholar at Kyoto University (Japan). She is a Director at Foundation LIFT, a project and research agency in the field of sustainable living. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “Dare to downshift”.

Victoria W. Thoresen is an Associate Professor of Education at the Hedmark University College in Norway and Director of The Partnership for Education and Research on Responsible Living (PERL). Thoresen has specialized in curriculum development, global education, peace education, and consumer education. Thoresen has written articles and textbooks for teachers and teacher training and been actively involved in the international processes on sustainable development. Her motto to enable responsible living is: “We must widen our circles of compassion to embrace everyone everywhere”.

John Wilkinson is an Associate Professor at the Federal Rural University, Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). Since co-authoring “From Farming to Biotechnology” he has published widely on the transformations of the agrifood system. Since the 1990s, he has focused on the emergence of new quality markets from an economic sociology perspective, drawing particularly on social networks and convention theory perspectives, and more recently exploring the relation between social movements and markets. In 2007, he co-authored “Fair Trade: the Challenges of Transforming Globalization”. He is currently focusing on the way the values initially associated with quality niche markets are now informing the (re)construction of the major commodity markets.

Silvia Zaharia is full Professor of Business Administrations and International Sales Management at the University of Applied Sciences Niederrhein (Germany). Furthermore, she is a Head of the eWeb Research Centre. Her research interests are multi-channel marketing, consumer behavior, and decision making. Her motto is: “Efficacy is one key to sustainability”.

Part I
Introduction

Enabling Responsible Living

An Introduction

Ulf Schrader, Vera Fricke, Declan Doyle and Victoria W. Thoresen

1 Background to this Book

This book is a compilation of the best papers presented at the 1st International Conference of The Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL). The Conference, held in March 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey, had the same title as the present book: "Enabling Responsible Living". Thus, this book—like the related conference—claims to be programmatic for the newly established network PERL.

PERL brings together educators, researchers and practitioners from government, NGOs and business who are all interested in innovative ways to foster responsible—and that means for us above all: sustainable—living (see www.perlprojects.org). The network members come from more than 130 institutions in more than 50 countries all over the world. PERL has been established as an Erasmus Academic Network and gets additional support by UNEP and different national ministries. The network continues the work of its predecessor, the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN), which was funded as an EU Thematic Network from 2003 to 2009. Hence, consumer issues and the question how to achieve

U. Schrader (✉) · V. Fricke
Economic Education and Sustainable Consumption, Technische Universität Berlin, Marchstraße 23 10587 Berlin, Germany
e-mail: schrader@tu-berlin.de

V. Fricke
e-mail: vera.fricke@tu-berlin.de

D. Doyle
School of Business and Humanities, Institute of Technology Carlow, Kilkenny Road, Carlow, Ireland
e-mail: declan.doyle@itcarlow.ie

V. W. Thoresen
University College of Hedmark, Postboks 40 2418 Elverum, Norway
e-mail: victoria.thoresen@hihm.no

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sustainable consumption remain to be of high importance for PERL. The new name highlights that sustainable consumption needs to be embedded in a broader concept of responsible living. Chances and obstacles to consume sustainably are not to be determined by the individual but are related to conditions shaped by government, companies and other societal actors. However, the way how these institutions shape the conditions is influenced by decisions and behaviour of individuals within them. Therefore, with responsible living we take into account that the roles of the individual in the modern world are not restricted to the consumer and the citizen, but could also include roles like employee, parent, association member and many more.

According to these considerations, the articles in this book address the question how institutions and individuals can enable responsible living which, in line with the famous sustainability definition of the Brundtland Commission, allows need satisfaction today without damaging the ability of others—today or in the future—to satisfy their needs. This volume continues the tradition of CCN to publish the best conference papers in a special book. From 2004 until 2009 five volumes of the series "Consumer Citizenship: Promoting New Responses" were published by Hedmark University College, Norway. For this first best paper book of PERL we decided to co-operate with an established international publisher and to set up an extensive review process to guarantee high and consistent scientific quality. Still, and in line with the principles of PERL, the articles published in this book are of high practical relevance and not basic research.

For the conference, within a peer review process 76 out of 104 submitted proposals were selected for presentation. 37 of the presented papers were submitted for this book. These submissions were reviewed in a double blind review process by at least two reviewers each. Some papers went through up to three rounds of review. In the end, we accepted twelve papers for publication. These papers cover very well the broad scope of topics considered in the PERL network. The authors of the twelve papers come from nine countries from three different continents, which again reflects PERL's internationality. Due to the long review process, the papers were written between the beginning of 2011 and the end of 2012.

2 Structure and Content

This book is structured in five parts. The introduction is followed by four parts that reflect the content and the relevance of topics which are important for PERL. Part II *Understanding Responsible Living* consists of articles which help to understand responsible (consumer) behaviour. Part III *Policies for Responsible Living* applies a macro perspective and asks for the effect of different policies on responsible living. Part IV *Education for Responsible Living* addresses a core topic for PERL and its predecessor CCN: the question, how schools and universities can foster responsible living. Finally, Part V *Corporate Responsibility for Responsible Living* deals with corporations as an important factor for responsible living especially as providers of—more or less sustainable—consumer goods and jobs. While part II to IV consist of three papers each, part V has two groups of authors, which is consistent with PERL's emphasis on consumption, policy and education and—up to now—less on business. However, the articles show that these topics are all interconnected and that in practice it is often hardly possible to separate them.

In the introduction part the book starts with *Victoria W. Thoresen*'s paper *1 + 1 = 5*. She shows that big societal transformations are only achievable when different actors work together and create synergies not only through summing up but multiplying the energies of the combatants. Using the example of the abolition of slavery the analogies between slavery and unsustainable lifestyles become strikingly clear: Like slavery in the past, today's unsustainable lifestyles are seen by many as an economic necessity, a privilege, and the natural way of things. Nevertheless, the abolition of slavery has shown that those who profited from unacceptable practices are able to learn that what they did was wrong and that the transformation has been for the weal of everyone. Thoresen shows how PERL's different activities are fostering this transformation towards a sustainable society.

The first paper in part II is written by *Viola Muster*. In *The Misjudged Discipline: A Plea for Strengthening Home Economics* Muster shows that home economics provide many valuable approaches and concepts to better understand sustainable consumption and responsible living. Nevertheless, the discipline has earned only little attention in the international discourse on sustainable development. To change this, Muster recommends that the discipline should develop a higher standard of international research and exchange, intensify its communication and lobbying activities, and position itself as an important economic discipline, complementing economics and business administration.

While the first article of this part is focused on the interpretation of theory, the other two papers present the results of empirical consumer studies from different parts of the world. The first by *Jeanine Schreurs, Pim Martens and Gerjo Kok* is titled *How to promote Sustainable Living? Inspiring Experiences of Dutch Downshifters*. The authors provide empirical evidence from consumers who downshifted their level of consumption recently—either voluntarily or involuntarily. They show that both groups differ significantly among each other and in relation to non-downshifters with regards to consumption attitudes and practices. For voluntary downshifters positive downshifting experiences are much more important than negative experiences. For consumers who had to downshift involuntary (e.g. due to unemployment), negative experiences are much more important. However, even they have relevant positive experiences. The authors show, how voluntary downshifting—as an implementation of the sufficiency strategy towards sustainability—can be supported by policy and society.

Livia Barbosa, Fátima Portilho, John Wilkinson and Veranise Dubeux contribute an article on *Youth, Consumption and Citizenship: The Brazilian Case*. Based on theories of post-materialism, political consumption, and hypotheses of mistrust in relation to political institutions the authors have conducted a consumer survey in Brazil. The results show that the level of political consumption among young Brazilians is still low in comparison with Europe or North America, but rising with age and the level of education. The authors conclude that political consumption is already relevant in Brazil today since the limited individual political consumption activities are successfully complemented by collective activism of NGOs.

The three papers in part III on policies for responsible living consist of one general approach and two regional case studies. First, *Arthur Lyon Dahl* presents *A Multi-Level Framework and Values-Based Indicators to Enable Responsible Living*. He gives an overview about factors determining responsible living on individual, local, national and international level. His main focus is the local level. Based on different case studies he shows how progress towards responsible living and sustainability can be achieved and measured with value-based indicators. Independent of the world region and the type of the analysed local communities, six values were identified to be crucial success factors: unity in diversity, trust/trustworthiness, justice, empowerment, integrity and respect for the environment.

The first regional case study is the article of *Jānis Brizga and Elīna Līce* with the title *Driving Forces, Environmental Pressures and Policy Instruments: Household Sustainable Consumption Assessment for Latvia*. Based on statistical data analysis and focus group interviews the authors present dominating consumption trends for Latvia, identify the main driving forces behind them and give policy recommendations. They show that consumption in Latvia tends to develop in the direction of the unsustainable situation in Western Europe and how modern policy instruments might stop this development and create a trend towards sustainability. Aspects like integrating externalities, cooperative involvement of different stakeholders and using multiple complementary policy instruments are of importance here.

Robert James Didham analyses in his contribution *Capacity for the Implementation of Education for Sustainable Consumption (ESC) in Northeast Asia* national policies for ESC of China, Japan and South Korea. By applying the four levers of change identified in UNDP's capacity development framework (institutional arrangements, leadership, knowledge, and accountability) Didham ranks Japan first, China second and Korea third. However, all three countries receive less than half of possible scores. Thus, based on identified shortcomings Didham provides recommendations how to improve the ESC policies. His focus is on the diverse roles of different political and societal actors (different levels of government, NGOs, corporations, media, academia) and how they could interact. His concepts go beyond the presented case studies and are generally applicable worldwide.

While Didham's article tackles education as a policy object, part IV focusses on more concrete examples of education for responsible living. The first article in this part is written by *Ilgın Gökler-Danışman and Özden Bademci* and deals with *Enabling Responsible Living by Increasing Social Awareness: Integrating Social Responsibility Projects into Undergraduate Curriculum*. Gökler-Danışman and Bademci analyse the participation of psychology students in social responsibility projects in the neighbourhood of their university near Istanbul in Turkey. They show that this collaboration can be useful for both, the work of the NGOs involved and the personality development of the participating students. They conducted a qualitative study which provides evidence that this kind of project learning for responsible living is often more successful than typical classroom lessons.

After this example of how to integrate education about responsible living in university teaching, the second contribution of this part deals with a tool for education for sustainable development at schools. *Helen Maguire, Amanda Mc Cloat, Miriam O'Donoghue and Mella Cusack* present *"Images and Objects". A Tool for Teaching Education for Sustainable Development and Responsible Living in Home Economics*. The core of "Images and Objects" is a brochure, developed by the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN), with background information, instructions for teachers and a selection of photos related to sustainability issues. The tool is used worldwide within education for sustainable development (ESD). As an input for the revision of the brochure the authors conducted a study with teacher students in Ireland. The results show that—despite a positive overall evaluation—a specific adaptation to national curriculums and teaching requirements and an extension of elements which increase the active involvement of students (e.g. by making photos themselves instead of only discussing photos of others) could further improve the toolkit.

The findings of the already mentioned articles in this part reveal that ESD requires more than traditional textbook based teaching. This is confirmed by *Daniel Fischer*'s contribution *Promoting Sustainable Consumption in Educational Settings*. Based on findings of public health research he distinguishes formal and informal learning for sustainable consumption and shows that the design of the learning environment (e.g. school buildings, canteen), which delivers occasions for informal learning, are as important for the competence development as formal classroom learning settings. Based on this he provides recommendations for promoting sustainable consumption in different educational settings (schools and universities).

The last part of the book focusses on companies and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Here, *Monika Eigenstetter and Silvia Zaharia* deal with the question *Is Engagement in CSR motivated by the defined Values of Entrepreneurs?* Based on the Schwartz value scale they confirm in a study on German small and medium sized enterprises that the owner-manager's engagement for the environment and employees is correlated with "universalism" and "benevolence". In addition they found unexpected positive influences for "security" and "tradition" which might be related to the correlation of these values with religiousness. Finally, they could confirm positive relations of CSR and classical business goals like profit and customer satisfaction.

While Eigenstetter and Zaharia look at companies as providers of goods for responsible consumers *Ulf Schrader and Christoph Harrach* analyse companies as employers of potentially responsible consumers. In their paper *Empowering Responsible Consumers to be Sustainable Intrapreneurs* they show that the integration of private values, experiences, and ideas of responsible consumers in business processes can be positive for both, employers and employees.

Empowered employees who like to be sustainable intrapreneurs try to pursue a sustainable lifestyle and are willing, able, and sufficiently free to pull and push colleagues and management towards more sustainability. Schrader and Harrach describe measures for implementation and possible effects of this kind of empowerment.

“1 + 1 = 5”

Victoria W. Thoresen

Abstract This chapter is a revised version of the opening keynote address at the First The Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL) International Conference “Enabling Responsible Living” in March 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey. It describes the importance and different types of partnerships as institutions to bring about social change. Presenting the example of the abolition of slavery it is shown, that a destructive social practice once seen as necessary and inevitable can be overcome by collaborative action. Lessons from this experience can foster the enabling of responsible living since there are striking similarities between slavery and today’s unsustainable over-consumption. Related activities of PERL to promote such a responsible living are summarized at the end.

Keywords Partnerships · Slavery · Partnership for education and research about responsible living (PERL)

1 Introduction

There was a song people used to sing in the 1960s—hundreds of people, thousands of people sang a verse which echoed the convictions of groups throughout history. This song reflected the very essence of humanity, that people are social beings, interdependent and possessed of an added strength when collaborating together. The song described a way of being quite opposite to the culture of self-centred individualism which surrounded them. It was a song of unity in diversity. It was a song of justice and equity. The groups sang of how changes in attitude and behaviour happen when “2 + 2 + 50 = a million, we’ll see that day come round,

V. W. Thoresen (✉)
Hedmark University College, Postboks 40 2418 Elverum, Norway
e-mail: victoria.thoresen@hihm.no

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we'll see that day come round(…)" (Lyrics to "One Man's Hands" by Kevin Becker). Thus, building partnerships is a key to build a future that individual human beings and institutions will never be able to achieve on their own. On the basis of the description of different types of partnerships this paper will present the abolition of slavery as an example how to overcome a destructive social practice through collaborative action. The historic lessons to be learned are transferred to the field of responsible living and exemplified by the activities of PERL.

2 Partnerships per Definition

Composites are more than the sum of its parts: The human body is a good example of a partnership of organs; a system which is so interdependent that should one tiny cell have a problem, the entire system is alerted by pain and runs to the rescue. Social partnerships have been the woof and warp of societies across the globe since time began. Families, for better or worse, constitute the matrix of interaction which keeps the human race going. Schools, workplaces, businesses, interest organizations, governments, nations, even regional and international communities are all forms of partnerships which together create the texture and colour of civilization.

Yet partnerships are not easy to establish or maintain. There exist inherent difficulties and explicit challenges. Let us briefly look at some of these and try to discover if history can afford any relevant examples of how partnerships actually have brought about significant change of attitudes and behaviour similar to what consumer citizens are trying to achieve in society at large.

Among the maze of partnerships big and small, categories emerge. There are partnerships based on donations, sponsorship, cooperation, coordination and collaboration (see Table 1).

The greater the complexity of the partnership, the larger is the risk for misunderstandings and the greater the decentralization which often occurs.

Bringing groups of people together, be it few or many, does not automatically lead to constructive change. Revolutions, protests, mafias, dictatorships, etc. have bloody, destructive histories. Creating positive partnerships is a complex, organic and demanding process. It is important to recognize central elements that contribute to making partnerships efficient and reflect on how to better implement them. According to my own experience, the elements essential to successful partnerships include

- identifying with common goals;
- consulting together frankly, openly and respectfully;
- creating common expectations;
- committing to common goals;
- pulling one's weight;

- consideration of others and their conditions;
- flexibility;
- quality controls;
- reflection and evaluation; and
- continual development.

Table 1 Models of partnerships source. Adopted from Skage (1996), p. 27

Donation—one-time financial or non-financial contribution to support program or service. Donors expectations may include public recognition or tax credits
Sponsorship—providing financial support for a specific time period or cycle of program, or providing contribution in kind for the purpose of supporting a program or service. The sponsor might expect public recognition in return for the support
Cooperation—two or more organizations/institutions share general information about their mandates, objectives, and services. They may work together informally to achieve their organizations day-to-day goals, for example, through support or referrals. It is a relatively superficial level of interaction as in inter-organizational meetings and informal networking
Organizational/institutional procedures, policies, and activities remain distinct and separate and are determined without reference to the procedures and policies of the other organizations. They are autonomous, function independently in parallel fashion, and work towards the identified goals of their respective programs. It demonstrates a peaceful co-existence, but is neither genuinely interactive nor interdependent (Swan and Morgan 1993 in Government of Saskatchewan 1994, p. 71).
Coordination—a multi-disciplinary approach where professionals from different organizations/institutions confer, share decision making, and coordinate their service delivery for the purpose of achieving shared goals and improving interventions
Coordination is characterized by deliberate joint and often formalized relations for achieving shared or compatible goals. It involves establishing a common understanding of the services committed to and provided for by each organization and by determining each organization's accountability and responsibility to specific target groups
Collaboration—unlike any of the other models of partnership, collaboration requires two or more organizations working together in all stages of program or service development; in other words, "joint planning, joint implementation, and joint evaluation" (New England Program in Teacher Education 1973 in Hord 1986). There is a cooperative investment of resources (time, funding, material) and therefore joint risk-taking, sharing of authority, and benefits for all partners (Government of Canada 1995)
The term collaboration has been used to describe integrations that result from blending provider disciplines and usually involves several organizations working together in a unified structure (Mawhinney 1993, p. 37).

3 Historical Lessons from the Abolition of Slavery

The case of the abolition of slavery is an example of significant change in attitudes and behaviour brought on by the work of many partnerships. Lessons may be learned from this case. Only slightly over 200 years ago slavery was considered an economic necessity (without slaves the markets would surely collapse). Slavery was also considered the right of the owner. It was the master's privilege to own slaves and many felt they were merely upholding traditions (slavery was the "status quo", a heritage). Add to these arguments the ones which claimed that slavery was the natural way of things (man is a beast and certain men are more beasts than others) or the attitude that slavery was a God ordained condition (some were "chosen" to have slaves, others to serve). Slave owners had control, did not have to listen to stakeholders, were not required to be accountable to anyone or transparent in their actions. The slaves were often unaware of their rights, passive and submissive or angry and revengeful (see Fig. 1).

Slavery:

- An economic necessity
- A privilege
- A tradition
- The natural way of things
- A God-given condition

Owners:

- Lacked accountability and transparency
- Had limited interaction with the stakeholders (slaves)

Slaves:

- Had little understanding of their rights
- Were afraid
- Were passive
- Were angry

Fig. 1 Characteristics of slavery

What did the groups and partnerships that contributed to the abolishment of slavery do? They

- dreamed (and sang and danced),
- questioned (cried and died),
- discussed (were opposed and ridiculed),
- expressed new understandings and interpretations (were laughed at and not believed),
- exposed injustice and inequality (attracted the attention of those who wanted change),
- developed means of showing others that society could exist without slavery (provided examples of alternative solutions), and
- refused inequity and persevered (and won).

There is a striking similarity in these arguments to the ones supporting the continuation of over-consumption lead by a small selected section of the global

Unsustainable consumption by a select few:

- An economic necessity
- A privilege
- A tradition
- The natural way of things
- A God-given condition

Producers:

- Lack accountability and transparency
- Have limited interaction with stakeholders (consumers)

Consumers:

- Have little understanding of their rights
- Are afraid
- Are passive
- Are angry

Fig. 2 Characteristics of over-consumption

society (see Fig. 2). The present global economic model based on unsustainable lifestyles—although often considered a privilege, a necessity, a tradition, the natural way of things, and even, to some, a God-given condition—this model seems to be in transition just as the model based on slavery was changed. The myths society has clung to are being unveiled.

The attitudes and actions of producers today, as with slave owners in the past, are evolving from authoritarian control, unaccountability and lack of interaction with stakeholders to attitudes based on collective corporate social responsibility. The reactions and initiatives of the consumer are in the process of moving toward a greater understanding of rights and responsibilities in a manner similar to that which happened with the slaves. The experience of the abolishment of slavery also appears to run parallel to the development of consumer reactions in relation to the existing passivity and anger of modern consumer citizens. Many Afro-Americans or others with slave heritage roots developed a pride in their background and participate constructively in society. Similarly, consumer citizens are standing up, being heard, and becoming active stakeholders.

Are there lessons to be learned? Was it the identification of a common vision (as has been done with the development of consumer citizenship, of sustainable lifestyles, of global citizenship)? Was it the recognition of the rights of all (slave owners and slaves, as the rights and responsibilities of governments, businesses and consumers are now being publically recognized)? Or was it perhaps the tools which were used to convince the public at large that slaves were equal human beings (tools like as, and in the case of consumers such tools as ISO 26000-Social

Responsibility, The UN Consumer Rights Act, the Johannesburg Implementation plan etc.)? An overview of common approaches show, that they are especially strong when they have implemented the characteristics of successful partnerships, mentioned above at the end of Sect. 2 (e.g. identifying with common goals consulting together frankly, openly and respectfully).

4 Present Situation and Perspectives

Definitions of responsible living (scientific, religious, ethical, humanistic, ecological, democratic, etc.) exist (Thoresen 2005) just as definitions of freedom and equity existed when slavery was still practiced. The challenge is to raise awareness and question how these definitions influence our lifestyle choices. Merely feeding people with information has proven to be unable to change consumer choices (Assadourian 2010). Repeated research results testify to the so called value-action gap which reflects that what people may want and what they do to achieve it are often not connected (Jackson 2009). It is a process of reimagining and reconstructing practices based on analysis of present practice (action learning). Consider, for example the new data confirming that there is a "surprisingly weak relationship between economic growth and improvements in health and education" (UNDP 2010, p. 2). These kinds of inputs have added new understandings to how well-being is measured. Is it enough to measure only the individual's own well-being or should measurements and indicators go beyond and encompass the well-being of others on the globe and future generations?

There exist roadmaps/traffic rules (UN pacts/declarations, goals, etc.) to help move to a more sustainable, responsible society. If one looks at the areas of responsible living then the sustainable consumption and production agenda can be briefly described to include:

1971 Founex Report before the Stockholm conference
1992 Agenda 21 Principles 8 Chapters 4, 7, 8, 10
2002 Johannesburg Implementation Plan Paragraph 2 Chapters 14–43
2003 Marrakech Process
2005 UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development
2010 Human Development focus on the interrelatedness of the sustainability and development discourse

Many groups and networks are already collaborating. The Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL) partners have worked together for over a decade (first as The Consumer Citizenship Network now as PERL). They are asking questions such as the ones dealt with in this publication. The work PERL is doing can briefly be described as in Table 2.

Table 2 Activities of the partnership for education and research about responsible living

Policy fields	Activities
International agendas	
OECDs consumer education recommendations	Information, consultation
CSD-18/19	ESC roadmap and recommendations: here and now!
10Year framework	Program proposal for education for 10YFP
Rio + 20	Side events, information briefs, materials
DESD	Launches, events, seminars, materials
National lobbying	
Committees, boards	Dialogues, consultation
Curriculum revision units	Translations, adaptations of materials and methodologies
Teacher training	Seminars, guidelines
Local communities	
Educational authorities	Meetings, articles
Schools	Enabling toolkits
Business	Stakeholder involvement
Civil society	Networking and collaboration
Building capacity	
Teacher trainers, teachers	Conferences, guidelines, toolkits, pilot projects
Students/pupils	Essay contests, video contests
Parents	Articles, reports
Public at large	Website information, links (PERL, DESIS, etc.)
Stimulating relevant research	
Conferences	Research and opinion paper presentations
Publications	"Promoting New Responses" series
Web platforms	Collaboration with other research projects
Creating methodologies and materials	
Active learning	Images and objects toolkits
Service learning	Training
Community-based learning	Looking for likely alternatives: LOLA
Creative learning	SEEK, etc.

The work that lies ahead of PERL and other partnerships whose goal is enabling responsible living can be summarized as follows:

- further develop visions of the future;
- question, investigate, learn and act;
- promote creative approaches and solutions;
- maintain a continual dialog and continue to collaborate with other partnerships;
- exemplify unity in diversity;

- welcome updated relevant scientific input, and show through deeds as well as words their commitment to the goal of enabling responsible living.

If we are successful in doing this, we will contribute to an ongoing development, described by the Baha'i International Community (2010, p. 16):

> Broader visions of human purpose and prosperity are moving from the periphery to the center of public discourse. It is becoming clear that the pathway to sustainability will be one of empowerment, collaboration and continual processes of questioning, learning and action in all regions of the world. It will be shaped by the experiences of women, men, children, the rich, the poor, the governors and the governed as each one is enabled to play their rightful role in the construction of a new society. As the sweeping tides of consumerism, unfettered consumption, extreme poverty and marginalization recede, they will reveal the human capacities for justice, reciprocity and happiness.

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Part II
Understanding Responsible Living

The Underrated Discipline

A Plea for Strengthening Home Economics

Viola Muster

Abstract Home Economics has always been dealing with sustainable living and a responsible use of resources. Even though sustainability issues have attracted growing attention in academic research and society in recent years, home economics has hardly benefited from this increased interest. In the view of the author Home Economics is barely noticed in the international discourse on sustainability. Thus this article calls for more attention to the Home Economics discipline. At first, selected benefits of Home Economics for promoting sustainable living are illustrated. It is argued that Home Economics has distinctive qualities (e.g. its focus on resource management or on practical competences) that are missing in other disciplines. Second, the author reflects on possible reasons that might explain the scant recognition of Home Economics in the field of sustainability studies, particularly with regards to German Home Economics. At last, ideas for strengthening Home Economics are presented.

Keywords Home economics · Responsible living · Scientific discipline · Social recognition

1 Introduction

In recent years research on sustainable living and sustainable consumption has rapidly expanded (e.g. Hansen and Schrader 1997; Jackson 2006; Schaefer and Crane 2005; Spargaaren 2003; Thøgersen and Schrader 2012). The international research community in this field comprises economists, psychologists and social scientists from many sub-disciplines. Despite this impressive interdisciplinary

V. Muster (✉)
Economic Education and Sustainable Consumption, Technische Universität Berlin,
Marchstraße 23 10587 Berlin, Germany
e-mail: viola.muster@tu-berlin.de

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assembly, one distinguished discipline is barely noticed in the international discourse on sustainability: Home Economics (e.g. Dewhurst and Pendergast 2011).

Home economics is considered to be the original field of research dealing with economic, social and ecological aspects of everyday living (Schweitzer 2006). Since everyday living takes place within households, private households are the main subject of Home Economics. Most individuals are integrated into household systems (e.g. Boulding 1972). All activities that take place within household systems contribute to sustaining and shaping individuals' everyday life (Schweitzer 2006). Therefore, Home Economics deals with conditions and functions of household activities, as well as the organization and management of such activities within the household system.

Within the present Home Economics community, it is seen as a matter of course that Home Economics contribute to responsible living. Rosemarie von Schweitzer, a German Home Economicst writes for example:

> It is the scientific mission of home economics […] to make the case for a sustainable, responsible requirement-orientated everyday culture of personal, family and social responsibility based on the solidarity of the genders and generations (Schweitzer 2006, p. 300).

In its position statement the International Federation for Home Economics writes that Home Economics needs to be understood as a

> field of study and a profession, situated in the human sciences that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities (IFHE 2008, p. 1).

However, the focus within the field of Home Economics on sustainable living is largely unrecognized in other research disciplines and society. Its impact on scientific and social discourses regarding sustainable living is therefore perceived as marginal.

This article argues that Home Economics can significantly contribute to promoting sustainable lifestyles, and seeks to call for more attention to Home Economics in sustainability research. Given this backdrop, the benefits of Home Economics in promoting responsible living are illustrated. Secondly, possible reasons for the limited acknowledgment of Home Economics in the context of sustainability are explored. Finally, recommendations are given on how to improve the standing of Home Economics in the scientific community and society in general.

In this article the terms "responsible" and "sustainable" are used synonymously. Sustainable or responsible living contributes to sustainable development, which is understood as "a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED 1987, p. 43).

2 Strengths of Home Economics for Promoting Responsible Living

This section presents some of the varied strengths of Home Economics that deserve appropriate scientific and social recognition and further elaboration in order to promote responsible living.

2.1 Focus on a Responsible Use of Resources

All household activities are shaped by the availability of internal household resources (e.g. time, (wo)manpower, competences, etc.), framework conditions and external resources (e.g. political rights, public infrastructure, nature, market goods, etc.) as well as the individual characteristics of the household members (e.g. specific needs or attitudes towards household activities) (Schweitzer 2006). Since most household activities require the use of internal and external resources, Home Economics concentrates on responsible resource management. It is a basic assumption that resources are scarce (Schweitzer 2006). There might be households, for instance, with high levels of income that nonetheless perceive some shortage, e.g. a lack in time for leisure or rest. In other households there might be sufficient free time, but physical health problems limit the scope of activity. In order to achieve life satisfaction for all household members, Home Economics aims at working out how individuals' needs and limited resources can be best balanced (Piorkowsky 2011; Schweitzer 2006).

In practice, Western households often ignore the limitations of (global) ecological resources. Unsustainable consumption and production patterns massively contribute to environmental degradation and ecocide (EEA 2010; WCED 1987). Even though Western households do not directly face these limitations of natural resources the reflection on other limited resources, such as time and (wo)manpower, can help to understand the finiteness of nature as well. Since the household system is concrete and tangible, implications of an unsustainable use of resources can be directly perceived by household members (e.g. stress, indebtedness, overweight). Therefore it can be assumed that the household perspective and people's own experiences with household resources are a very good starting point for learning sustainable living.

2.2 Focus on Practical Knowledge

In contrast to most other scientific disciplines Home Economics is a discipline that focuses both on theoretical and practical knowledge. From a Home Economics point of view, many household problems do not arise from a lack of material resources but from poor skills in proper management and application of these resources (Schweitzer 2006). As previously mentioned, all household activities require the use of scarce resources. In order to apply these limited resources sustainably various competences and skills are prerequisite. In order to promote such skills and competences Home Economics is dedicated to practical education. In Home Economics, students learn concrete techniques and skills like preparing, maintaining and recycling products. They do not only read and talk about sustainable food, for instance, but they learn how to cook it. Home Economics is thus assumed to enrich theoretical knowledge of other disciplines with practical everyday knowledge. Since the gap between attitudes and behaviour in sustainable living is perceived as a significant problem for its promotion (e.g. Kollmus and Agyeman 2002), practical knowledge is considered a useful tool in closing this gap.

2.3 Focus on Productive Household Functions

The third benefit of Home Economics in promoting sustainable living is its focus on active and creative functions of the household. In national and business economics, for instance, households are often perceived only as receiving and consuming entities (Piorkowsky 2011). However, households have significant shaping and producing functions. On the one hand, households and household members actively influence their household-related natural, social, economic and technical environments, for instance by modifying public space, by establishing local exchange trading systems or offering neighbourly help. On the other hand, households significantly (re-)process market goods and produce consumption-ready products that are in line with household members' needs and desires (Ironmonger 2000). Households must utilize other capacities, such as the aforementioned competences, or time and energy, in order to process market goods (Ironmonger 2000). Even though the producing power of households is considered significant for a society household production is hardly recognized in other disciplines (and society) (Piorkowsky 2011). All household activities are summarized as consumption. However, it is worthwhile to separate household consumption from household production processes. This can be accomplished by using Reid's conception of the third person criterion (Ironmonger 2000; Reid 1934). According to Reid, all household activities can be understood as productive if a third person outside of the household can also carry them out (Reid 1934).

The Home Economics perspective on household production is significant in the promotion of sustainable living, as it raises questions, for example, about framework conditions of sustainable household production (e.g. time structures, provision structures, required living standards) and the distribution of production work (e.g. with regard to gender, age, social position). The unique insights from the field of Home Economics into these household processes can help to increase both social recognition and understanding of household production activities.

2.4 Focus on an Alternative Economic Paradigm

The history of Home Economics documents the evolutionary development of the understanding of economy; it begins in Greek Antiquity (Richarz 1991; Schweitzer 2006). As the present economic system significantly contributes to the exploitation of nature and its resources, reflecting on the origin of economics can help to reflect on and critically scrutinize the prevailing idea of economy in present times.

Oikos, the ancient Greek term for household, is also the root of the modern word, economics (Richarz 1991). About 2000 years ago, Xenophon, and later Aristotle, wrote practical instructions about responsible household management (e.g. Richarz 1991). The fact that ancient scholars already considered household management reveals that management and balancing of needs and resources in the domestic sphere is a long-existing challenge for humanity. While management of domestic resources during pre-industrial times was characterized by shortages, problems with contemporary management of resources in the domestic sphere in western countries are due in large part to overconsumption and wastage.

Aristotle's observations about household management are particularly relevant in the promotion of responsible living because he emphasized the importance of sustainment-oriented household activities in contrast to market-oriented business activities (Richarz 1991; Schweitzer 2006). He illustrated the household as economic paradigm (Seel 2006). Household activities are understood as all activities that focus on the sustainment of household members and a responsible use of household resources (Schweitzer 2006). In part, business activities are also considered as household activities as they are needed, for instance, to procure market goods. In Aristotle's assessment most business activities related to trade and moneymaking, so-called "chrematistics", are described as unnatural, hedonistic and excessive actions (Richarz 1991; Schweitzer 2006).

Aristotle's considerations are highly relevant for promoting responsible living in contemporary life and provoke reflection on the prevailing understanding of mainstream economics, which typically excludes the domestic sphere. They make clear that the economic focus on market activities and moneymaking has completely marginalized economic behaviour that is concentrated on sustainability. As Rosemarie von Schweitzer states:

> The extravagances of current business ambitions, with growth always the goal, and the inability of modern economics to recognize that people with few means might achieve a "good" life, underscore the consequences of overlooking the wisdom of Aristotle (Schweitzer 2006, p. 104).

By illustrating Home Economics' ancient origin and its original understanding of economics, Home Economics can help to promote principles of responsible living.

In conclusion, Home Economics provides various benefits for promoting responsible living. Particularly important is its focus on a responsible use of resources, its emphasis on practical knowledge, its illustration of productive household functions and its theoretical economic foundations. It is assumed that there are multiple reasons for Home Economics' little recognition. The following reasons are perceived from an external perspective on Home Economics, since the author of this article is a social scientist, but no skilled Home Economicst. Here again, the following collection does not make a claim to be complete, but aims to provide an overview.

3 Reasons Explaining Home Economics' Deficient Recognition

Even though Home Economics is understood as a socio-economic scientific discipline that focuses on household systems, its recognition as a scientific discipline and its impact on social discourses is minimal. This is, in my opinion, due in large part to Home Economics' unfavourable image and reputation.

I suppose that the poor reputation of Home Economics is predominantly related to the history of economic theory and economic developments. As mentioned above, the household system has been the prevailing economic paradigm from ancient times until industrialization. Though, due to the separation of private life and employed work during industrialization, the importance of private households has been increasingly marginalized in the context of economics (Richarz 1991). With the rise of national and business economics, Home Economics became dispensable. Paid work outside the home took on greater importance during the process of industrialization and increasingly became the domain of men, while household work was relegated to the female sphere. In the nineteenth and twentieth century, Home Economics was developed into a teaching course for "good housewives" (Richarz 1991; Schweitzer 2006). Home Economics concentrated mainly on practical housekeeping skills such as cooking, sewing and cleaning. In turn, its foundations in micro-economic theory were often not emphasized enough. In a speech to the American Home Economic Association radical feminist Robin Morgan illustrated that by the middle of the twentieth century, domestic work in the western world had been nearly completely severed from its roots in economics and focused entirely on family and women as consumers:

> I gather from your literature and from the way Home Economics has functioned in this country that the main emphasis of your organization is to reinforce three primary areas: marriage, the family, and the issue of consumerism, which you may euphemistically call consumer protection. Now those three areas—the institution of marriage, the institution of the nuclear family, and the incredible manipulation of women as consumers—are three of the primary areas that the radical women's movement is out to destroy. So one could say that as a radical feminist, I am here addressing the enemy (Morgan 1973 in AHEA 1973, p. 13).

Even though Home Economics may no longer be suspected of uncritical support of mass consumption, its image as old-fashioned, family-oriented subject for housewives is still persistent. Moreover, a possible process of changing this housewife-image is even more difficult because in practice, most housekeeping activities are still managed by women (Dixon and Wetherell 2010). Even though western countries strive for equality between men and women and even though women are increasingly participating in paid employment outside of the home, women are still doing the largest portion of the domestic labour (Dixon and Wetherell 2010). Particularly repetitive, regular and time-consuming household activities such as cleaning, washing and daily cooking are still mainly women's work. This gender-specific, unequal distribution of household-related consumption and production work can be assumed as additional reason why the image of Home Economics remains "female". The interrelationship between the image of Home Economics on the one hand, and the social reality regarding gender inequalities as well as the lack of social recognition of unpaid household work on the other hand, restrains efforts to regenerate Home Economics as a gender-neutral and well-regarded micro-economic discipline.

Moreover, Home Economics' early orientation towards uncritical market-driven consumption is much more persistently present than its ancient orientation as a discipline centred on sustainment and rooted in economic theory. In fact, the long tradition of Home Economics as a discipline in which responsible management of all internal and external resources is necessary is often neglected.

Home Economics' image problem could be both the cause and consequence of an additional problem. In order to rid itself of its limited reputation the Home Economics community has extensively discussed its identity. Strengths and weaknesses of Home Economics have been evaluated in detail (e.g. McGregor 2009; Stage and Vincenti 1997; Turkki 2005). Therefore, in my opinion, Home Economics has limited its own development and exposure by choosing to discuss its identity at length, but mostly within the confines of the Home Economics discipline. As such, it has largely failed to promote its own academic contributions or engage in meaningful exchange with other disciplines.

This is a vicious cycle, as image and identity problems led to this extensive internal discourse in the first place. However, if these internal discourses are not presented to other disciplines, then external recognition cannot be achieved.

A further problem with the image of Home Economics within the scientific community is found in its focus on practical knowledge and education. While these characteristics have value, as illustrated above, they also have decisive drawbacks. Because of its practical orientation, Home Economics is often depreciated as a non-scientific and non-academic discipline, and as such, external research communities have largely ignored the intellectual value of Home Economics. Moreover, Home Economics itself is not very strong to defend this verdict. For example, Home Economics research in high-ranking international journals, including in economic or sociological journals, is limited. But in order to get scientific recognition, exposure in valued publications is needed.

The scarcity of sophisticated Home Economics research is related to another problem of the Home Economics discipline, which again, can be seen as cause and consequence of its image problems. Certainly its reputation in the scientific community is dependent on its institutional anchoring. It should be noted that Home Economics is a small discipline. Its institutionalization and diffusion at universities is low and hampers widespread scientific research (Schweitzer 2006). As Home Economics is dedicated to teacher education, its academic position is dependent on its existence as a school subject. In Germany, Home Economics as a standardized school subject is not existent. Depending on the federal states and the type of school Home Economics is partly an independent subject, partly integrated into or combined with other subjects and partly not taught at all. Also in other regions of the world Home Economics integration into school curricula has successively been reduced (Ma and Pendergast 2011). This is not a favourable basis for strengthening and refreshing Home Economics.

The traditional focus of Home Economics on teacher education is another reason that Home Economics is not highly esteemed as an academic discipline. Most parts of teacher education in Germany, for instance, were not integrated into universities until the educational expansion of the 1970s. Before this expansion, teacher education was often centred in teacher training colleges, where academic research was not a priority. This tradition still influences—and arguably limits—Home Economics' conception of itself as an academic research discipline.

Finally, I claim that Home Economics makes too little effort to improve scientific international networking and exchange. This is particularly true with regards to Home Economics in Germany as is evident in the high number of articles published solely in German and not in English. Moreover, German Home Economists often refer to other German Home Economists in their books and articles (which is also partly true for this article). Without publication in English, international exchange is unlikely, if not impossible.

In conclusion, the perceived unfavourable image and little reputation of Home Economics is partly caused by the discipline of Home Economics itself. Given the valuable contributions to sustainability of this discipline Home Economics should strive for more publicity and appropriate recognition. In the following section, I therefore present possible ideas on how to strengthen the reputation of Home Economics as an academic discipline that has important contributions to make to a wide range of disciplines, including the study of sustainability.

4 Ideas for Strengthening Home Economics

In my opinion, the time has come for a revival of Home Economics. A small insight into the "trendy green-glamour scene" in Germany gives the impression that the practical side of Home Economics is more fashionable than ever. Online-communities dedicated to sustainability and "green blogs" often report about family issues and work-life balance, presenting practical advice on environmentally friendly products or services and ideas for a responsible way of life (see for instance the German online platforms www.karmakonsum.de or www.utopia.de).

Young people are discovering the do-it-yourself principles. They have re-discovered knitting and felting. They increasingly demand cookery courses and organize private dinner parties (e.g. Schiekiera 2011). Urban gardening (e.g.

tomato cultivation on the balcony) and guerrilla gardening (e.g. planting in public space) are trendy (Müller 2010). The so-called LOHAS-people (**l**ifestyles **o**n **h**ealth **a**nd **s**ustainability) are increasingly interested in healthy, environmentally-friendly alternatives to mass production and in finding balance and meaning with do-it-yourself (Sinus Sociovision 2009). There might be a return to nature of sorts, and a new dedication to originality and lasting values. Even though this little "movement" might be limited to well-educated, urban communities, it can be viewed as a hopeful sign for the future visibility of Home Economics.

Though, in order to profit from the "zeitgeist" Home Economics needs to progressively communicate its topics to these interested target groups. It needs to open up its community for these young, (post-)modern people and promote itself accordingly. Social networks, blogs and online magazines can be used for this (e.g. KarmaKonsum 2012; Planetgreen 2012; Utopia 2012).

In this context Home Economics' strong affinity to sustainability should to be emphasized (Dewhurst and Pendergast 2011). Home Economics has valuable insights to contribute to conferences on sustainable consumption or education for sustainable development. Further, it can improve its efforts to publish in relevant journals as a means of sharing and interfacing with other research disciplines. Additionally, conference programs and calls for proposal in the field of Home Economics could invite researchers from other disciplines in a bid to increase interdisciplinary exchange and networking with other research communities. The international conferences organized by the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN 2009) and the Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL 2011) are good examples of these kinds of efforts. The organizing team has succeeded in bringing together researchers and practitioners from all over the globe in different disciplines, such as sustainable consumption, Home Economics and consumer education.

In this context it is also important that Home Economics improves its reputation as an academic discipline in general. It needs to advance sophisticated research and strive for publications in well-read and well-regarded journals. More publicity and external presentations are needed to promote Home Economics' contents in the scientific community.

Additionally, I suggest that Home Economics should as a discipline emphasize its relevance for a sustainable and well-functioning society. Considering rising household challenges, such as indebtedness or obesity, education for responsible household activities emerges as indispensible. It is a social risk if Western education systems only concentrate on theoretical knowledge and professional competences. Concrete household competences are complementary to highly specified and theoretical skills. Successful life management skills include not only those relevant in the realm of paid work, but also skills related to personal, family and social tasks. In this context, the focus of Home Economics on practical skills and competences is a unique selling proposition. Therefore, lobbying and promotion activities for Home Economics need to be continued and strengthened. Likewise it follows that Home Economics curricula should also be contemporary and target-group oriented.

Finally, I would argue that Home Economics should seek to reassume its position as an economic discipline. Modifications and changes to Home Economics' name, for instance by establishing "family and consumer science" (AAFCS 2011) or "nutritional science" (University of Giessen 2011) have both weakened the public image of Home Economics—and in turn, altered its direction, principles and foundations as a discipline. However, Home Economics should be perceived as a possible paradigmatic alternative to conventional market-oriented understanding of "economics" (Seel 2006). By strengthening its valuable ancient heritage, Home Economics can confront the prevailing economic conception with its own idea of economic behaviour.

The principles of responsible household management are distinctly well-suited to discourse on sustainability and sustainable consumption. Home Economics can and should take pride in its 2000 years old history as an economic science. It can function as a system critical discipline that illustrates that economic behaviour is never an end in itself but always a mean to the end of achieving quality of life and satisfaction for all present and future generations. Strengthening Home Economics can be seen as prerequisite for promoting responsible living.

All of these hoped for outcomes dependent on Home Economics' disciplinary self-confidence. Home Economics should no longer hide behind other disciplines. Its principles and achievements deserve recognition, particularly because they can significantly contribute to promoting responsible living.

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How to Promote Sustainable Living?

Inspiring Experiences of Dutch Downshifters

Jeanine Schreurs, Pim Martens and Gerjo Kok

Abstract Sustainable and responsible living requires far more than the consumption of eco-friendly and fair trade products. It is the joint outcome of the three pillars of the Dutch Triple G model of sustainable living: geld *(money)*, groen (*eco-friendliness*), and gezondheid/welzijn (*health and well-being*). This approach integrates the interests of the environment, personal finance and well-being/health. It provides an effective guiding principle by showing, first, how to identify the distinctive features of sustainable living, and second, how to implement behavioural change. There are strong indications that lifestyle change is a real possibility, as is shown by recent empirical data on downshifting in the Netherlands, and demonstrated by other studies on this topic. But change is only possible if a variety of measures is taken simultaneously. This requires a concerted strategy which addresses not only the micro level of individual consumer behaviour, but also includes institutional and organizational interventions.

Keywords Downshifting · Sustainable living · Behavioural change · Consumer study

J. Schreurs (✉) · P. Martens
International Centre for Integrated assessment and Sustainable development,
ICIS–Maastricht University, P.O. Box 616 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands
e-mail: jeanine.schreurs@maastrichtuniversity.nl

P. Martens
Institut für Ethik und transdisziplinäre Nachhaltigkeitsforschung, Leuphana University,
Scharnhorststr. 1, C11.210b 21335 Lüneburg, Germany
e-mail: pim.martens@leuphana.de

G. Kok
Psychology and Neuroscience, Work and Social Psychology, Applied Social Psychology,
Maastricht University, P.O. Box 616 6200 MD Maastricht, The Netherlands
e-mail: g.kok@maastrichtuniversity.nl

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1 Introduction

In the twentieth century the commercialization of consumption has brought about radical changes in both the volume and the cultural significance of consumption (Assadourian 2010; Cohen 2004; De Geus 2003; Maniates 2002, 2010; Miller 1995; Schor 1998). Discretionary consumption has become a mass phenomenon and not merely a privilege of the rich and middle class (Schor 1998, p. 217). As a result consumerism and the consumerist lifestyle have become dominant cultural features in the Western world and are rapidly spreading to other regions in the world. Obviously, increased consumption has improved living conditions on a large scale; yet there is also a disadvantage. The paradox of well-being, as Jackson puts it (2008), counteracts the prevailing perception that the more people consume, the happier they will be again. The positive correlation, however, between happiness and income is weak and even diminishes as income increases. In countries with average incomes above $15,000, no improved life satisfaction could be measured (Jackson 2008, p. 50). Overall, the costs that come with consumerism and the consumerist lifestyle, despite its attractions, are rising substantially. Concurrently risks are increasing: in personal life because of prohibitive debts, stress illnesses or impoverishment; at a global scale because of climate change, and social and political instability as a result of the growing gap between rich and poor. As a result the argument for moderating consumption has increasingly become more compelling. Although for many governments technical solutions remain the primary focus of attention, seeking to change consumer behaviour is receiving increasing support. This attention is not limited to reducing the use of fossil fuels. It also includes lowering CO_2 emissions, limiting waste and moderating the use of natural resources. These steps are perceived as not only necessary but also inevitable if we are to increase ecological sustainability (Jackson 2009; Worldwatch 2010).

Despite the increasing awareness that a more sustainable way of living is needed, yet living with less is generally considered an inconvenient option. The current viewpoint is that the hedonistic and materialistic mentality of people would be too serious an obstacle for change. This chapter however contends this vision, referring to the rapid growth of the new consumer movement and the sustainability movement in the First World. There are strong indications that a fundamental change towards a less consumerist and more restrained way of life is taking place (Datamonitor 2003; Etzioni 1998; Gandolfi and Cherrier 2008; Ray and Anderson 2000; Schor 1998). The number of people dissatisfied with their lives and longing for a simpler, less stressful existence is even much higher, according to Datamonitor (2003).

Also the sustainability movement gets growing support. The results of the second annual National Geographic/GlobeScan, the Greendex (2010) showed that consumers have adopted more environmentally friendly behaviour which has led to a general increase in Greendex scores. Because the Greendex measures the behavioural practices of citizens in 17 countries in both the developed and the developing world, the results indicate that growing numbers of citizens are not only convinced that measures should be taken to preserve the planet but that they are also willing to adjust their behaviour toward a more sustainable lifestyle.

What lessons can be learned from the experiences of these new consumers? This is the starting point of this chapter, which examines how living with less can contribute to sustainable and responsible living. A comprehensive study of downshifting—simply defined as a reduction in spending—conducted in the Netherlands provides the basis of the chapter. This study was the first to examine living with less money from an experiential and practical perspective and included both voluntary and involuntary downshifters. In this context the concept "sustainable" should be understood more broadly than its common definition as "eco-friendly" or "green". Since the study of downshifting showed that also personal finances and well-being/health are determinant factors, a sustainable lifestyle is considered to be the joint outcome.

The theoretical construct of the Dutch Triple G is in line with Callenbach's (1990) green triangle and provides the frame of reference for our discussion. First we will elaborate on the principal findings from the study on consumer practices of voluntary and involuntary downshifters, and their experiences, both positive and negative, paying particular attention to the relevance of these results for sustainable living. The second part of the chapter will address the issue how prospects for sustainability could be strengthened, in particular with regard to the fact that—due to the economic crisis—involuntary downshifting has become a stark reality for millions of people. Special attention will be given to the differences between voluntary and involuntary downshifters. The chapter concludes with four recommendations for a general strategy to enhance sustainable consumer behaviour.

2 Consumer Practices of Dutch Downshifters

In 2007 a survey was conducted among the readers of the Dutch magazine *Genoeg* (Enough), a bimonthly publication focusing on consuming less and on sustainability. Readers of this magazine are potentially more inclined towards moderation and downshifting than the average dutch consumer is. The homogeneity of the research population was useful for the explorative purpose of the study, but has limited the generalizability of the results. The survey covered 1006 participants (response of 13.35 %) and comprised three groups: voluntary downshifters (N = 461), involuntary downshifters (N = 280) and non-downshifters (N = 265).

To assess the potentialities for sustainability we developed a special measure of consumer practices reflecting the Dutch Triple Gs of sustainable lifestyle, geld (money), groen (ecology) and gezondheid (health and well-being). The measure combined items from the Ecological Footprint (Rees 1998), and from the list of Simple Living Practices and the Simple Living Scale (Huneke 2005) (see Tables 1 and 2) and addressed a broad range of activities across the six domains of daily life: purchasing, food, leisure, environment, do-it-yourself and mobility.

Table 1 Consumption practices (voluntary versus involuntary downshifters)[a]

	Voluntary downshifters N = 461			Involuntary downshifters N = 280			
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	p
A Purchasing							
1 Buy fair trade	3.17	0.808	459	3	0.801	277	0.01
2 Buy green	3.43	0.751	460	3.4	0.718	278	n.s.
3 Buy second hand	3.34	0.831	460	3.26	0.89	277	n.s.
4 Dumpster diving	2.12	1.039	460	2.03	0.987	278	n.s.
5 Buy at local stores	2.74	1.042	460	2.67	1.072	277	n.s.
6 Ignore advertisements	3.45	1.382	457	3.22	1.442	278	0.04
B Food							
7 Eat organic food	3.17	0.995	460	3.07	1.033	278	n.s.
8 Eat meat	3.15	1.075	460	3.14	1.125	277	n.s.
9 Cook from scratch	4.35	0.638	460	4.38	0.652	277	n.s.
10 Eat local food	3.44	0.951	457	3.49	0.963	276	n.s.
11 Eat fish	3.18	0.915	460	3.19	0.916	278	n.s.
C Leisure							
12 Watch television	3.27	0.869	460	3.36	0.925	276	n.s.
13 Read	3.98	0.524	460	4.01	0.579	278	n.s.
14 Exercise/sport	2.81	1.077	459	2.73	1.055	277	n.s.
15 Walk and bike	3.76	0.84	460	3.83	0.807	277	n.s.
16 Meditate/pray	2.53	1.199	459	2.63	1.261	277	0.3
17 Shop	2.69	0.706	460	2.83	0.811	278	0.01
18 Personal growth	3.41	0.89	456	3.52	0.893	275	n.s.
19 Social contact	3.68	0.64	460	3.68	0.727	278	n.s.
20 Go out	2.59	0.725	460	2.53	0.791	278	n.s.
21 Travel	2.75	0.779	459	2.64	0.828	278	n.s.
22 Garden	2.96	1.193	458	3.06	1.208	278	n.s.
D Environment							
23 Recycle	4.68	0.619	459	4.64	0.716	278	n.s.
24 Compost	2.42	1.676	459	2.24	1.595	277	n.s.
25 Limit energy consumption	4.33	0.683	459	4.34	0.655	277	n.s.
26 Bring items to second hand shop	4.12	1.095	459	4.2	1.02	278	n.s.
27 Compensate CO_2 emissions	2.72	2.197	459	2.94	2.267	277	n.s.
E Do-it-yourself							
28 Sewing	1.95	1.088	461	1.98	1.173	280	n.s.
29 Grow vegetables	2.18	1.306	460	2.08	1.406	280	n.s.
30 Do home maintenance	3.56	1.089	461	3.42	1.125	279	n.s.
F Mobility							
31 Car use	2.93	1.139	460	2.96	1.206	279	n.s.
32 Public transport	2.91	1.072	461	2.95	1.066	279	n.s.
33 Biking	3.93	0.992	460	3.96	1.012	278	n.s.
34 Plane	1.85	0.825	461	1.85	0.792	280	n.s.

[a] Answers were provided on a 5-point scale (1 = always; 5 = never). Scale means were subsequently calculated and compared. Multiple testing corrections were applied using the Bonferroni correction.

Table 2 Consumption practices (non-downshifters versus downshifters)[a]

	Non-downshifters N = 265			Down-shifters N = 741			
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	p
A Purchasing							
1 Buy fair trade	3.21	0.784	264	3.1	0.809	736	n.s.
2 Buy green	3.47	0.77	264	3.42	0.738	738	n.s.
3 Buy second hand	3.22	0.86	264	3.31	0.854	737	n.s.
4 Dumpster dive	2.04	1.066	263	2.09	1.02	738	n.s.
5 Buy at local stores	2.77	0.984	264	2.71	1.053	737	n.s.
6 Ignore advertisements	3.57	1.377	264	3.36	1.408	735	0.04
B Food							
7 Eat organic food	3.33	1.019	263	3.13	1.01	738	0.01
8 Eat meat	3.1	1.136	264	3.15	1.094	737	n.s.
9 Cook from scratch	4.37	0.628	263	4.36	0.643	737	n.s.
10 Eat local food	3.32	0.936	263	3.46	0.955	733	n.s.
11 Eat fish	2.94	0.91	264	3.18	0.914	738	0.00
C Leisure							
12 Watch television	3.27	0.786	264	3.3	0.891	736	n.s.
13 Read	3.94	0.622	265	3.99	0.545	738	n.s.
14 Exercise/sport	2.91	1.137	263	2.78	1.069	736	n.s.
15 Walk and bike	3.85	0.685	265	3.79	0.828	737	n.s.
16 Meditate or pray	2.55	1.226	264	2.57	1.223	736	n.s.
17 Shop	2.7	0.695	265	2.74	0.75	738	n.s.
18 Personal growth	3.23	0.992	261	3.45	0.892	731	0.00
19 Social contact	3.66	0.652	264	3.68	0.674	738	n.s.
20 Go out	2.64	0.738	264	2.57	0.751	738	n.s.
21 Travel	2.88	0.777	263	2.71	0.799	737	0.00
22 Garden	3.11	1.124	263	3	1.199	736	n.s.
D Environment							
23 Recycle	4.75	0.521	265	4.67	0.657	737	0.05
24 Compost	2.54	1.672	265	2.35	1.647	736	n.s.
25 Limit energy consumption	4.2	0.72	265	4.34	0.672	736	0.01
26 Bring items to second hand shop	4.14	1.009	265	4.15	1.067	737	n.s.
27 Compensate for CO_2 emissions	2.92	2.236	264	2.8	2.225	736	n.s.
E Do-it-yourself							
28 Sewing	1.87	1.037	265	1.96	1.12	741	n.s.
29 Grow vegetables	2.18	1.324	265	2.14	1.345	740	n.s.
30 Do home maintenance	3.35	1.019	265	3.51	1.104	740	0.04
F Mobility							
31 Car use	2.79	1.15	264	2.94	1.164	739	n.s.
32 Public transport	3.06	1.084	265	2.93	1.069	740	n.s.
33 Biking	4.18	0.853	265	3.94	0.999	738	0.00
34 Plane	1.92	0.759	265	1.85	0.812	741	n.s.

[a] Answers were provided on a 5-point scale (1 = always; 5 = never). Scale means were subsequently calculated and compared. Multiple testing corrections were applied using the Bonferroni correction.

Below, we first discuss the scores in each domain and then address the research questions: how does downshifting contribute to sustainability and do voluntary downshifters, involuntary downshifters and non-downshifters differ in this respect?

2.1 Purchasing Activities

The purchasing practices of non-downshifters and voluntary and involuntary downshifters appeared to be rather close. All reported regularly buying fair trade and green products, although voluntary downshifters reported doing so significantly more often ($p < 0.01$) and they were also more likely to buy second hand goods. The second remarkable difference noted was the response to advertisements: non-downshifters tended to ignore advertisements much more frequently than downshifters ($p < 0.04$).

2.2 Food

With regard to food consumption, the most salient result was the finding that all three groups reported very frequently cooking from scratch instead of eating prepared meals (mean ≥ 4.35). Striking differences have been noted for non-downshifters eating organic food more frequently than downshifters ($p < 0.01$); downshifters on the other hand reported consuming more fish than non-downshifters ($p < 0.001$).

2.3 Leisure Activities

The three groups showed comparable scores (mean ≥ 3.66) for reading, walking and biking and social contacts. The least frequently reported leisure activities were meditation and exercise/sports (mean ≥ 2.53). Further, participants reported engaging fairly often in activities related to personal growth and development. Watching television was also a popular leisure activity. Striking differences between the three groups were noted with respect to shopping, traveling and personal growth. Shopping occurred considerably more often among involuntary downshifters than among voluntary downshifters ($p < 0.01$). Traveling occurred significantly more often among non-downshifters than among downshifters ($p < 0.001$). Personal growth activities were practiced more often by downshifters than by non-downshifters ($p < 0.001$).

2.4 Environment

In the environment category, we found that non-downshifters, as well as involuntary and voluntary downshifters, reported recycling glass and other materials very frequently (mean $\geq$ 4.64). The three groups were also very careful with respect to energy consumption (mean $\geq$ 4.2) and all reported a tendency to bring unnecessary items to second hand shops (mean $\geq$ 4.12). The least frequently reported activity in this domain was organic composting (mean $\geq$ 2.24). Compensating for CO_2 emissions due to air and car travel was also reported less frequently. Remarkably, we noted that downshifters were significantly more careful to limit energy consumption than non-downshifters ($p < 0.01$).

2.5 Do-it-yourself

In the do-it-yourself category conducting one's own home maintenance appeared to be the most favourable activity for the three groups, with a significant difference in the scores of downshifters compared to non-downshifters ($p < 0.04$). Results for sewing clothes and growing vegetables indicated rather low frequencies.

2.6 Mobility

Biking was reported to be the most popular mode of transport for all types (mean $\geq$ 3.93). Non-downshifters reported biking most often (mean = 4.18). Additionally, the three groups reported rarely traveling by air plane (mean $\leq$ 1.92). Further, results indicated that downshifters were slightly more frequently car users (mean = 2.94) than non-downshifters (mean = 2.79), although the difference was not significant. With respect to public transport, conversely non-downshifters showed higher means than downshifters (3.06 vs. 2.93).

From this detailed list of results, a nuanced picture rises of the sustainable character of downshifting. Downshifters and non-downshifters scored fairly high on all practices indicative of sustainable behaviour. Probably due to the fact that the sample includes all readers of the magazine *Genoeg* differences between the subgroups are fairly small. Yet there are indications that downshifters exhibit a more sustainable lifestyle than non-downshifters. In particular with respect to energy use and fish consumption there are remarkable differences between the scores of downshifters and non-downshifters. Furthermore, downshifters practiced activities related to personal growth and home maintenance more often than non-downshifters. Voluntary downshifters moreover developed more sustainable practices than involuntary downshifters. Remarkable differences between voluntary and involuntary downshifters include: ignoring advertising (more often by voluntary downshifters) and buying fair trade products (more frequently than involuntary downshifters). Voluntary downshifters also reported shopping less frequently than involuntary downshifters. An explanation for this counterintuitive result could be that involuntary downshifters are more price-conscious consumers who visit different shops to save money.

3 Positive and Negative Experiences of Downshifting

The qualitative field study that preceded this survey showed indications for positive experiences with living with less. In order to get a refined picture two open-ended questions were used that invited participants to provide three positive and three negative experiences. Two evaluators categorized the results separately. In this way nine categories of positive experiences and eight categories of negative experiences emerged. Some noteworthy differences between voluntary and involuntary downshifters have risen from this qualitative part of the downshifting study (see Figs. 1 and 2).

The most apparent and rather obvious finding is that involuntary downshifters reported higher scores for all negative experiences, except for the category incomprehension/criticism (from their social environment). Voluntary downshifters on the other hand reported higher scores for all positive experiences. When we consider the specific experiences of living with less money, the category

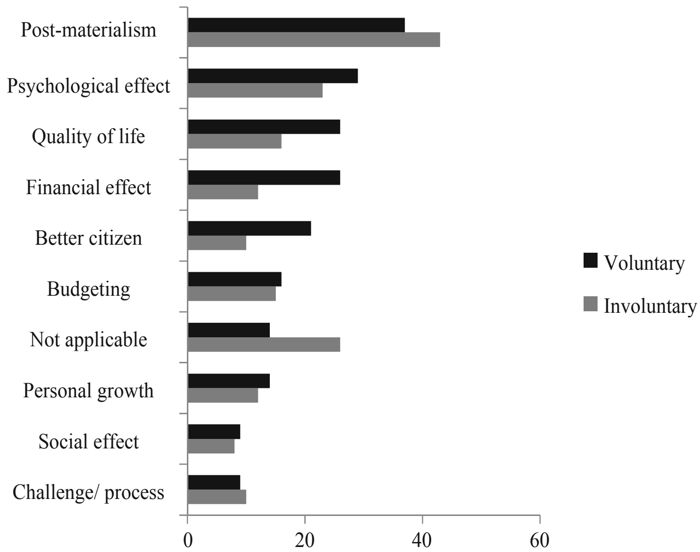

Fig. 1 Positive experiences in percentage

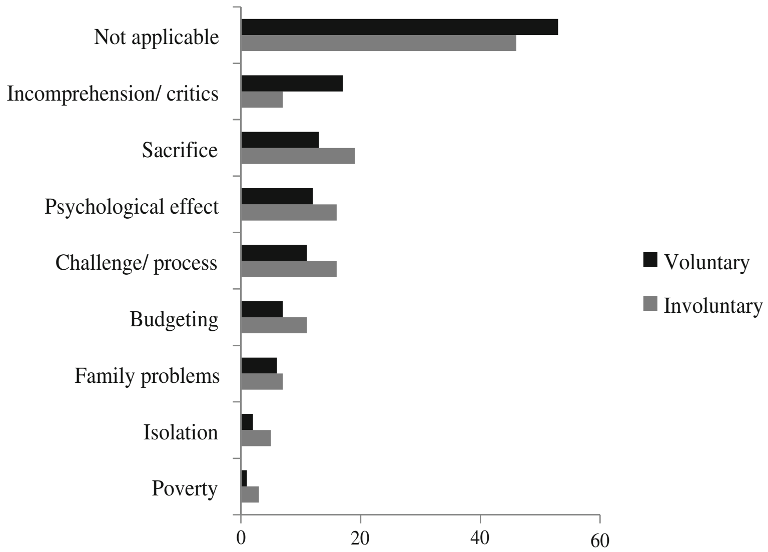

Fig. 2 Negative experiences in percentage

incomprehension/criticism stands out. This negative experience scored the highest among voluntary downshifters. Participants reported that they were confronted with criticism and negative judgments from their social environment. For involuntary downshifters experiences of sacrifice (19 %) and the challenge (16 %) to cope with less money posed the heaviest burden.

In the public's mind living with less money would hardly be considered as something positive. The results of our study on downshifting, however, contradict this general belief. It is striking that the total number of reported positive experiences is double that of the reported negative experiences. The fact that participants were all readers of the magazine Genoeg offers a possible explanation for this exceptional score. Nevertheless, the findings shed a new light on the issue of living with less and offer an interesting lead for policy and for further research. Which among these positive experiences are most remarkable? The highest scores among both the voluntary and involuntary downshifters (about 40 %) were reported in the categories "post-materialism" and "psychological effect". The downshifters reported that they valued material possessions and money differently than before. They reported feeling more independent and autonomous and being happy about the fact that they now could master their finances. Respondents described their new lifestyle as more creative and adventurous. They reported doing nicer things than before, such as going on sporting holidays, going for nature walks and picking fruit and mushrooms. In addition, the discovery of unexpected talents (e.g. gardening, cooking, do-it-yourself projects) contributed to the quality of life experience. Also, one fifth of the voluntary downshifters reported a change in attitude and a new commitment to society and the world, which we labelled as being a better citizen. Lastly, respondents reported that they had become more generous and more committed to the environment and/or the eradication of world poverty.

Rounding up, we may conclude that involuntary downshifters reported more negative experiences than voluntary downshifters, except for the experiences in the category "postmaterialism" which were reported more often by involuntary downshifters. Voluntary downshifters on the other hand generally reported more positive experiences. But they selected the negative experience "incomprehension/critics" more frequently than involuntary downshifters. These results suggest that voluntary downshifters experience more negative social reactions and more positive individual effects.

4 Downshifting and Sustainable Living

What opportunities does downshifting offer and to what extent can downshifting be defined as a sustainable lifestyle? Using the Dutch triple Gs we will now discuss results pertaining to: (1) financial behaviour; (2) eco-friendly behaviour; (3) personal well-being and happiness.

4.1 Financial Behaviour

Downshifters tend to be conscious, careful spenders as revealed by their scores on the frugality scale and by their responses to the list of consumption expenditures. Their product use and their buying behaviour are frugal and restrained, and budgeting is generally perceived as one of many positive experiences associated with downshifting. Downshifters seek to increase their savings and pay off their debts. This may be interpreted as an indication of sound financial management. Studies in other countries show that the wise stewardship of resources is a common trait among downshifters (Schor 1998; Huneke 2005). However, this is not the explicit goal but rather a means—a deliberately chosen strategy to serve other goals.

Similarly, we found that downshifters seek to maintain their lifestyle by ignoring advertisements and strengthening their own convictions. This attitude may function as a protective measure to counter marketing stimuli for impulse buying.

4.2 Eco-Friendly Behaviour

Our study showed various indications of eco-friendly behaviour among downshifters. First, downshifters reported handling their possessions consciously and carefully. Overall, they avoid waste and take good care in the use of their possessions. Additionally, downshifters used significantly less energy than the non-downshifters in our study. This is an interesting finding as *Genoeg* readers are likely to be already more committed to reducing energy consumption than the general population in the Netherlands. As such, downshifters consistently met the standards for eco-friendly behaviour that seeks to reduce, re-use and recycle. When it comes to eco-friendly food consumption and mobility, the picture is less evident. Although downshifters consume local food products and fish more frequently, they consume significantly less organic food than non-downshifters. Additionally, downshifters did use the car slightly more and the bike significantly less than non-downshifters. This finding is remarkable considering other ecofriendly characteristics of downshifting. Further research is needed to clarify this counterintuitive result. These mixed results correspond with the results of previous studies that have linked downshifting to eco-friendliness (Jackson 2009; Huneke 2005).

4.3 Personal Well-Being and Happiness

Unlike other studies on the subject of downshifting, our study did not specifically explore the emotions or judgments downshifters express about their way of life. However, given our results, we can conclude that downshifting may increase quality of life and therefore contribute to feelings of personal well-being and happiness. This is plausible, especially given the fact that downshifters reported a broad range of positive experiences. This is particularly the case for voluntary downshifters, although involuntary downshifters reported positive experiences as well, such as stress reduction and an improved psychological outlook. We can also assume that the reported increase in activities in the sphere of personal growth promotes personal well-being and contributes to a better quality of life. Yet, the results of previous studies found a more direct association between downshifting and increased quality of life and satisfaction with the lifestyle change. As Breakspear and Hamilton reported: "The only regret shared by downshifters was that they had not done it sooner". Conversely, our detailed overview of negative experiences paints a more nuanced picture of well-being and happiness. In particular, criticism from one's social environment as well as the financial difficulties connected to trying to make ends meet seem to colour the downshifting experience.

In short, it can be concluded that downshifting can contribute to sustainability, as this way of life fundamentally resonates with the three pillars of the Dutch triple Gs of a sustainable lifestyle. Downshifters tend to practice the re-use, reduce and recycle mantra of eco-friendly behaviour and they are careful, resourceful spenders that find other values more important than those provided by materialism and consumerism. It seems these positive experiences can also strengthen their attitude. Despite this, downshifters appear not to be primarily motivated by environmental or ecological concerns but rather by a desire to improve their quality of life or their financial situation. This conclusion is affirmed by the results of previous studies conducted in Australia and the USA, where low numbers of downshifters reported a fundamental desire for a post-materialistic or eco-friendly lifestyle as their basic motivation for downshifting.

Although the motivation for downshifting appears to be personal rather than environmentally driven, the outcome of downshifting could be eco-friendly. It was found that interest for the environment could very well coincide with financial or personal interests. Moreover the idea that downshifters primarily seek an improvement of quality of life beyond materialism and consumerism may be useful to promote sustainability. It can inspire to define new, less strictly material dimensions of sustainability and complement the current focus on the environment by strengthening the social and economic conditions of a sustainable lifestyle.

Summing up, we contend that living with less can promote sustainability both directly, through reduced consumption, and indirectly, through a more fundamental transformation of lifestyle.

5 Promoting Sustainable Living Through Downshifting

In the preceding section we have concluded that downshifting can be a rewarding, eco-friendly and positive way of living that resonates with the three pillars of sustainable living. Which general conclusions could be drawn from the insights of this study? And under which conditions could downshifting be made attractive and acceptable for modern consumers? These are the questions on which we will elaborate in the following. These issues are all the more intriguing because the economic crisis has created so many involuntary downshifters. Could the crisis perhaps offer new prospects and—if so—what can we do to strengthen these tendencies?

As the study of Dutch downshifters demonstrated, the transformation of consumer behaviour is a multidimensional process. It is influenced by the social context, habits, attitudes, beliefs, self-perceptions, consumption infrastructure, advertising and marketing, and by personal characteristics, as well as by macro level determinants such as political and economical circumstances and cultural traditions. However, despite the challenges, the study also offered concrete indications for consumer behavioural change towards sustainability. From these we deduce the following generalizations, relevant for the promotion of sustainable living.

In the first place we found that frugality and moderation still are vital cultural features and guiding principles for consumer behaviour and practices. This finding resonates with the reported cultural change towards a less materialistic way of life and indicates broader support for reduction than was previously assumed.

In the second place, positive experiences with downshifting contradict the popular belief that spending less or a decrease in income is a purely negative event. In fact, living with less money may contribute to a better quality of life and promote a sustainable lifestyle, if and when there is a balance with the two other pillars of the Dutch Triple G's, gezondheid (health and well-being) and groen (respect for the environment). Finally, since individual financial problems proved to be a start up for a fundamental lifestyle change, we think that generally speaking, downshifting can be held to offer realistic chances to enhance sustainable living.

Under the present conditions the sense of urgency for change appears to be greater than ever before. The numbers of involuntary downshifters increase as the economic downturn decreases incomes. Notwithstanding the personal tragedies that are associated with a loss of income or savings, the economic crisis may create opportunities for a redirection towards social and economic sustainability. A promising example is the proliferation of sustainable banks in the Netherlands, such as Triodos Bank and ASN. Private savings are increasing, as is public interest in measures promoting energy saving and reduction of carbon emission. The combination of supportive political measures—such as the ambitious EU 2020 strategies for education, job innovation and the environment—and large scale sustainable production initiatives have created an excellent environment for change, which in its turn creates possibilities for accelerated sustainable social development.

But large-scale behavioural change is only possible if a variety of measures is implemented simultaneously. This requires a concerted strategy (Jackson 2006) that will not only increase the value and effectiveness of the sub-strategies, as they are reinforced by the other initiatives, but have a strong synergetic effect as well. The proposed strategy is directed at simultaneous changes on the individual level (attitudes and behaviour); on the institutional level (facilities and interventions in consumption infrastructure) and on the macro level (legislation, government policy).

It is impossible to provide a complete blueprint for such a strategy in this concluding section. Therefore we will confine ourselves to listing four requirements which in our view are necessary for success.

5.1 Increase Sustainable Personal Finances

Sustainable behaviour requires far more than the consumption of eco-friendly products. Therefore, actions should be directed towards the three interlinked domains in order to strengthen personal economics, eco-friendliness and well-being. Although there is a broad range of possible actions, we will here address the first pillar of the Triple Gs, namely how to increase sustainable personal finances.

Because of the current financial and economic crisis, circumstances are such that campaigns to stimulate thrift are likely to be successful. Some suggestions include stimulating knowledge of personal finance and budgeting and providing insight regarding personal spending behaviour. Perhaps home economics could be introduced as a subject at school. Further, credit facilities and loans should be more restricted. Sustainable alternatives to buying should be promoted, particularly those in line with the core principles of sustainable behaviour: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Simultaneously, practices should be encouraged to augment the two other pillars of sustainable behaviour: eco-friendliness and health/well-being.

5.2 Transform the Consumption Infrastructure

Radical interventions are needed in the consumption infrastructure in order to make sustainable living easier and more attractive. Currently, environment-friendly behaviour is often penalized and is a lot more expensive. For example, whereas the prevailing image of public transport is that it is the second best option, it ought to be promoted as a high quality experience in terms of comfort, facilities and price. The same holds for food, housing, leisure activities and clothing. In general, institutions in a mass consumer society encourage individualism and competition instead of communal behaviour and cooperation. For example, the low wages of public sector and health care jobs are subtle signals of their social value. Because governments play an important role in shaping the context for sustainable behaviour, we advocate more courageous leadership in social engineering. A striking example is the London Agri program, a covenant between the city of London and farmers that aims to realize a regional food supply of 80 % by 2025. In addition, advertising restrictions, already in place in several European countries, need to be expanded. Particularly children should be protected against commercial manipulation, but adults should be protected against unwanted commercials in the public media as well.

5.3 Strengthen Existing Initiatives

Numerous consumer/citizen initiatives have been undertaken to promote a sustainable society. A recent example of a very successful initiative is the transition town movement that is rapidly growing worldwide and in the Netherlands as well (www.transitiontowns.org). Other examples of behavioural change initiatives are simplicity-circles, climate clubs and eco-teams of the Global Action Plan, which after a period of inactivity have made a strong come-back in Great Britain. These and similar initiatives could be encouraged and strengthened to maximize their effect and create broader support for change. The role of the government should be one of co-creator of the transformation process, facilitating financial and emotional support (Jackson 2006). Successful downshifters and adherents of other eco-friendly lifestyles could become role models making helping to make a sustainable lifestyle more acceptable to mainstream society. At the very least their example could provide an effective response to possible criticism of sustainable lifestyles.

5.4 Brand Sustainable Living as Prestigious

"All people today deep down are probably already beginning to consider greater self-restraint as a way of life." This statement is not taken from a spiritual leader's handbook, nor is it derived from an anti-globalist group's leaflet; it is part of the mission statement of the Japanese department store, MUJI. This company—with stores on prime location in major cities of the Western world—assesses the changing attitudes of consumers and embodies these in its product-choice, management and marketing strategy. For MUJI, the Triple P of social responsibility—People, Profit, Planet—is so self-evident that it is not explicitly mentioned in the mission statement. The store is merely explicit about its main characteristics, namely durable quality and low prices.

MUJI could function as an important source of inspiration for branding a sustainable lifestyle. Instead of the existing connotations of sacrifice or the image of a 1950s rerun, a sustainable lifestyle could become a futuristic new brand and could be launched with images of modernity, sophistication and sound financial management. The idea is that the same tools and strategies that marketing used to promote consumerism could now be used to promote sustainable living. We advocate a concerted, professional, multi-annual, segmented, multimedia marketing campaign to increase awareness, create new role models, promote green products and engender behavioural change.

This approach breaks with traditional campaigns to promote eco-friendly consumption or behaviour: with few exceptions like the successful Dutch eco-team campaign (Staats et al. 2004) most campaigns are based on the rational learning model. The assumption that product choice results from the collection of rational information still guides many sustainability campaigns, for example that dedicated to product labelling. Another aim of our approach is to disable the automatic response to a problem, in which we try to solve a given problem by buying a more sustainable product. We should avoid creating the perception that sustainable living is simply a matter of buying eco-friendly products. Today, sustainability is becoming commoditized and integrated in consumerism. Changes should be made to counter this mentality. It might be more sustainable not to buy at all and use products for longer. A striking new method of changing prevailing attitudes in the Netherlands is the tax on household refuse for individual citizens. As a result of this new incentive, the number of Dutch recycle shops has grown rapidly. So this measure keeps reusable products out of the landfill and makes good products available at reasonable prices.

6 Conclusion

All in all, we think that today's circumstances are strongly conducive to change consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable lifestyle. The results of the study of Dutch downshifters could guide the effectiveness of interventions in consumer practices. The conditions necessary for the success of the strategy outlined above however can only be realized if sufficient political motivation and support are found.

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Youth, Consumption and Citizenship

The Brazilian Case

Lívia Barbosa , Fátima Portilho , John Wilkinson and Veranise Dubeux

Abstract There is evidence of a possible politicisation of consumption in Brazil, similar to what has been occurring in other countries. In this process, consumption attitudes, behaviours, and practices are perceived and used as a way of participation and political action. Theories of post-materialism and hypotheses of mistrust in relation to political institutions have been used as an explanation for this phenomenon. However, little is known about the use of political consumption by young adults in Brazil. To explore this field, a quantitative study was conducted to analyze perceptions, interests, forms of engagement, personal and institutional trust, and political practices of young adults. In this article the study is presented as well as the results obtained. Results show that, in Brazil, involvement in political consumption is low, with little variation regarding social and economic class, age and school level.

Keywords Political consumption · Youth · Citizenship · Political action · Institutional trust

L. Barbosa (✉)
ESPM Center for Advanced Studies (CAEPM), Rua Alvaro Alvim 123—C/8th floor, São Paulo, SP 04018-010, Brazil
e-mail: livia.barbosa3@gmail.com

F. Portilho · J. Wilkinson
CPDA—Social Sciences Graduate Program on Development, Agriculture and Society, UFRRJ—Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro, Av. Presidente Vargas, 417—9th floor, Rio de Janeiro, RJ 20071-003, Brazil
e-mail: faportilho@yahoo.com.br

J. Wilkinson
e-mail: jhn.wlknsn@gmail.com

V. Dubeux
ESPM Center for Advanced Studies (CAEPM), Rua Alvaro Alvim 123—C/8th floor, São Paulo, SP 04018-010, Brazil
e-mail: veranise.dubeux@uol.com.br

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1 Introduction

As in many countries, a process of politicization of consumption seems to be underway in Brazilian society. This expresses a tendency of rapprochement with the civic values of consumer culture as pointed out by several authors (Canclini 2001; Halkier 1999; Paavola 2001; Portilho 2005; Stolle et al. 2005; Trentmann 2004) who draw attention to the fact that recent years have seen a weakening of the boundaries between the categories of consumption and citizenship, symbolized by the construction and recurring use of the term "consumer-citizen".

As a result, daily practices such as shopping, eating, drinking, bathing, washing dishes, cleaning house, or going to work acquire political and ideological aspects and incorporate environmental and social concerns. Food consumption, for instance, ceases to be merely a simple, private, and pleasant daily family activity, instead becoming a highly conscious, complex, regulated, political, and ideological activity which brings about changes in eating habits and ways of thinking about food (Barbosa 2009). Greater awareness of the issues surrounding our daily lives leads to the construction of consumers' responsibility.

This process led us to examine the relationship between consumption practices and political culture. We observed this situation by paying attention to the new ideologies and discourses that propose conscious, ethical, or sustainable practices of responsible consumption as a solution to social and environmental problems, a phenomenon that can be considered under the broader label of political consumption (Stolle et al. 2005).

Political consumption has been defined as the perception and use of practices and everyday consumer choices as a new form of engagement in the public sphere and in the political pressure arena (Halkier 1999; Portilho 2005; Stolle et al. 2005). This is an attempt to adhere to values that support social and environmental improvement, materialize them and make them public. Examples of political consumption include actions such as boycotts, buycotts, reducing waste in the household use of goods and services (water, energy, automotive, waste separation, etc.), and the creation of cooperatives and consumer networks.

However, studies of participation and political action tend to focus exclusively on conventional, institutionalized, and collective forms of action that target the political system per se, which can end up leaving out new repertoires of political participation. Most studies that attempt to measure political participation, e.g. the World Values Surveys, do not include questions about political and consumption data. Such research may lead to the conclusion that political participation is declining, when in fact there may just be a change in the repertoires and political arenas, as well as in the actual content of politics (Stolle et al. 2005).

Some evidence of the politicization of consumption can be observed in Brazil:

(1) the creation of NGOs focused specifically on this issue, such as the Faces Institute of Brazil, the Kairos Institute, the Akatu Institute for Conscious Consumption, and ICONES (Institute for Sustainable Educational Consumption of Pará);

(2) the frequent publication of stories on “sustainable,” “responsible,” or “conscious” consumption in mass media;
(3) the establishment of programs of “Education for Conscious Consumption,” both in the governmental and the non-governmental and business spheres;
(4) the explosion of CSR initiatives;
(5) the proliferation of certification and labelling; and
(6) the strengthening of so-called new social and economic movements which presuppose the existence and action of “conscious consumers,” such as the solidarity economy, fair trade, and slow food movements.

Despite these clues, no one knows for sure if political consumption exists in Brazil. The evidence, however, seemed sufficient for us to justify empirical research on and analysis of the nature of the phenomenon in the country.

But how to capture this kind of engagement? How to measure informal, private, non-organized and non-institutionalized actions that are at the “edges” of classical political arenas? In fact, consumption is a less-organized and less-structured political act than conventional political actions. Furthermore, actions such as boycotts and buycotts are intertwined and diluted in the routines of everyday life, making it difficult to study and measure them. Research related to these attitudes often focus exclusively on consumers’ willingness to pay more for a product considered to be “green” and rarely manage to capture the actual engagement in such practices.

With this intention, we developed a pilot survey in Brazil entitled “Youth, Consumption, and Citizenship.” For comparative purposes we relied on related research by Stolle et al. (2005) who measured forms of political participation, including political consumption, in Sweden, Canada, and Belgium.

The Brazilian research had four main objectives:

(1) to map the phenomenon of political consumption in Brazil among youth aged 16–25 years;
(2) to see the extent to which political consumption practices are consolidated among them and
(3) how they relate to conventional political practices; and finally
(4) to establish the initial bases for the creation of an index of political consumption for Brazilian society.

In this chapter we present the main data collected in the survey and apply some of the major explanatory theories that have been used to explain the phenomenon of political consumption, in an attempt to understand the specificity of the phenomenon in Brazil in light of this country’s cultural characteristics. First, however, we elaborate the research questions that guided our analysis, some explanatory theories, and the methodology employed.

2 Research Questions in Detail

The first group of research questions concern the description of political consumers, namely their socio-demographic variation. Do conventional indicators for measuring political participation, such as income, gender, age, and educational level, also apply here? Is it a reasonable and consistent hypothesis that women—traditionally responsible for buying for the home—are more receptive to political consumption, and thus are the group which most uses consumption as a way to press for social change? Is it plausible to assume in advance that the income factor is determinative, that is, that citizens with higher incomes are more likely to engage in political consumption activities than those with lower incomes?

The second field of research question relate to the social embeddedness and the political values of citizens engaged in this non-conventional form of participation. Are these individuals no longer rooted in associations, networks, or groups of citizens, and therefore only "participate" individually? Are they people who, having had their basic material needs met, engage in post-materialistic values such as human rights and the environment, and post-modern questions such as the construction and expression of identities and personal biographies, choice and individual autonomy, or self-expression? Do these people engage in political consumption because they have developed a distrust of conventional political institutions (such as governments, elections, political parties, unions, social movements)?

The third area of questions concern the relationship between political consumption and conventional forms of participation and political action. Does political consumption reduce, replace, or complement the more collectivist forms of participation? That is, are people who engage in political consumption practices the same who take part in conventional political actions? Do they use political consumption to replace or expand their repertoire of political action? Do they see political consumption as a means of political influence and social change? Do they decide to take responsibility and act in the everyday sphere instead of delegating to professional political actors? Furthermore, could we expect that these people do not trust conventional political institutions, and that they therefore use new and different forms of participation to make their voices heard? Do they perceive political consumption as an effective action?

3 Theoretical Background

Of the major explanatory theories used to analyse the phenomenon of political consumption, we will briefly highlight the following two, which are of special relevance: post-materialism theory and the theory of distrust and loss of confidence in conventional political institutions.

3.1 Theory of Post-Materialism

One of the main explanations for the phenomenon of political consumption has been the sociological theory of post-materialism, developed by Ronald Inglehart at the end of the 1970s. The theory suggests that the rapid economic growth experienced since the Second World War has led to the satisfaction of material needs for the vast majority of the population in advanced societies, causing a value shift toward post-materialist values, namely those that emphasize quality of life, self-expression, the environment, human rights, etc. This phenomenon has led to changes in various spheres of social life. Especially the political sphere is accompanied by an evaluative critical stance toward conventional political institutions such as parties and unions, and a reduction in rates of conventional political mobilization. This, however, is not a sign of political apathy, but rather of change in the repertoire of political action, since post-material values are associated with unconventional political actions (Ribeiro and Borba 2010), among them political consumption.

3.2 Theory of Distrust, or Loss of Confidence in Conventional Political Institutions

Authors such as Beck (1997) and Canclini (2001) also emphasize that, in contemporary societies, we see some loss of credibility of, and distrust in, conventional political institutions (parties, unions, elections, institutionalized social movements, etc.) particularly among younger generations. This leads to a "non-institutional rebirth of the political" in which different social arenas, not previously thought of as political, undergo a process of politicization. This is explained through the concept of sub-politics, namely those politics at and beyond the edge of the nation-state's political institutions, a policy directly involving individual participation in day-by-day decisions. For Beck (1997), the place of politics in contemporary societies is not the street or the factory door, but the television, the Internet, and the market.

4 Methodology and Sampling

The descriptive research involved in this study reveals the characteristics of a particular population or a specific phenomenon based on larger representative samples, eliminating where possible the presence and influence of the researcher, and controlling the design of the study to ensure the proper interpretation of results.

The research method adopted was a quantitative survey through personal interviews at home, using a structured questionnaire with 100 open and closed questions, requiring approximately one hour and forty minutes to complete.

The survey took place from June 24th to July 1st, 2010. The interviews were spread over four areas of the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, with a total of 457 individuals (228 in Rio de Janeiro and 229 in São Paulo) between the ages of 16 and 25, belonging to the three upper income classes in the country—A, B, and C. It is noteworthy that pilot interviews with individuals from income segments D and E revealed a great difficulty with and resistance to answering the questionnaire on their part, claiming disinterest in politics, technology, economics, and professional advancement, among other reasons. This fact made it impossible to fill the quota previously established for these groups, which forced the authors to change the sample and abandon the data collected for these segments.

Sample selection was carried out by a systematic process; in each household selected, the interviewer asked if there was a resident between the ages of 16 and 25. If so, the interviewer applied the Economic Classification Criteria, known as the "Brazil Criterion," to identify the class and start—or not—the interview. If not, an attempt was made at the next residence. Upon successful completion of an interview, the interviewer skipped three homes and made a new approach.

The choice of this age group was primarily due to the need to allow correlations with the research by Stolle et al. (2005), which argued that this generation grew up in a time when there was a profusion of environmental concerns, many of which linked the causes and possible impact of environmental problems with individual lifestyles and consumption choices. Furthermore, the authors believe these young people are likely to be a part of a generation that lived through environmental campaigns and education projects in their schooling and have thus been socialized with environmental values. Stolle et al. (2005) have assumed that, if such a process is happening, it can be best observed in youth.

Unlike Stolle et al. (2005) who chose to apply their study to college students taking courses in social sciences, we questioned young people from all different educational levels. Our choice took into account the Brazilian tradition of high politicization among social science students and the strong influence of Marxist thought in the teaching of these subjects, factors which could skew the results considerably.

The research tool included six socio-demographic variables (income, religion, gender, age, city, level of education and information) that were later co-related with eleven variables on political issues:

(1) personal expectations for the future, the world, and the country;
(2) level of information;
(3) political values;
(4) trust in people and institutions;
(5) interest in politics and social issues;
(6) type and frequency of political participation;

(7) perception of the responsibility of different actors for the improvement of social and economic conditions in society;
(8) political consumption practices;
(9) consumer rights;
(10) knowledge of certification campaigns and labels; and
(11) fair trade.

It should be stated that this study cannot make any statement about the extent of the phenomenon of political consumption in the population as a whole, or even among young Brazilians in general, beyond the two cities studied and the controlled-for levels of income.

5 Results and Discussion

Due to the large amount of information collected and the lack of space, we chose to focus this chapter on an analysis of issues directly related to political participation and consumption, leaving other questions for another occasion. For the same reason, this chapter will consider only the demographic variables of income, age, and educational level.

5.1 Interests and Attitudes

From the standpoint of the level of information, young respondents feel well informed; those between the ages of 21 and 25 and those in the A and B income classes are slightly more knowledgeable than those in class C, although this difference is not statistically significant. The three subjects about which they are best informed are sports, music, and fashion, while issues such as the environment and politics occupy sixth and seventh positions respectively, in a set of eleven options offered. Men see themselves as significantly more knowledgeable about sports than do their female peers, but there are no significant differences between the sexes about other subjects. Broadcast television is the primary means of information (82 %), followed by the Internet (44 %), and colleagues (43 %), without any differences among the three variables adopted.

With regard to trust in people, 60 % of respondents stated that they do not consider people reliable, and 75 % think that, given the opportunity, people always seek to take advantage. To assess young people's confidence in institutions, 21 choices were ranked on a scale of one to ten, where ten corresponds to the highest degree of confidence and one the lowest. The most reliable institutions, in order of importance, are: family (average 8.9), church (6.8), and school (6.4), which led us to separate them from the rest and classify them as "traditional institutions". The least reliable are political institutions, such as political parties (average 3.1), followed by Municipal Government (3.7) and the National Congress (3.7).

Only 27 and 26 % of respondents consider themselves engaged in environmental and social issues respectively. However, when asked their position on statements about issues related to the environment and politics, and about their interest in issues like income inequality, poverty, energy, and terrorism, the average response was equal to or higher than three (on a five-point scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). In this context, the attitudes of young people interviewed could be classified as "politically correct". They clearly positioned themselves in defence of the environment, felt that the Amazon issue cannot be addressed by Brazilians decontextualized from the rest of the world, and fully agreed that Brazilians do not seem to be engaged with the issue of income redistribution in the country. However, when urged to take a stance on issues concerning politics at the municipal, state, and national levels, the average response on the same five-point scale was 2.5 or lower. That is, negative statements about these three power levels received a higher number of "strongly agree" than "disagree." This attitude is driven home when we examine the frequency with which these young people reported talking about politics: 55 % said they never or rarely do, 28 % do so only occasionally, and only 7 % reported doing so frequently.

5.2 Political Participation

From a set of 13 different types of participation, 79 % stated that their main form of political participation is through the vote. All other options were below 28 %, dropping to 7 % in the case of affiliation with political parties. Given that voting is compulsory in Brazil, we consider that all spontaneous political participation falls below 28 %.

Regarding alternative means of political participation (youth organizations, social movements, web activism, volunteerism, consumer associations, and consumer awareness), given four options ranging from "frequently participate" to "never attend", the proportion of youth who declared never having participated in any of the methods ranged between 87 and 96 %. Those who reported having participated in some of them were asked about ten possible forms of assistance, including donating money to NGOs, wearing campaign badges, attending meetings, and signing petitions. The proportion of those who never participated decreased, ranging from 39 to 68 %.

Regarding the responsibility of different actors to improve the living conditions of societies, the most cited were: the federal government (51 %), followed by citizens (40 %), the UN (29 %) and consumers (24 %). When detailed, the "responsibility of citizens and consumers" suggests that there are many doubts and much ignorance. With regard to participation via consumption, about 32 % said they believe an individual has the power to influence society through boycotts, while 22 % thought that collective action is superior to individual political action; 21 %

had no opinion, 12 % think they can have an influence in this way but that this type of activity can lead to a worsening of the problems, and 13 % disagree that it can have an effect at all. The proportion of those who think they can have an influence through buycotts is somewhat larger (34 %), while 14 % think they cannot, followed by 13 % who think that this form of political action may wrongly privilege environmental issues over job creation, and 12 % who think that these issues are new trade barriers imposed by rich countries against developing countries.

In addition to measuring whether they believe or not in the possibility of influencing society through their consumption habits, we also measured whether respondents have in fact participated in some kind of boycott or buycott. As in the research conducted by Stolle et al. (2005), our data indicate that although at a low rate, buycott practices are more frequent than boycott campaigns: 98 % said they never participated in boycotts, but with respect to buycotts the numbers are a bit more encouraging: 81 % answered negatively, and 19 % positively. Price (45 %) and distribution (39 %) are the main reasons given for not buying socially and environmentally responsible products. Questions about certification, personal taste, and the quality of green-friendly products complete the list of other reasons.

Further to consumption practices, when respondents were asked if they think citizens have a responsibility to inform themselves about the social and environmental practices of firms, 57 % agreed while 31 % said they do not know and 12 % believe that is not their responsibility. Moreover, 52 % of respondents feel well informed about the products they consume, while 48 % do not. Out of 13 types of information about products they own or are interested in buying, the three most popular options are: expiration date (92 %), brand (50 %), and composition (46 %). Information about whether the product is environmentally friendly (10 %), certified (5 %), or sourced from fair trade (3 %) received the lowest proportion of responses.

The criteria for purchasing goods and services most applied by respondents are: price (89 %), quality (86 %), offers and promotions (69 %), and brand (55 %). The least used are, in order: appropriate conditions of production (16 %), ethical treatment of animals (13 %); does not stimulate prejudice (9 %); and negative reviews on websites (8 %).

Only 10 % of respondents claimed to know what fair trade means, and only 30 % of these actually indicated the correct choice. With respect to the rights of consumers, 68 % are unaware of the Code of Consumer Rights (a law passed in 1990), while 77 % have never felt disrespected in consumer relations. 84 % have never made any claims against stores and/or supermarkets, and 97 % have never made complaints to legal consumer protection bodies; those who have (16 and 3 % respectively) are from the higher income bracket and over 19 years in age. 50 % said they know an organization that advocates for consumers, the most cited being Procon (Program for Consumer Orientation and Protection—an agency of the Ministry of Justice created in 1987, with offices in every Brazilian state and many cities, which provides information to consumers and fields complaints).

5.3 Discussion of Descriptive Results

Certainly, the presented data suggest neither intense commitment nor effective political participation in the sense understood by social sciences, especially political science. The rates of trust in people and institutions, especially political institutions, are extremely low, especially when compared to institutions such as family, church, and school. This lack of trust and political participation in conventional political institutions is not accompanied by a widespread application of any of the alternative forms of participation mentioned by the questionnaire. In some cases, these alternative forms reach only 4 % of the entire sample. When analyzing engagement in political consumption practices (boycotts and buycotts) as criteria that guide the purchase and search for information about products and services, this situation does not change. In the case of these young Brazilians, lack of interest in and loss of influence and leadership from conventional political institutions have not led to an increase in alternative forms of participation, which leads us to conclude that, in Brazil at any rate, the theory that distrust or loss of confidence in conventional political institutions necessarily leads to a "non-institutional rebirth of politics"—through political consumption for example—is not proved.

Can we, therefore, endorse the view that the current generation is more politically alienated than, for example, the generation of the seventies? We believe not. When analyzing the issues that are relevant for these young people (such as poverty, income inequality, and terrorism) and their agreement on environmental, social, and political values, the thesis of alienation does not hold. Rather, the data suggests that the young people surveyed are interested in social issues, perceive the environment as an important issue for Brazil and the world, and recognize the need for greater involvement of people and individuals in the public sphere as a way to eradicate poverty. It is true that they have doubts and questions about the extent to which environmental policies and restrictions would simply act as tariff barriers by rich countries against products from developing countries, but overall the respondents positioned themselves on the side that could be termed "politically correct in relation to environmental issues".

Additionally, the results do not support the theory of post-materialism, which indicates that environmental values, among others, increase as a society begins to provide enough to solve the material problems of its members. Aside from the numerous objections that we could make to this theory—ranging from a "Maslow's pyramid" in disguise to extreme evolutionism, in which people can reflect on morally significant values and issues only after they have filled their bellies—the post-materialism theory was refuted by our data because it showed few changes across income and education level variables. This perspective is also in opposition to the history of social mobilization in Brazil which, in addition to the struggle for access to the material conditions of existence, includes a large number of environmental organizations devoted to so-called "post-materialist values". It is also worth noting, as a particularity of environmentalism in Brazil (and Southern countries in general), the perception of the inseparability between social and environmental issues (Guha and Martinez-Alier 2000), which can be confirmed by the construction and extensive use of the term "socio-environmental" in Brazil. In other words, it is not the case that a mobilization around post-materialistic values can only emerge or increase after social problems have been solved.

5.4 Socio-Demographic Determinants of Political (Consumer) Behaviour

It is here that we would like to introduce a broader scope of interpretation. When we analyzed the six indices constructed from survey data—level of trust in people, in political institutions, in traditional institutions (family, church and school), social and environmental values, political participation, and consumption—they mostly showed very few changes across the three socio-demographic determinants considered (income, age, and education), and the level of trust in traditional institutions was strongest (see Figs. 1, 2, 3).

Regarding the rates of confidence, whether in people, political institutions, or traditional institutions, and also the rates of socio-environmental values, these variations were irrelevant (one to two percentage points) relative to both income and age range, indicating a high homogeneity of practices and views among young people surveyed.

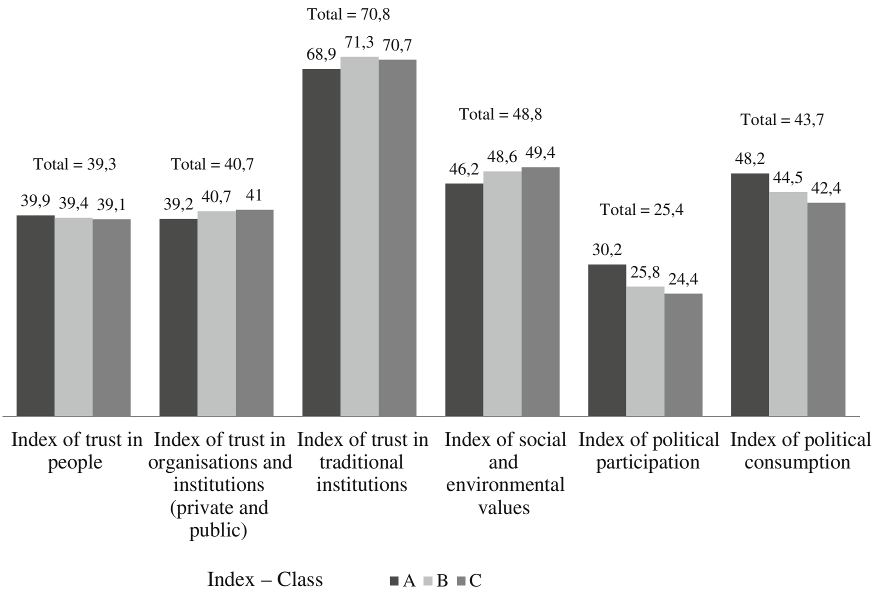

Fig. 1 Influence of income

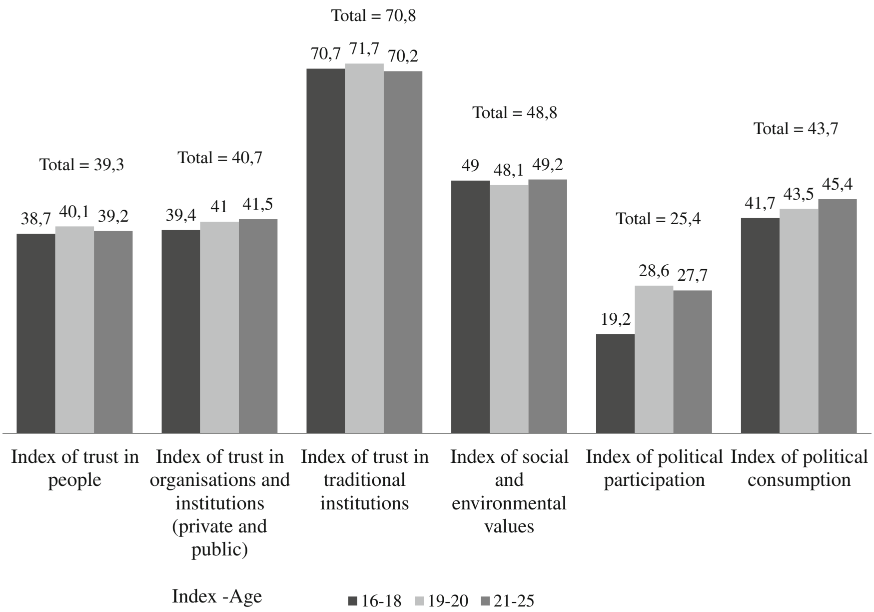

Fig. 2 Influence of age

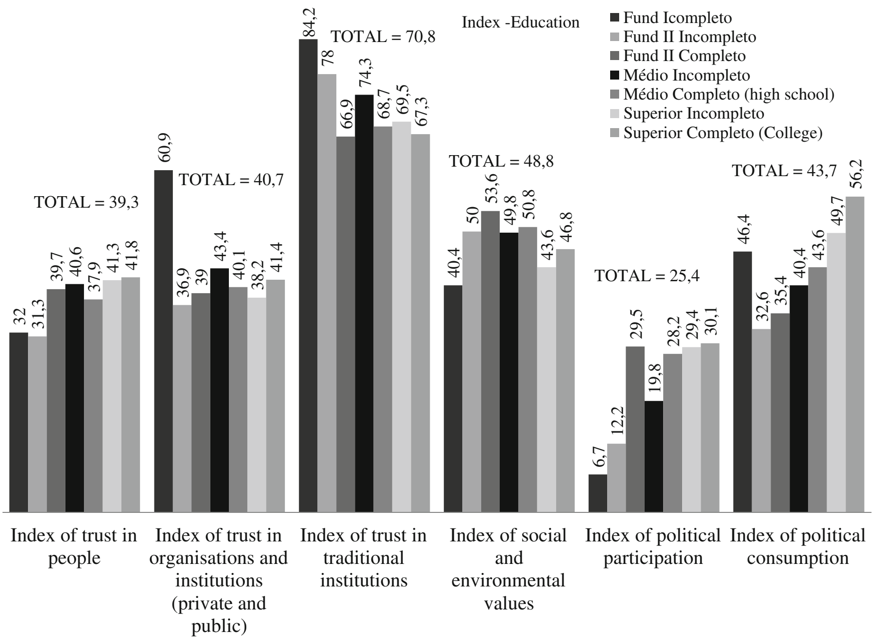

Fig. 3 Influence of education

However, with respect to the indices of political participation and political consumption, results differ somewhat, with a slight directly proportional relationship; i.e. the higher the income, age, and education level, the greater the participation in general and the engagement in political consumption practices. However, this relationship is not highly significant in statistical terms, which again confirms the relative homogeneity.

The data confirm the structure of Brazilian society, in which family is considered the most important institution, functioning largely as a total institution insofar as it provides its members with emotional and financial assistance, among other aspects (Goffman 1961). Unlike their European and North American counterparts, who typically leave their family immediately on completion of high school, young Brazilians tend to stay at home at least until the age of 25. Because of this, issues relating to their physical and social reproduction remain the responsibility of the family (father and mother). Their autonomy in terms of consumption is very low, although attendance to individual preferences is an extremely important value in these families. As a result, the process of construction of social identity in Brazil, contrary to what is observed in North America and Europe, occurs not so much through opposition to their parents' generation, but out of admiration for it. Although these youth are well informed about what happens around them, they do not engage, in practice, with the wider world. However, several examples in the past have shown that, under certain circumstances, young people in Brazil can be politically mobilized. Good examples are the "*Diretas Já*" campaign (Direct Elections Now) of 1983; the young movement "*Caras Pintadas*" (Painted Faces) which led to the impeachment of President Fernando Collor in 1992; and the "*passe-livre*" campaign (free pass) for no-cost public transportation for students in uniform, implemented after an extensive wave of demonstrations and protests.

It is also possible that the low participation in acts of political consumption is motivated not by alienation, disinterest, or misinformation, because many (according to data presented above) do not believe in the efficiency of this practice (47 % for boycotts and 39 % for buycotts), for a variety of reasons.

6 Conclusion

Our indices suggest that, in Brazil, political participation and consumption seem to increase with income, age, and education level, but still do not approach European and North American levels (Stolle et al. 2005). One explanation seems to lie in the importance of the institution of family in Brazilian culture, a system that provides solutions and support that individuals in European and North American societies have to seek in the community or the public sphere.

Furthermore, it is essential to consider that despite lacking deep social roots, Brazilian social organizations are both numerous and extremely active, achieving changes in legislation, public policies, and the marketplace, which ends up making individual action secondary. Examples of important achievements realized through pressure by these organizations include the São Paulo Agreement on certified wood, the food industry's pledge to reduce sodium, a ban on advertising aimed at children, and a quota policy for universities, businesses, advertisements, and soap operas.

As a final conclusion, given that contemporary societies are characterized by an intense degree of particularism, in conjunction with a high degree of universalism, we could conclude that today's political action would be precisely the simultaneity of a strong state (the one that regulates and acts quickly to meet the demands of its citizens) with equally "strong" citizens; conscious, responsible, active, and assertive, who do not expect government to solve problems.

The analysis of the phenomenon of political consumption through surveys proved useful in providing a first frame of the real situation, but it must be supplemented with qualitative research that will enable us to further our knowledge and answer new questions we pose, mainly about the relationship between political values (equality, freedom, liberalism, strong state, minimal state, etc.) and political consumption practices.

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Part III
Policies for Responsible Living

A Multi-Level Framework and Values-Based Indicators to Enable Responsible Living

Arthur Lyon Dahl

Abstract Efforts to enable responsible living require supporting frameworks and tools to bridge science and values at all levels from local to global. At the local level, community action is most effective in a village or neighbourhood where people will invest for the common betterment of their families and neighbours. Educational activities in and outside formal education for children, preadolescents, youth and adults should encourage action for responsible living based on the community's own values and vision of human purpose and well-being. Values-based indicators can help to measure the impact of sustainability education on behaviours in communities and organizations, as demonstrated in a recent pilot project. At the national level, in addition to formal curricular change, the media and diverse organizations of civil society from businesses to faith-based organizations can lead discussions of various dimensions of responsible living. Internationally, the debate on the future of sustainability around the Rio+20 conference has stimulated a re-examination of preconceptions and certitudes about individual and collective purposes and underlining the importance of values and ethical principles to sustainability. Linking local efforts to these international debates and implementing values-based indicators of education for sustainability will help to move from words to action for responsible living.

Keywords Community · Ethics · Indicators · Sustainability · Values

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A. L. Dahl (✉)
International Environment Forum, 12B Chemin de Maisonneuve,
CH-1219 Geneva, Chatelaine, Switzerland
e-mail: dahla@bluewin.ch

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1 Introduction

1.1 Relevance and Overview

Society operates at many levels, becoming increasingly complex as it has globalized, with multiple levels of organization. As human societies evolved, new levels of social structure, including institutions of governance, were first added as the geographic range of human interaction expanded from the local community to the international level, producing multilevel governance (Karlsson 2000, 2007). Other organizations of civil society such as guilds, trade unions, business federations, and scientific, cultural and sports associations were based on professional activities and personal interests or functions in a group. With the spread of information technologies, new kinds of organization are emerging as people associate, network and share in new ways. Each of these structures and relationships is founded on and communicates information and values that condition and drive human behaviour. Moral values state what is good and of primary importance to human civilization, and are usually given expression in ethical principles which guide decision-making and action (Anello 2008). Since the institutions of governance and social organization are founded on a set of explicit or implicit common values, knowledge of these values can contribute to understanding how these structures operate. Furthermore, each individual inherits or is educated with these values and combines and integrates them into a personal lifestyle. Since sustainability is essentially an ethical concept of responsibility for all of humanity, the natural environment, and future generations, its values need to be incorporated into institutional structures at all levels. Any effort to modify human behaviour towards greater sustainability must take into account the interrelationships between these levels and identify both opportunities for and obstacles to responsible lifestyles at each level if they are to have any impact. This chapter outlines some relevant characteristics of this multilevel framework and some tools to make the values dimension more visible and to assess its contributions to more sustainable behaviour.

1.2 A Systems Approach

To achieve sustainability in complex human/natural systems, many different components need to interact in balanced ways. A systems approach can help to bring some order to our understanding of the complexity of human society, based on an analysis of the nested systems that operate at different levels. Each system will have a certain internal coherence and autonomy, while being cross-linked in various ways to systems above and below it in the hierarchy of organization (Dahl 1996). Each will have certain required enabling conditions to function effectively, and processes of information flow and signalling that determine internal system behaviour and maintain relationships with other systems. There may also be unique features or emergent properties that only appear at higher levels of organization. A typical example is the human body, composed of cells differentiated into organs performing unique roles within functional systems (nervous, digestive, hormonal, reproductive, etc.) composing a body that is itself dependent on an external environment, with emergent properties like intelligence, and serving as a functional unit in larger social and economic systems. Similarly, human society is structured in hierarchical levels from the family, community or neighbourhood, city, region, country to the planetary level, cross-layered with cultural or tribal, ethnic, religious, linguistic, professional and associative groupings and affiliations.

The forms that information flow takes within and between systems are as diverse as the kinds of systems at different levels in the hierarchy. Often information is condensed into indicators that efficiently provide signals with a wider meaning. Where Gross Domestic Product (GDP) may be taken to indicate the state of wealth a national economy, pay slips and bank account statements may provide similar information for individual consumers. Indicators for the economic dimensions of human systems are reasonably well developed, if often misused or misinterpreted as measures of well-being. Some social indicators like infant mortality, educational levels or unemployment rates also signal important social dimensions. Much effort has gone into developing indicators of sustainability, mostly at the national level (Hak et al. 2007), but apart from the ecological footprint, few indicators have found much use to assess individual lifestyles and community sustainability.

While values may be the most fundamental dimension of information in social systems at all levels (Dahl 1996), it has been difficult to develop indicators of the values or rules underlying the operation of these systems and determining their goals and purposes. This is particularly relevant at the individual and community levels where values are important determinants of lifestyle and behaviour. Making this dimension more visible would facilitate and reinforce education for sustainability. An initial attempt to do this with indicators is described below.

2 The Individual Level

The individual human being is the fundamental unit for responsible living, driven by biological needs interacting with knowledge and values to produce behaviours which may or may not be responsible in the context of the global sustainability of human society. Knowledge and values are first transmitted by the mother and in the family, then by social interaction in the community, and through institutions of religion and culture. A relatively new phenomenon is the impact of the media which increasingly reach into every home and influence children from the earliest age. Formal and informal education, role models and peer pressure add their own contributions as the individual forges an independent identity and personal lifestyle while growing through adolescence to adulthood. While lifestyles may become more rigid with age as the individual becomes locked into an occupation and community, and takes on family responsibilities, there can be moments of fluidity and reconsolidation, particularly at times of transition such as unemployment or career change, a "midlife crisis", religious conversion, retirement, widowhood, etc.

While in the past, limited mobility and access to knowledge meant that lifestyle change was rare, or at least culturally determined at stages through life, globalization has exposed everyone to multiple alternative values and lifestyles and undermined traditional certainties, just as it has increased the choices of more or less sustainable patterns of consumption and forms of behaviour (Jackson 2009). While this complexity means that what constitutes a responsible lifestyle is very context-specific, it also provides opportunities for larger-scale interventions intended to influence lifestyle choices, which is the focus of the Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL).

A strategy to enable people to live more responsibly as individuals and families needs to be developed in a supporting framework of concepts, together with potentially significant institutions, at all levels from local to global. When there is a variety of impediments to sustainable living at different levels, only a concerted action to identify and address all of them will allow significant progress. Inciting people to use public transport or to buy socially-responsible products is useless if such options are not available locally. An effort to find substitutes for petroleum products may be blocked by a national government that depends on import duties on petroleum for most of its revenues. The following sections of this chapter will discuss a few examples of relevant actions and processes taking place at some of these levels. These are intended to illustrate a multi-level integrated approach. More comprehensive studies could certainly identify many other factors that will need to be addressed in various contexts.

Another point is important when considering individual choices and lifestyles. Experience has shown that scientific information by itself is necessary but rarely sufficient to change behaviour (Dahl 2004, 2006). A human being is not simply a rational actor making informed choices to maximize self-interest, despite what some economists would like to believe. Emotional, psychological and social factors can dominate decision-making processes and life-style choices, as the advertising industry knows only too well. There is even increasing evidence that evolution has selected for a human capacity for cooperative behaviour and altruism, favouring a larger social benefit over individual self-interest (e.g. Boehm 2012; Nowak 2011; Wilson 2012).

Living responsibly or being a good consumer citizen are concepts rooted in values, since values define behaviour that benefits society. An individual operates on a spectrum from egotistical to altruistic, infantile to mature, base impulses to cooperative. In society this is expressed as power-hungry, seeking status and social dominance, versus conscientious, egalitarian, communitarian (Karlberg 2004; Shetty 2009). The latter qualities generally contribute to greater social good and higher integration. Failures of implementation in actions for sustainability at all levels can often be attributed not to a lack of understanding but to a lack of motivation to change damaging behaviours or activities. A values-based motivation will lead to commitment and ultimately to action. Examples of values relevant for responsible living are justice and equity, a sense of solidarity with every human being as a trust of the whole, and respect for nature and the environment. Any systematic strategy for responsible living needs to incorporate this dimension both in individuals and in institutions and collective action at each level.

3 Local Level

At the local level, community action is most effective in a village or neighbourhood where people will invest for the common betterment of their families and neighbours. This is the most immediate scale of human interaction, based on direct knowledge and daily encounters, where relationships are built, and prejudices most easily overcome. Individual efforts at lifestyle change can become mutually reinforcing, and their impact immediately visible. Teaching by example is particularly effective.

3.1 Community Diversity

In this community context, a new challenge to responsibility is emerging (IEF 2010). The increasing movement of people around the world, and the expected massive increase in population displacements with climate change and environmental deterioration, are producing communities in which the original culture is eroding and a heterogeneous population of multiple origins must learn to live together. Most indigenous cultures and spiritual traditions have principles of hospitality towards strangers, but these are being lost (Switzer 2008). Faced with an accelerating challenge and the lack of morally acceptable options, a common tendency towards xenophobia and prejudice against immigrants needs to be replaced by an appreciation of diversity and of the new vitality that immigrants bring to a community. This can best be built at the neighbourhood level where personal experience through direct interaction and solidarity can overcome prejudice based on stereotypes. The same process can address local issues of sustainability and encourage lifestyles that reflect responsible living.

3.2 Community Education

Educational activities in and outside formal education for children, preadolescents, youth and adults should encourage action for responsible living based on the community's own vision of human purpose and well-being. An understanding of the global, national and local context for sustainability based on science should be combined with the spiritual and ethical principles and moral values necessary to motivate changes in consumer behaviour relevant to the local situation. For adults, these can be addressed in informal neighbourhood study circles, perhaps reinforced by devotional meetings where people of all spiritual traditions can share some time of prayer, meditation and reflection together. Local children's classes taught by parents or youth can provide a values-based content that is often lacking in formal schooling. For pre-adolescents in the process of forming their identity, action-oriented activities with environmental or responsible consumption themes can build a foundation for life-long commitment to consumer citizenship. An example of this approach is the strategy for the development of climate change education in the Bahá'í community (BIC 2009). Similar action plans on climate change with an ethical/spiritual foundation have been developed for many religious traditions (ARC 2009).

These activities should build a neighbourhood or village cooperative spirit which would naturally lead to community consultation on local problems followed by priority actions to address those that are most pressing. A community thus empowered could be better able to advance towards sustainability without depending on outside assistance. It might also be more resilient to outside shocks, whether natural disasters, economic crises, or other difficulties predicted to become more frequent as the world continues in unsustainable directions.

3.3 Values-Based Indicators at Local Level

Strong communities generally share a set of common values, which may be assimilated unconsciously by those raised in the community. Many civil society organizations (CSO) are also values-driven or work at the level of values, but they have seldom been able to demonstrate the usefulness of this work to others in any concrete way. Providing a framework of values-based indicators can reinforce efforts to build sustainability at the grass roots.

The European Union, through its FP7 research programme, funded a two year project (January 2009–April 2011) on the Development of Indicators and Assessment Tools for CSO Projects Promoting Values-based Education for Sustainable Development, or ESDinds for short (Podger et al. 2010; www.esdinds.eu). The partners in the project were the University of Brighton (UK) and Charles University (Prague) as academic partners, and Civil Society Organizations including the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC, UK), the Earth Charter Initiative (Costa Rica), the European Bahá'í Business Forum (EBBF), and the People's Theatre (Germany). The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies did not formally join the project, but contributed a case study. The following is a summary of selected project results.

The CSOs defined what values were important to them and what they wanted to measure, i.e. implementing values or spiritual principles. This often meant clarifying their values in a way they had not done before. They needed to be clear about what they were trying to do in a way that might make it measurable. Often the organizations discovered values that they had not realized were important. This crystallization of their values was itself an important outcome, as it added a new and valuable dimension to their work.

The researchers helped to define assessment methodologies and indicators relevant to the identified values, compiled the explicit values in each civil society organization, and looked for implicit values by interviewing staff and participants. While hundreds of terms for values were compiled, these were often found to be context-specific, and could not be used consistently across projects and organizations. The CSO partners selected six common values for initial trials, for which many possible indicators were derived:

- unity in diversity;
- trust/trustworthiness;
- justice;
- empowerment;
- integrity; and
- respect for the community of life (the environment).

The indicators were tested successfully with field projects selected to show the diversity of situations in which values can be measured at the organization and community level; including an NGO working with indigenous school children and a university applying the Earth Charter in Mexico, and a Red Cross youth project on behavioural change in Sierra Leone (see below and further case studies on the ESDinds project website). The indicators in each case were selected by and adapted to the situation: semi-quantitative or qualitative, expressed in interviews, observations, gestures or word associations, for example.

Case study: Echeri Consultores, Mexico (Earth Charter)

Echeri Consultores is a small non-governmental organization affiliated with the Earth Charter Initiative, working to increase environmental awareness and an understanding of Earth Charter values in rural indigenous communities in Mexico.

One of its projects is a programme working with 9–13 year olds in 15 schools in the Purepecha indigenous communities. It includes arts workshops on environmental conservation and values; guided reflection on local ecosystems; and tree planting workshops, enabling the children to establish tree nurseries in the school grounds and to conduct reforestation activities in the wider community.

For this project with school children, it decided to focus on two values: collaboration in diversity, and care and respect for the community of life. This led to the choice of 22 indicators, such as:

- we feel girls are valued;
- different points of view are listened to;
- emotional connection to community of life; and
- quality in outputs (training in tree planting).

Many different types of assessment tools were used, such as:

- use of a spiral of coloured scarves on which pupils stood (spatial/corporal method);
- hand painting (paint how you felt when we finished the last project) and word elicitation (what words go with these pictures that you painted?);
- focus groups;
- theatrical comprehension (can you "act out", as in a play, how you plant a seedling?) as a test of knowledge; and
- key informants (interviews with project leaders/teachers).

Before the project, they used to measure the number of trees planted and the number of children involved as their indicators of success. Now they can measure as well the emotional connection to nature, gender equality, equality of the indigenous members, and empowerment. They realized that these things that were important to them were also of interest to their funders, since their funding was extended at a time when many projects were cut.

A second Echeri Consultores project in Mexico was with a multi-cultural group of around 19 youth aged 12–21, called Juatarhu ("Forest" in Purepecha), meeting every week. The activities of Juatarhu are similar to those of the schools programme, but with greater scope and depth, incorporating large reforestation campaigns and municipal arts festivals (ESDinds 2010).

Case study: University of Guanajuato, Mexico (Earth Charter)

The Environmental Institutional Programme of Guanajuato University (PIMAUG) is a cross-faculty initiative structured around six strategic areas:

(1) assisting students to develop a holistic vision of the environment;
(2) promoting sustainable resource use and waste management;
(3) diffusion of a culture of environmental awareness, through a variety of media;
(4) interdisciplinary research;
(5) training in environmental issues through diploma and masters programmes; and
(6) social participation and inter-institutional partnership.

The programme decided to engage in the indicators project because the Earth Charter is about transforming values into action, which is the "heart" of the University mission. The University already has good environmental measures, but there was no way to know rigorously the deeper dimension of the Earth Charter vision, and the degree to which those values were present and transformative. The values-based indicators provided a way. The indicators articulated deeply-held aspirations and priorities which had not previously received systematic attention. The process of reflection and selection of the indicators, even before measurement, had a significant cultural impact on the PIMAUG unit and enthused participants, becoming a process of transformational learning.

Among the key benefits was the change of culture experienced in PIMAUG. The Earth Charter workshop leaders reported a greater sense of effectiveness as a result of a clearer and more precise focus on values in their workshop delivery. The personal impact of the indicators affected how a manager dealt with conflict, and generated a much more participatory approach in her work with volunteers. The unit has a greater unity of vision, and participants in the focus group discussions have reported having reconnected or been re-inspired in their work. Integrating the indicators into regular evaluation has increased group insight into their own application of values and led to understanding success in terms of values in a practical way (ESDinds 2010).

Case study: Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change, Sierra Leone (Red Cross)

The Principles and Values Department of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has initiated and conducted a worldwide programme called "Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change" (YABC). YABC seeks to empower youth to take up a leadership role in positively influencing mindsets, attitudes and behaviours in their local communities towards a culture of peace, respect for diversity, equality and social inclusion.

As part of this programme, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society has established an agricultural project composed of four teams of 30 members each. It brings together members of different tribes and chiefdoms, even those who fought on opposite sides during the civil war, which ended ten years ago. These youth live and work together on agricultural sites and participate in YABC workshops relating to non-discrimination and respect for diversity, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion, gender, and building a culture of non-violence and peace. The indicators were trialled successfully during a weekend workshop, and provided the organizers with new insights on the effectiveness of their work and on some problems still to be addressed (ESDinds 2010).

The IFRC was sufficiently pleased with the results that they asked the researchers to participate in a regional conference in Jordan with youth leaders from 45 countries of Asia and the Middle East, to share the methodology and encourage its widespread application.

After the field testing, where some indicators were refined and others dropped, a final list of 166 indicators was produced which seemed to be broadly relevant across all case studies, often measuring more than one value. While the vocabularies for values differed greatly between cultural and institutional contexts, the behaviours described by the indicators proved to be more universal, although certainly still far from comprehensive. For rigorous measurement of the presence of a particular value, the indicators considered valid for it need to be defined clearly, and more than one indicator and measurement method should be used. If it is not necessary to be rigorous every time, a simple measurement is sufficient. Ultimately it is for each organization or user to decide what the presence of a value looks like in any particular context. It is this internal consistency that validates and makes the tool useful. The indicators list has been derived from the experience of many CSOs and has demonstrated its usefulness but each user needs to decide what would be considered a good measurement with that indicator.

The results were presented at the international conference "Making the Invisible Visible: An emerging Community of Practice in Indicators, Sustainability and

Values" (University of Brighton, England, 16–18 December 2010), with conference reports, presentations and videos of the main speakers documented on the Internet (iefworld.org/conf14.html). An online platform has been created at www.WeValue.org to provide access to the indicators developed and to encourage a community of practice for values-based indicators, and a partnership of the principal organizations and researchers is carrying this work forward.

In the context of community action for sustainable lifestyles, these indicators can make previously invisible dimensions of an activity such as values more visible. When something can be measured, it becomes important. Values can then be consciously encouraged or cultivated, and the community or organization becomes more values-driven. Strong values are linked to more effective outcomes. Using indicators as tools, values can be embedded more widely in many kinds of human activity that can benefit from stronger values. The measurement methodologies are sufficiently flexible to adapt to most situations and can incorporate almost any values framework. Measuring desirable behaviours and values for sustainability becomes positively reinforcing within the group.

4 National Level

Introducing concepts and values of sustainability and responsible living into the formal school curriculum usually requires intervention at the national or sometimes state level where curriculum content is determined. There is often resistance to change at this level, and progress can be slow unless there is strong political leadership on the issue. Yet community efforts will be strongly reinforced if students are receiving similar messages at school. School children frequently become educators of their parents in environmentally-responsible behaviour such as economizing energy and recycling. Since much of the effort of PERL is focused at this level, it will not be discussed here in depth.

Another important set of partners that can be addressed at the national level is the media, including the press, radio, television, cinema, the music and entertainment industry, and increasingly the Internet. Unfortunately, the media are often themselves purveyors of unsustainable lifestyles and cultivators of irresponsible consumer behaviour through advertising and the lifestyles they portray (Karlberg 2004). Their marketing to children is particularly pernicious. It is often not in their interest to encourage responsible consumer behaviour, so their capacity to educate the public is rarely used to its full advantage. A regulatory requirement for public interest programming, or for balance in the presentation of viewpoints, can provide a partial counterweight.

Many and diverse organizations of civil society from businesses to faith-based organizations are spread across the spectrum from those supporting damaging forms and levels of consumption in the name of commercial, political or cultural interests, to those that are staunch defenders of the values of responsible living. Even within the business sector, for example, some companies market products damaging to health and the environment, while others build their reputation with products from socially and environmentally responsible sources. Given the mixed messages with which we are surrounded, consumer education must include the capacity to see behind the superficially-attractive messages of the consumer society. Where advertising plays on animal impulses and selfishness, falsehood becomes public information, and greed, lust, indolence, pride and violence have social and economic value (UHJ 2005), the antidote must be rooted in moral values and ethical principles. Educational programmes should aim to "vaccinate" children against the excesses of the consumer culture with which they are surrounded, enabling them to understand how they are manipulated by the role models and messages purveyed by the media, and teaching counterbalancing values of moderation and being content with little. Values-based indicators could support these activities, as in the Guanajuato University case study described above.

There are increasing numbers of public bodies and civil society organizations with the capacity to support national campaigns of public information on responsible consumer behaviour. While many target specific issues relevant to their mandates, there is considerable potential for more integrated campaigns involving a variety of actors, such as the national Preach-In on Global Warming organized in the United States by Interfaith Power and Light in February 2011 (IPL 2011). Such organizations could also use values-based indicators to amplify their action at the national level.

5 International Level

5.1 Global Economy and Financial Crisis

The choices for living responsibly are often conditioned or constrained by what the economy and society offer. The tendency has been for nations, businesses and communities increasingly to become integrated into the global system and dependent on its functioning correctly (MacKenzie 2008). The individual consumer cannot control the larger dimensions of the economic system, but is simply swept along in the current. Individual, local and national efforts for responsibility will not be sufficient without a transformation of the global economy and structures of governance. Fortunately that process has now started. The assumption of adversarial relationships and economic competition as fundamental norms is being challenged by more mutualistic approaches to social and economic organization (Karlberg 2004). While the future evolution of the economy is unpredictable, the evidence suggests the process will be bumpy, with alternating crises and (usually inadequate) reforms.

The financial crisis since 2007 launched a fundamental questioning of the economy and its underlying values, and an exploration of alternatives that would be more responsible (see for instance Stiglitz et al. 2009) looking for indicators beyond GDP. It remains to be seen how the values-based approach to indicators pioneered at the community level can be transposed in some way to higher levels of social organization. Assessment of the ethical behaviour of institutions and governments would provide a counterbalance to some of the excesses of the present system. The conceptual work has begun. The growth paradigm itself is being called into question (Jackson 2009), launching a search for new values and principles for an alternative economic system. Unfortunately the financial sector has gone back to business as usual, with speculation-driven instability and a bubble of derivatives and other financial products that could easily burst again. Meanwhile the high level of government borrowing in many countries to salvage the financial sector and relaunch the economy has added a new level of instability. The increasing risks of government defaults are putting further pressure on the system. As a result, government intervention in the economy on the scale of the last few years is no longer possible, and a loss of confidence in governments' abilities to repay their debts would bring down the world economy. In a debt-financed system, when the economy does not grow fast enough to pay back principle and interest, default and/or inflation are inevitable (Korowicz 2010). These economic failures are in part due to reliance on the wrong kinds of indicators (Jamison 2008). This vulnerability at the international level becomes an additional incentive for responsible living that is community-centred, locally-sourced, values-based and moderate in its requirements.

5.2 Rio+20 and Other UN Activities

Regionally and internationally, the debate on the future of sustainability has been influenced by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012. The conference theme of the Green Economy is particularly relevant to responsible living, and UNEP has released a report on this topic (UNEP 2011). The topic is controversial, as it can be interpreted as simply reorienting the present economy towards environmental responsibility (seen by some as superficial "greenwashing"), or requiring a much more fundamental transition to a more socially equitable and environmentally sustainable system. In either case, the required changes in energy sources and resource supplies mean transforming many industries and fundamentally altering consumption patterns. These top-down drivers will complement and reinforce educational activities for responsible living at the local level. The international events around the conference in 2012 themselves provided a good opportunity for public education on environment and sustainability. Values-based indicators of corporate and government behaviour could be one tool to increase accountability for implementing a truly green and socially-responsible economy. Proposals on this have been submitted to the Bureau of Rio+20 (IEF 2011).

The second conference theme on institutional arrangements for sustainable development and international environmental governance should also lead to international institutional innovations that will encourage and facilitate greater responsibility at national and local levels. Civil society input to this process from the Advisory Group on International Environmental Governance has highlighted the ethical importance of the oneness of humanity as the foundation for a more sustainable society. Since humanity is one, each person is born into the world as a trust of the whole, and each bears a responsibility for the welfare of all humanity. This collective trusteeship constitutes the moral foundation of human rights and of values for responsible living. International and national measures to reinforce these values should ultimately empower each individual and each community to contribute to the general welfare. They should recognize human diversity as a source of collective capacity, creativity, productivity, resilience and adaptation that is vital to our social and economic development, prosperity and well-being (Advisory Group 2011a).

In its submission to the Rio+20 Bureau, the Advisory Group has proposed mechanisms to bring an ethical perspective into the United Nations decision-making processes (Advisory Group 2011b). If such mechanisms are established, values-base indicators could be one tool used in their implementation.

The discussions at the United Nations on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) are also highly relevant. A 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP was considered and largely finalized by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in May 2011 (UNCSD 2011), but after the failure of the Commission to adopt any decisions, it was finally adopted at Rio+20. Regardless of the weakness in international decision-making at present, the many national and regional programmes proposed within this framework will encourage economic transformation and support local initiatives for responsible living. The process has also stimulated deeper reflections on visions of development, the roots of the crisis in the present economic system, and the need for cultural transformation, as illustrated by the statement on “Rethinking Prosperity: Forging Alternatives to a Culture of Consumerism” (BIC 2010) contributed to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

6 Conclusions

Values and their expression through ethical principles are a key to individual motivation and social transformation towards sustainability. Their assessment through indicators can make them more visible and encourage educational processes that target them more directly. The success of recent experience in this at the community and project level should inspire further efforts to extend this approach to institutions and processes of governance at the national and international levels. There is also potential to develop additional tools for values assessment at the individual level.

Recognition of the multi-level framework of social organization should allow more coherent approaches to reinforcing the ethical dimension of education for sustainability. While lifestyles are ultimately the responsibility of each individual and family on this planet, responsible living is not something that can be achieved in isolation. The major focus for empowerment and support should be at the neighbourhood and community levels where social processes operate most directly and powerfully. However, the accelerating processes of disintegration of old economic frameworks and certainties, and innovations in new approaches, are rapidly transforming the context to which individual lifestyles must respond and the values that will be relevant. Education in values for responsible living must therefore be dynamic and adaptive.

The growing awareness of the need to recognize the principle of oneness of humanity as the broadest framework for human rights and responsibilities is stimulating a re-examination of preconceptions and certitudes about individual and collective purposes. Linking the scientific arguments for sustainability and ethical perspectives on responsibility, and relating local efforts to the international debates on these issues, will help everyone to think deeply about what is meant by responsible living. Values-based indicators can help to turn this awareness into action.

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Driving Forces, Environmental Pressures and Policy Instruments

Sustainable Consumption Assessment for Latvia

Jānis Brizga and Elīna Līce

Abstract Current unsustainable consumption patterns are one of the main sustainable development challenges, which have been recognised by many researchers, and are part of global, regional and national policies. Household consumption volumes and pressures on the environment in Latvia, although in most cases below EU average, have negative trends and tend to increase. The aim of this research was to investigate consumption trends in Latvia, the main driving forces behind household consumption (sustainable and unsustainable) patterns, to identify the main stakeholders and their roles and propose policy instruments and recommendations for sustainable consumption development in Latvia. The research methodology was based on desk research of statistical data and three different co-creation focus group interviews with representatives from NGOs and scientific communities working on sustainable consumption issues. The results show that the main driving forces depend on the individual's internal factors such as personal values, knowledge, personal income as well as external factors: infrastructure, availability of information, prices and legislation. The main stakeholders responsible for sustainable consumption development are public (government) bodies, commercial enterprises, NGOs and households. The chapter concludes by outlining the main preconditions for sustainable development in Latvia.

Keywords Driving forces · Policy instruments · Stakeholders · Sustainable consumption

JānisBrizga (✉) · ElīnaLīce
University of Lativia, Raina bulv. 19, Riga, Latvia
e-mail: janis@zb-zeme.lv

ElīnaLīce
e-mail: elina.lice@lu.lv

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1 Introduction

Household environmental behaviour patterns account for a large amount of environmental problems. Most of the latest studies on household environmental impacts in Europe (e.g. European Environment Agency 2005; Hertwich 2005; Kok et al. 2006; Lähteenoja et al. 2007; Moll and Watson 2009; Nissinen et al. 2006; Tukker et al. 2006; Wiedmann et al. 2007) suggest that current unsustainable consumption patterns of food, housing and mobility are some of the main drivers behind many environmental problems, like climate change, eutrophication, biodiversity loss, resource depletion and others.

Internationally sustainable production and consumption (SCP) has been recognised as one of the main challenges for sustainable development (UN 1992, 2002). Following this call for urgent action the European Union (EU) has developed an action plan (EC 2008) and several EU member states (e.g. Sweden, Finland, UK) have their national strategies or plans on SCP. There are several studies analysing these SCP policy approaches (Berg 2011; Clark 2007; Szlezak et al. 2008).

Latvia does not have a national policy or institutional framework on SCP. However, Latvia's long-term sustainable development strategy for 2030 recognises the need to support sustainable lifestyles as one of its long term targets. There are also several SCP policy elements integrated into different sectoral policies, but policy research concerning sustainable consumption, household environmental concerns and values or sustainable behaviour patterns is very limited. Only a restricted number of studies and surveys are available and there is no systematic work going on to analyse or monitor pro-environmental behaviour in Latvia.

Taking into account the lack of policy and research on SCP not only in Latvia but also in many other countries in the region this chapter contributes to the discussion on the need for national SCP policy development. The need for such a policy development which would be targeted towards changes in consumption and behaviour patterns also comes from the increasing ecological footprint of consumption. During the last 15 years, the per capita ecological footprint in Latvia has more than doubled. Whereas in 1995 the ecological footprint per capita was 2.5 ha (Brizga 2008a) the 2010 assessment (based on 2007 data) shows that the on average per capita footprint has reached 5.6 global hectares (WWF 2010).

An Eurobarometer (2011) survey shows that people in Latvia are less inclined than on average in Europe to buy environmentally friendly products even if they cost a bit more, whereas at the same time people rate their knowledge about environmental issues as being higher than the European average. However, people may not always be aware of the environmental impacts of behaviour related to their consumption patterns and the environmental benefits of behavioural changes (Brizga 2008b).

Actual individual consumption in Latvia significantly differs from that in Western Europe. Eurostat data show that in 2009 it accounted only for 50 % of EU average and was one of the lowest in the EU followed only by Romania and

Bulgaria. Public surveys on environmental awareness and attitudes in Latvia (SKDS 2006, 2008) show that people in general value Latvia's environment as clean and with high biodiversity. However, respondents in Latvia do not specify the environment as being as important for their quality of life as their counterparts in many other EU countries. Asked about the factors influencing their quality of life more than 90 % of respondents in Greece, Cyprus and Malta pointed out the environment as the main factor, whereas in Latvia only 67 % did so (Eurobarometer 2011).

This could be explained by the fact that Latvia has the lowest CO_2 per capita emissions in the EU and one of the highest biocapacities (WWF 2010). Due to these aspects and the poor economic situation (according to Eurostat Latvia's GDP purchasing power parity per capita in 2010 was 52 % of an average EU level), people generally prioritise achieving the EU average income level and tend to set environmental priorities for the future. At the same time, the economic recession in 2008 in Latvia has had a significant impact on household consumption habits. Data show that in last two years consumption has changed in all three main consumption clusters.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate in detail the consumption trends in the three main consumption clusters—food, housing and mobility, and the main driving forces behind these trends in Latvia, as well as to identify the main stakeholders and their roles and to propose policy instruments and recommendations for sustainable consumption development in Latvia.

2 Methodology

This chapter is based on research, carried out by the authors as part of the EU 7th framework project Action town sub-project Participatory SCP policy assessment implemented by the NGO Green Liberty. We used the Drivers, Pressures, Response framework which was adopted from the DPS IR (European Environment Agency 1999) to assess the main driving forces behind sustainable and unsustainable consumption patterns in Latvia, the environmental pressures of these consumption patterns on the environment and policy responses to shape sustainable consumption—roles of different stakeholders and policy instruments.

This research relies on quantitative and qualitative methods and a multi-step analysis approach (see Fig. 1):

- quantitative method—desk research was carried out to analyse consumption trends and environmental pressures from consumption patterns;
- qualitative method—three participatory facilitated co-creation workshops were used to identify:
  - driving forces for sustainable and unsustainable consumption;
  - policy instruments for sustainable consumption development;
  - stakeholder roles and recommendations for the main stakeholder actions.

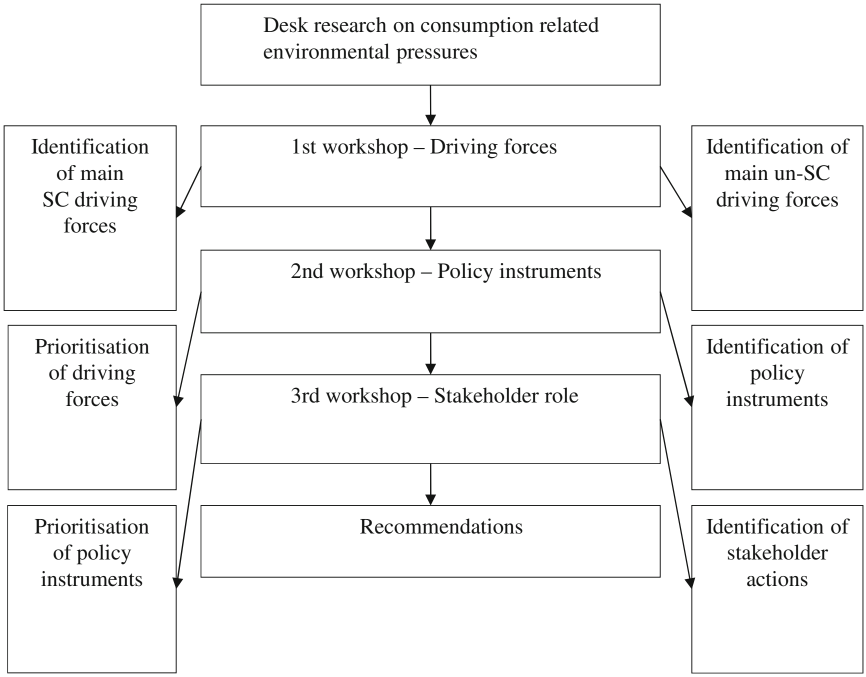

Fig. 1 Research approach

Desk research focused on national statistical analyses to identify main consumption clusters and trends in the housing, food and mobility consumption clusters. Data on consumption volumes and trends and household environmental pressures were derived from databases of Latvia's Central statistical bureau, European Environmental Agency, Eurostat and ODYSSEE.

The qualitative research was used to identify driving forces behind consumption patterns in the consumption sectors with higher environmental pressures—housing, mobility and food. The research material was gathered through three co-creation workshops, conducted at the end of 2010 and the beginning of 2011. In each of the workshops, 12–15 experts from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and scientific institutions working on the sustainable consumption issues were involved. Totally 34 experts participated in the workshops. The workshops were organized as a learning process where both scientists and NGO representatives exchanged their experience, and learned from each other. Mind mapping supported this process, and at the same time the results we gathered are qualitative and represent views of these participants. We should also add that not all the stakeholders dealing with consumption issues in Latvia were involved in this process.

During the first co-creation workshop, participants created cognitive maps of their shared understanding of important driving forces that affect sustainable and unsustainable consumption patterns of food, housing and mobility. These driving

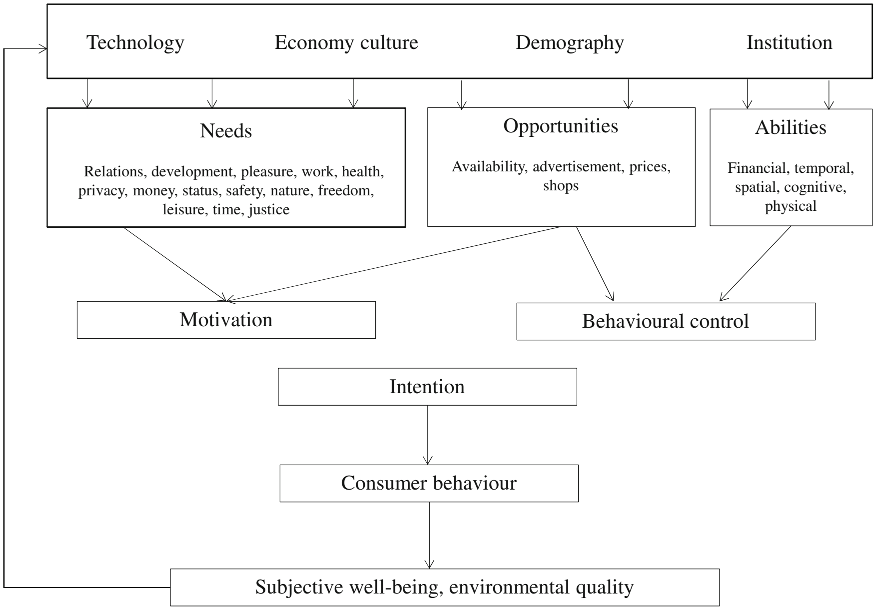

Fig. 2 Needs-Opportunities-Abilities model (adopted from Gatersleben and Vlek 1998)

forces were clustered using the Needs-Opportunities-Abilities (NOA) model developed from Gatersleben and Vlek (1998) (see Fig. 2).

The model is intended to diagnose the specific forces underlying consumer behaviour at both the macro level of society and the micro level of households. In the NOA model, the individual motivation to act in a concrete way results from certain consumer needs and opportunities in the external environment and individuals' abilities to fulfil those needs. The *needs* according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid are physiological (food, water, shelter, sleep etc.) and concern safety (security: of body, employment, resources, the family, health etc.), love/belonging (friendship, family), esteem (self-esteem, respect of others) as well as self-actualization (morality, creativity etc.) (Maslow 1943). *Opportunities* in the NOA model are external factors—objective availability of goods, materials and services, their accessibility, and specific information and the prices for those goods. *Abilities* in the opposite are a set of internal individual factors—the capacity to act in an environmentally friendly manner, including financial (income, credit options), temporal (more time to take holidays) and spatial aspects (home space to store goods, the distance to shops, services) and skills (health fitness, possession of licences and permits). The macro level driving forces in the NOA model are technology, the economy, demography, institutions and culture, which have an direct impact on needs, opportunities and abilities and thus affect consumption patterns.

The second co-creation workshop was built on the results from the first one and focused on policy instruments. Participants in the workshop identified the main instruments to deal with the driving forces behind unsustainable and sustainable consumption patterns in food, housing and mobility consumption clusters identified in the first workshop.

The following policy instruments were considered:

- planning (policy documents, strategies, action plans etc.);
- regulation (legislation, control, responsible institution structures etc.);
- economic (taxes, tariffs, subsidies);
- infrastructure;
- communication (information, education public participation, collaboration).

In the third co-creation workshop, participants looked at the roles of different stakeholders (government, business, households and mediators) and identified the main instruments they can use to work on sustainable consumption governance. This workshop concluded with integrated recommendations for each of the stakeholder groups to work on sustainable consumption governance. These recommendations built on the outcome of all the workshops.

3 Household Environmental Pressures on the Environment in Latvia

According to the European Topic Centre on Sustainable Consumption and Production report (ETC SCP 2010) on SCP indicators, the main consumption pressures on environmental could be considered with these indicators:

- *housing and buildings*: absolute pressures related to construction and pressures per m^2 of living (pressures include energy use, GHG emissions, material use, water use and land use), per capita demand for space (living, working and shopping); usage phase of buildings; heat energy per m^2, housing space per person, indoor temperatures, household appliances, ICT equipment;
- *eating and drinking*: percentage of imported food consumed; imports and exports; meet, dairy, per capita frozen foods consumption; percentage of consumption of organic food; percentage of food waste; choice editing; price changes;
- *mobility*: pressures related to CO_2 emissions, land use, noise, and breakdowns, pressures of construction of vehicles; number of passenger kilometres; trips switched to more sustainable modes (short distances to public transport, from air to bus and railway); ownership and use of private cars; improvements in CO_2 kg/km.

To give a brief insight into household consumption in Latvia, we used some of these indicators, describing consumption trends and environmental pressures in each of the three aforementioned consumption clusters.

3.1 Housing

In Latvia, energy consumption per square meter in the average building is 308 kWh, 78.8 % of this energy is used for space heating and hot water (Construction, Energy and Housing State Agency 2008). Compared to Germany and Sweden, in Latvia households consume almost 40 % more energy for heating, mostly because of low building heat insulation. Due to the low energy efficiency of buildings, the housing cluster has the highest household impact on climate.

According to the data from the Latvian Central Statistical Bureau, there are 27 m^2 of living space per capita in Latvia. Although in recent years the floor space per capita has tended to increase, it is still below the EU average—35 m^2. In the sustainable consumption context, this indicates reduced land use and energy consumption. Mostly due to economic considerations people still choose to live in smaller apartments and bigger households.

Most of the energy to heat this space comes from district heating. However unlike most of EU countries, Latvia has a big share of renewable energy mostly used in decentralized heating systems. Biomass as well as electricity consumption have experienced a steep increase over the last ten years (see Fig. 3). Households now use electricity not only for lighting and some basic electric appliances, but also for cooling (and in some cases heating), and increasingly for cooking and entertainment.

One of the fields in which Latvia is leading in comparison to other EU countries is waste generation. Annual per capita solid waste generation in Latvia is around 305 kg, while EU average is 500 kg per capita (EEA 2010). At the same time, there is a weak waste recycling system, lack of infrastructure and awareness among the residents about recycling.

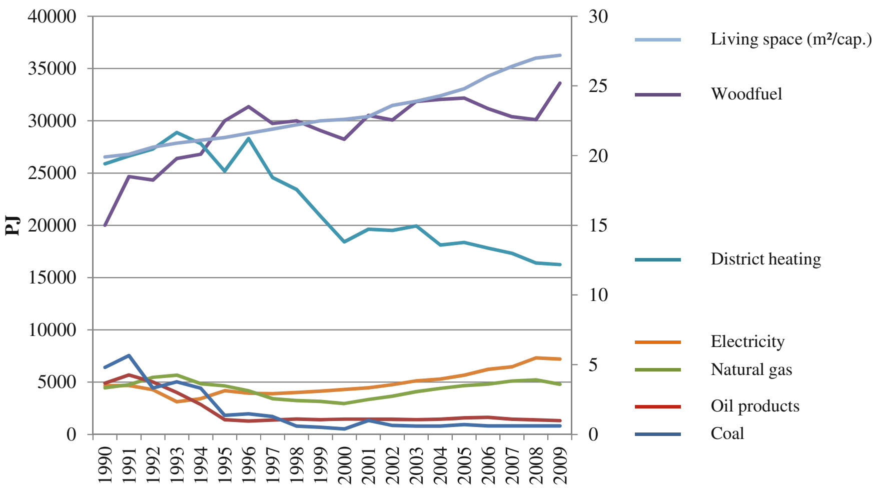

Fig. 3 Housing energy consumption by households (PJ/a.) (Central Statistical Bureau data)

3.2 Food

Environmental pressures from food consumption are linked to farming practices, food production processes, systems of provision and household's dietary habits—daily kilocalories, imported food, meat and dairy products consumption. Data show that average food consumption per capita in 2005 was 2600 kcal per day (Melece 2007). This is below average in European countries, e.g. in Germany it is 2888 kcal per day, and in France—2942 kcal.

Part of the food is wasted. Food waste in Latvia accounts for 90 kg/cap./a., which is one of the lowest amounts in EU (Greece has 40 kg/cap./a., Netherlands 580 kg/cap./a.) (Monier et al. 2010). However, people in Latvia are over consuming animal-based proteins (PVD 2009) which leads to increasing environmental pressures because animal-based products not only have high environmental impacts but also a significant share in food expenditures (see Fig. 4). Statistical data (Eurostat) and sociological survey (Unilever 2009) show that food consumption in Latvia has decreased during 2008–2009 mostly due to the economic recession. This gives rise to the possibility to reduce food related environmental pressures, because fruit, vegetables and potatoes which are cheaper have also lower carbon intensity.

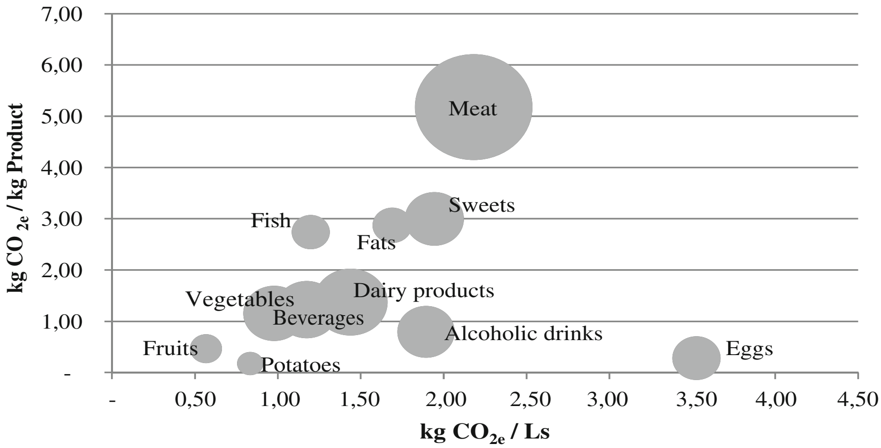

Fig. 4 CO_2 emission intensity of food products in Latvia 2009 (Central Statistical Bureau; authors' calculations *Note* size of the cycle shows annual per capita CO_2 emissions from food consumption in Latvia. 1 EUR = 0,702804 Ls.)

3.3 Mobility

The main pressures on the environment in the transport sector are related to motorized transport use and growing aviation transport use in Latvia. The transport

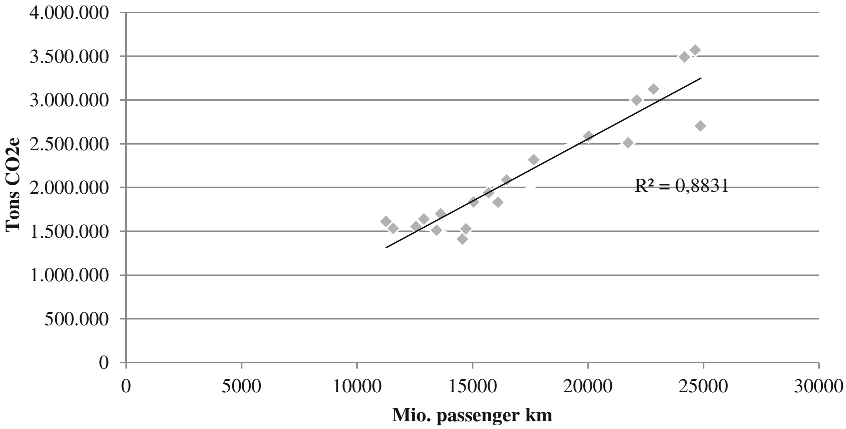

Fig. 5 Development of total passenger travel in relation to CO_2 emissions (1992–2009) (Central Statistical Bureau data; authors' calculations)

sector has experienced the fastest growth in CO_2 emissions over the last ten years. 82 % of trips are made by private cars, 12 % by bus and 4.5 % by train. On average, people in Europe use private cars less (76 %) and trains more (7 %) (Klāvs 2010). Increasing mobility also leads to increasing CO_2 emissions and the transport sector is not really benefiting from efficiency improvements, fuel switches and changes in the modal shift (see Fig. 5).

Latvia's Central Statistical Bureau data show that from 1990 until 2009 the number of cars per 1000 residents in Latvia has increased four times—from 106 cars per 1000 residents in 1990 to 402 in 2009. Recent statistics show that in 2010 the number of registered cars decreased. Another positive trend in the transport sector is the growing popularity of bicycle use in Riga (Andins 2009). Due to low cost flight companies and the resultant increased accessibility of air transport, during the last 20 years air transport use in Latvia has almost tripled. At the same time, the government has reduced subsidies for inter-city bus transport, thus reducing the availability of public transport in rural areas. Rail transport is also poorly developed.

4 Driving Forces

The NAO model has been used to analyse the driving forces behind consumption in Latvia. During the co-creation workshops, experts created mind maps of the driving forces in each of the consumption clusters: food, housing and mobility. These mind maps were further analysed and main driving factors were prioritised, identifying the main factors influencing sustainable and unsustainable consumption choices. The following aspects are based on the outcomes of the co-creation workshops.

4.1 Housing Sector

The experts indicated that the main driving forces behind unsustainable consumption are fossil fuel prices and taxes. Energy prices over the last ten years have more than doubled, but they still do not cover all the external environmental and social costs. Important impact factors are household values, the understanding of a good life and a demand for comfort, for instance, by choosing a high indoor air temperature during the heating season, and cooling homes during the summer season. The low level of personal income is a notable obstacle to improving the energy efficiency of buildings and choosing energy efficient appliances.

At the same time, factors that could promote sustainable consumption are efficient city planning and the quality of neighbourhoods, as well as the availability of funding for energy efficiency measures. The availability of infrastructure, such as containers for waste recycling, building materials, heating systems etc., information and acceptable prices are important factors supporting sustainable behaviour in the housing sector in Latvia (see Table 1).

Table 1 Driving forces in the housing sector

Driving forces for unsustainable housing	Driving forces for sustainable housing
1. Fossil fuels prices, taxes	1. City planning and quality of neighbourhood
2. Individuality, public values and understanding of well-being	2. Funding availability for energy efficiency measures in buildings
3. Comfort level (heating/cooling)	3. Standards for buildings efficiency
4. Personal income	4. Availability of infrastructures and information
5. Low energy efficiency in dwellings	5. Affordability of prices

4.2 Transport Sector

The main factor that promotes unsustainable behaviour in the transport sector are existing public values and status since owning a personal car is considered as an indicator of wealth. During the past 50 years, the price of personal cars has become more affordable for many. Besides which, existing prices and the public transport infrastructure do not induce people to leave their cars at home. At the same time, personal mobility has been growing—it is almost the norm that travelling to school, work, shopping and visiting friends are done using mechanised private transport.

Availability and comfort of public transport use, individuals' understanding and knowledge of environmentally friendly mobility and available safe cycling infrastructure were mentioned by participants in the co-creation workshops as the key factors for promotion of sustainable consumption within the transport sector (see Table 2).

Table 2 Driving forces within the transport sector

Driving forces for unsustainable transport	Driving forces for sustainable transport
1. Individual transport as a status indicator	1. Availability and comfort of public transport
2. Individuality and following the public values	2. Knowledge and understanding of environmentally friendly transport
3. The price of fuel	3. Cycling infrastructure
4. Traditions for living in the country side	4. Parking costs
5. Fashion	5. Communication collaboration
6. Daily need for mobility	6. Environmental awareness

4.3 Food Sector

In the food sector, one of the main driving forces for unsustainable consumption is the increasing speed of life which leads to time poverty and people spending less time thinking about their health and not cooking food themselves. Another important factor is subsidized food imports which lead to cheap food prices. At the same time, prices of organic food are higher than for conventional food, which is an obstacle to organic food consumption.

The driving forces behind sustainable consumption depend on individuals' knowledge and understanding of their physical needs. In addition, systems providing local, seasonal and organic food play an important role in sustainable food consumption. Family and friends also have a role to play. For example, if individuals have children in most cases parents feel responsible and try to eat healthier thereby setting a good example (see Table 3).

Table 3 Driving forces in the food sector

Driving forces for unsustainable food consumption	Driving forces for sustainable food consumption
1. Speed of life	1. Understanding of organism needs and wishes
2. Subsidized food import	2. Knowledge of environmentally friendly consumption
3. The price of organic food	3. Availability of specific markets
4. Traditions, society habits	4. Care for family, health
5. Example shown by friends, neighbours	5. Availability of organic food and information

5 Policy Instruments and Stakeholder Roles

In the previous section we described the driving forces behind sustainable and unsustainable consumption patterns in Latvia. From this analysis we can identify that not only economic factors (income, prices, availability of products and

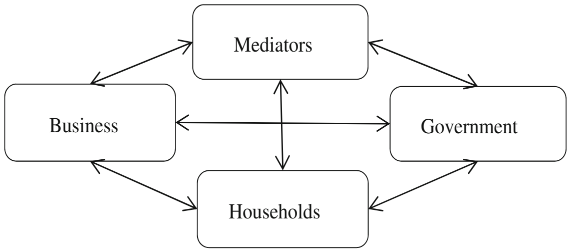

Fig. 6 Stakeholders of change (adopted from UK Sustainable Consumption Roundtable report, UK SCR 2006)

services, etc.) play an important part in determining household behaviour, but also other aspects including social pressure, human values, knowledge and understanding of a good life and comfort level. In addition to that, special planning, infrastructure and systems of provision are also important consumption drivers.

Some of these drivers (like planning, infrastructure and taxes) can be effectively tackled by state and municipal institutions. However, the state alone cannot ensure effective sustainable consumption governance. Other stakeholders, i.e. government, businesses, households and mediators (NGOs, the media, educational and scientific institutions) also play an active role in the "pyramid of change" (see Fig. 6).

During the workshops, the main policy instruments and directions of development leading to a shift towards sustainable consumption for each of consumption clusters were identified:

(1) *Housing sector*:

- availability of energy efficient household appliances and equipment;
- tax (e.g. property tax, income tax) subsidies for energy efficient buildings;
- tighter construction standards and their control;
- collection and communication of best practices;
- better public involvement and participation in neighbourhood development.

(2) *Transport sector:*

- improvements in electric public transport (trolleys, trams, trains);
- supporting development of public transport and bicycle-transport infrastructure;
- subsidies for public transport;
- supporting pro-environmental behaviour through improvements in special planning;
- tax cuts for environmentally friendly transport.

(3) *Food sector:*

- development of short supply chains;
- internalization of externalities into the price of food products;

- supporting motivation for changes in the agricultural methods used;
- encouraging cooperation of organic farmers;
- tax cuts for the enterprises distributing organic food.

The *government* is responsible for the implementation of most of these policy instruments. Taxes, subsidies, regulation and infrastructure are policy instruments that have to be implemented by the government. Apart from their regulatory and economic instruments, the role of the government is also to set a good example, which could be done through green public procurement: sustainable public transport procurement, providing local and organic food in public institutions, and sustainable energy production by municipality service companies are some such examples. Green public procurement in these areas would be a big step forward towards sustainability.

The role of *businesses* in supporting sustainable consumption should be in complying with legislation, as well as designing, producing and distributing environmentally friendly products and services and communicating environmental aspects of the consumption and production cycle to their clients and supply chain. Businesses should work to provide competitive prices for environmentally friendly products, improve products supply for consumers and use third party verified ecolabelling as tools to inform consumers about the sustainability of their goods. Social enterprises, cooperatives and sharing economy are also fields to be encouraged in Latvia, as they are underdeveloped and could stimulate reduction of ecological footprint of households. To improve energy efficiency within the housing sector, it is also important to develop energy service companies and other business forms to share financial risks with consumers.

The *mediators*' (NGO, education, science and media) role in shaping sustainable consumption is to facilitate discussion, directly participate in solving specific environmental problems, translating and mediating public interests and helping to define the policy context. A mediator can also indirectly perform an educational function, by setting good examples, as well as encouraging and supporting sustainable consumption. They (especially NGOs) also have a role in supervising government and business activities and representing people's interests within decision-making processes. Some of the NGOs are working to provide these services for their members.

Households should demand environmentally friendly products and services from businesses and lobby government for stricter governmental regulation and support for sustainable consumption. As the final consumers, households should also practice sustainable lifestyles, build social networks and platforms to provide mutual support to each other, in order to encourage sustainable consumption. Changing habits, finding sustainable hobbies and discussing values within the family and among friends are actions, which should be developed at the household level. Collaboration, initiatives and green leaders are important preconditions for all the above.

6 Discussion and Conclusions

To conclude the analysis above, Table 4 summarises the main strong and weak points of sustainable consumption in Latvia. The share of renewable resources among primary energy supply in Latvia is one of the highest in the EU: 36 %. The low waste generation and floor space per capita are good indicators as well. At the same time, the low energy efficiency of buildings, increasing electricity consumption by households and low recycling rates are some of the weaknesses Latvia faces. In the food sector, some of the strong aspects are increasing production and consumption of organic and local food products, as well as the tradition of growing your own food and preserving it for the winter. At the same time, increasing food product prices and dietary changes—increasing consumption of animal based sub-products—are leading to an increase in the environmental impacts of food consumption. In the transport sector, strong aspects are increasing bicycle use in cities and decreasing private transport use. However, almost 82 % of all trips are still made in private cars, air transport is increasing and there are poor alternatives for that, i.e. no rail connections to EU countries.

Table 4 Strong and weak aspects of sustainable consumption in Latvia

	Strong	Weak
Housing	36 % renewable resources in primary energy supply Low waste generation per capita—305 kg Low living space per capita 27 m^2	Low energy efficiency of buildings Increasing electricity consumption; Disorganized waste sorting system
Food	National organic food supply increasing National ecolabelling for organic food Economic recession has led to changes in diet and food consumption reduction People prefer local food products People grow their own products	Increasing prices in food products Increasing use of animal based sub-products
Transport	Increasing bicycle use in cities Number of registered of cars reduced in years 2008 and 2009	82 % trips are made by private cars, buses—12 %, trains—4.5 % Week intercity railway system Increasing aviation transport use

To drive recommendations for sustainable consumption governance it is necessary to take into account both strong and weak aspects for sustainable consumption, as well as to remember that it is necessary to change not only individual behaviour, but also aim for collective change. To ensure such a behavioural shift towards sustainability it is not enough to provide regulation and initiatives for sustainable consumption. Many of the consumers are locked into the social and physical infrastructure, which limits their abilities to act sustainably. So the changes should occur in all of the macro factors influencing the driving forces behind consumption:

- *economy*—development of market mechanisms to promote environmentally friendly production and consumption and limit unsustainable consumption patterns;
- *technology and innovation*—support of not only technological but also institutional and social innovations;
- *physical environment*—resources, time and infrastructure available for sustainable consumption;
- *institutional environment*—not only linked to the market, but also to non-market economy and existing models of development and developing social capital;
- *cultural and socio-psychological aspects*—motivation, needs, desires and habits in society to develop less materialistic values and lifestyles.

These macro factors are linked to the driving forces behind consumption patterns (needs, external and internal factors) within the housing, food and mobility sectors. From statistical analyses, we can see that over the last two years consumption and the environmental pressures linked to it have decreased. According to the NOA model, economic recession is a macro level factor influencing the driving forces behind consumption, and thus significantly affects household opportunities for sustainable consumption. Decreasing income in combination with changes in social-psychological factors have encouraged people to use more public transport, cooperate to save money, grow their own food and implement many other pro-environmental initiatives. However, these changes are most likely to be negatively affected if the economy recovers and incomes increase. Nevertheless, this is a good time and possibility to encourage sustainable consumption. Taking into account this social transition period, currently long-term system thinking could be one of the main principles for all involved stakeholders, but in particular the policy makers, to promote sustainable consumption. This applies not only to Latvia, but globally, where the economic recession has opened the doors for many sustainable consumption initiatives.

Many of these drivers have a dual nature. For example, increasing economic wealth can lead to increasing income which allows consumers to switch to more expensive sustainable products and services, but at the same time in most cases increasing income also leads to higher consumption and increasing environmental pressures.

The study demonstrates that addressing one or two of consumption drivers is unlikely to yield an impact on the whole system. Many of the driving forces (such as available funding, infrastructure, standards, urban planning, etc.) depend on government action; at the same time these factors make a diverse and complex system which could only be developed through the involvement of different stakeholders and use of multiple complementary policy instruments. Therefore, there is a clear need for an integrated approach to the sustainable consumption governance assessing and addressing all the drivers at macro and micro levels and involving different stakeholders. The informed self-action of households, proactive and informative mediators, regulating and supporting government and sustainable business are the key stakeholders that should bring these changes forward.

Stakeholder collaboration and interaction in sustainable consumption context is an important precondition for effective sustainable consumption governance. However, it should be taken into account that stakeholders have different, in many cases, conflicting interests, which should be addressed within the governance process.

As the main preconditions in promoting sustainable consumption, the following recommendations were identified which are relevant not only for this case study of Latvia, but also in other contexts:

- *integration of environmental externalities* into the costs of products and services —to ensure adequate market stimulus;
- *systemic thinking/cross-sectoral*—(economic, social and environmental) interactions and causal analysis to assess how changes in one sector will affect others;
- *long-term perspective*—time integration so that decision-making is based on long-term development vision, taking into account the future prospects of the availability of resources, demographic trends, the impact on future generations;
- *the principle of cooperation*—mutual cooperation between and inside each of the interest groups to ensure successful and effective sustainable consumption governance, e.g. successful special planning and neighbourhood development could be achieved only involving many different actors and not only within the planning process, but also within implementation and monitoring;
- *principle of complement*—policy instruments should be used complementary to each other, e.g. if we run an information campaign on alternative modes of transport, there should be corresponding initiatives to build available infrastructure, which means well planned cycling lanes, safe parking places, and this should be supported by legislation (traffic regulations) etc.
- *principle of interest and commitment*—the interest groups must be interested, informed and understand the importance and urgency for changes in current unsustainable consumption and production patterns.

The approach of this study, analysing driving forces of sustainable and unsustainable consumption patterns, policy instruments and involved stakeholders, could be adapted in other countries as well for systemic household consumption analysis and sustainable consumption development. The approach we used in analysing the situation and understanding the complex interrelations among different factors of sustainable consumption can be adopted for policy planning and implementation.

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Capacity for the Implementation of Education for Sustainable Consumption in Northeast Asia

Strengthening Governmental Strategies to Promote Responsible Consumer Behaviour

Robert James Didham

Abstract National policy for Education for Sustainable Consumption (ESC) is a powerful instrument to influence sustainable consumption (SC) behaviour at individual and organisational levels. Despite diverse policy dialogues and initiatives on sustainable consumption and production (SCP), there is a lack of knowledge on how to influence behaviours towards SC. This chapter will address how to improve the capacity of governments in implementing effective ESC. The research was conducted through primary interviews with relevant government officers, survey/questionnaires, and analysis of policy documents in P.R. China, Japan and Republic of Korea. The findings identify key aspects of current governmental context for promoting SC. The three country cases are analysed in a comparative capacity assessment based on the four levers of change identified in UNDP's capacity development framework: (1) institutional arrangements, (2) leadership, (3) knowledge, and (4) accountability. The recommendations aim to strengthen policy and institutional frameworks for ESC and to link with wider policies for SCP and education for sustainable development (ESD). The primary recommendations address: (1) expanding roles and responsibilities for ESC beyond national governments, (2) applying multiple policy mechanisms and inter-ministerial/agency approaches, (3) defining policy priorities and target areas for SC, (4) improving accountability as a means to strengthen the overall system, and (5) addressing ESC as a thematic approach to ESD and SCP.

Keywords Education for sustainable consumption (ESC) · Policy and strategy · Capacity assessment · Northeast Asia (China, Japan and Republic of Korea)

R. J. Didham (✉)
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, 2108-11 Kamiyamaguchi, Hayama, Kanagawa 240-0115, Japan
e-mail: didham@iges.or.jp

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1 Introduction

Education for Sustainable Consumption (ESC) has recently received attention as an important process for bolstering transition towards a *low-carbon, sustainable society*. ESC proves a poignant concept because of its ability to bridge and incorporate three of the major approaches for sustainability, specifically Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), and sustainable (or responsible) lifestyles.

UNEP's publication *Here and Now* (2010), prepared in cooperation with the Marrakech Task Force on ESC, provides important recommendations for mainstreaming ESC into formal and non-formal education. The publication outlines the following aspirations:

> ESC is therefore about providing citizens with the appropriate information and knowledge on the environmental and social impacts of their daily choices, as well as workable solutions and alternatives. ESC integrates fundamental rights and freedoms including consumers' rights, and aims at empowering citizens for them to participate in the public debate and economy in an informed and ethical way (UNEP 2010, p. 11).

ESC gained recognition during international processes on both SCP and ESD, UN's Marrakech Process and Decade of ESD respectively, for its uniqueness to invigorate active methods for citizens and consumers to participate in and actively incorporate responsible, sustainable consumption (SC) into their daily habits.

ESC is viewed in this work as having a two-fold objective: the first objective aimed at influencing behaviour is to advance participation in SC practices, and the second aimed at influencing knowledge and conceptualisation is to provide a tangible entry into the wider "philosophy" of sustainable development. While SCP and ESD both attempt to address complex subjects, they often aim more at influencing knowledge and conceptualisation than at influencing behaviour, thus lacking relevance to the average person's daily life. ESC, with its balance tilted towards practical actions, provides an entry point for people to incorporate SC practices into to their daily lives thus gaining experience of the underpinning principles of sustainable development. ESC is first viewed as a mechanism to increase individuals' proactive participation in SC and responsible consumer behaviour. Second, ESC is viewed as a process that encourages experiential learning and allows individuals to relate the principles of sustainable development to their own reality.

It is also important that the challenges for effective ESC are acknowledged, which requires addressing the complexities faced in achieving the primary goal of ESC—behaviour change. The field of behavioural studies has provided many divergent models on the main factors influencing behaviour (whether they are driven by values, social convention and norms, personal experience and empathy, etc.). Tim Jackson, in his review of how these various behavioural change models relate to SC and consumer behaviour, finds that even those models that perform best still only account for 35 % of the variances between personal norms and indicators of pro-environmental behaviour (Jackson 2005, p. 58). Paul Stern also reviews the behavioural change models in an effort to develop a theory of environmentally significant behaviour and concludes that these models derived on single-variable explanations are limited in providing insight about pro-environmental behaviour change when it is influenced by multiple, interactive variables (Stern 2000, p. 419). "Environmentally significant behaviour is dauntingly complex, both in its variety and in the causal influences on it" (Stern 2000, p. 421).

Some hope for progress in ESC can be found though in the fact that ESC often engages a learning model that directly challenges the traditional information-based behavioural change approach. Although there is clear evidence against a causal effect of increased knowledge leading to new attitudes which in turn leads to changes in behaviour, "educators still cling to the outdated mantra that more knowledge will spur transformative action" (Frisk and Larson 2011). ESC, on the other hand, uses an "action first—learning second" approach that directly engages individuals in the activities that the learning process aims to encourage and sustain. This approach to ESC can be facilitated through the incorporation of experiential learning theory (ELT) (Kolb 1984; Kolb and Fry 1975). ELT provides a learning model where "Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb 1984, p. 41). ELT is based around four stages of learning: (1) concrete experiences, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualisation, and (4) active experimentation. These stages initiate a process that utilises both "grasping" to gain apprehension and comprehension and also "transforming" knowledge into action to support intention and extension (Dieleman and Huisingh 2006, pp. 837–839).

Identifying the different processes to how we learn and the types of knowledge we gain from these various dimensions is important. A parallel model to these learning mechanisms has been developed to strengthen ESD by Henry (2009) that simplifies the two primary dimensions to the "mechanisms of learning" (individual vs. social) and the "types of knowledge" (empirical vs. normative). This does not exactly replicate the process and perception dimensions identified by Kolb, but it does highlight the need to extend beyond a focus on the individual learner and incorporates a social learning dimension which is important for ESC when we acknowledge the influence social norms have on behaviour.

To bring this discussion of the challenges for ESC full circle, it is necessary to return to the factors that influence behaviour. We now have a grasp on the complexities ESC must address: multiple variables driving behaviour, socially-entrenched patterns of consumption, different ways to learn and different things to learn. Recognition of both what influences individuals and how they become aware of ideas beyond the normal circles of influence can guide ESC towards a learning approach that supports transformative change.

The goal of this research though is not to try to fully develop this learning approach but rather to identify the roles governments can play in promoting effective ESC implementation in a systematic manner. Thus, it targets governmental capacity for implementing effective ESC as an important opportunity for strengthening the meta-level structures through which transformative change can be encouraged. The work investigates opportunities to strengthen governmental capacity for ESC implementation. The recommendations in this work aim at improving the meta-level structures for producing effective ESC initiatives and ensuring positive impacts rather than focusing on the micro-level activities and initiatives that strengthen the subject basis of ESC. This choice was taken due to recognition of the wide diversity of thematic coverage under ESC and belief that prior to increasing the quantity of topics covered by ESC it is first necessary to strengthen the quality of how ESC initiatives are implemented.

2 Methods

Primary research was conducted from August 2010 to January 2011 in China, Japan and Republic of Korea to investigate governmental capacity and strategies for promoting SC and to identify opportunities for improving ESC implementation. The main methods for data collection were qualitative interviews, survey/questionnaires, and analysis of government policy documents. The target respondents (which aimed for 20–25 respondents per country) were three-fold: 60 % from national governments (including Ministries of Environment, Education and Trade); 20 % from one municipal government; and 20 % from NGOs and civil society organisations.

The three country cases were subsequently used for a comparative capacity assessment of the current institutions and strategies for promoting SC and implementing ESC in each country. This assessment is structured around the four levers of change identified in the capacity development framework utilised by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). UNDP's current strategy is focused on providing capacity development to strengthen the foundations for effective and continued development efforts. The levers of change are identified as (1) institutional arrangements, (2) leadership, (3) knowledge, and (4) accountability (UNDP 2010, pp. 7–13; see Table 1).

Table 1 Components of capacity assessment framework (UNDP 2010)

Levers of change: capacity development core issues and responses			
Institutional arrangements	Leadership	Knowledge	Accountability
Streamlined processes	Clearly formulated vision	Research supply and demand linkage mechanism	Audit systems and practice standards
Clear definition of roles and responsibilities	Communication standards	Brain gain and retention strategies	Participatory planning mechanism
Merit-based appraisal mechanism	Management tools	Knowledge sharing tools and mechanism	Stakeholder feedback mechanism
Coordination mechanism	Outreach mechanism		

Institutional Arrangements provide leverage points that are relevant across public sector management, governance and development activities as it addresses the procedures that functionalise political mandates and development objectives. Inefficiencies in institutional arrangements are often identified during capacity assessments due to the fact that optimal procedural structures in terms of efficiency and impact are often unacknowledged especially as new procedures are developed without cohesion with previously existing arrangements (UNDP 2008, p. 11).

Leadership as a lever of change has different natures depending if addressing individual or organisational levels. Effective leadership as an organisational capacity helps to advance a vision-driven agenda and strategic planning. Capacities for leadership can be enhanced by strengthening organisational abilities in vision setting, systems thinking, risk assessment and through establishing collective management systems that encourage active, experiential learning (UNDP 2008, p. 12; UNDP 2010, p. 9).

"*Knowledge* is the foundation of capacity" (UNDP 2010, p. 10). At an organisational level, knowledge development is about improving expertise and organisational learning strategies. Knowledge capacity can be strengthened through professional training, experience sharing and knowledge management systems. At a social level, knowledge capacity is often best addressed through reforming formal education systems to ensure that younger generations have the skills and awareness to deal with emerging challenges. The link between social and organisational levels can be developed through ensuring higher education is responding to skills and competencies desired by the professional sector (UNDP 2008, p. 12; UNDP 2010, p. 10).

Accountability is an important lever within the organisational sector as it provides oversight, monitoring and evaluation to ensure activities are achieving desired objectives and to identify obstacles. Systems can also be established to provide for public accountability and transparency to ensure that governments are reaching citizens' needs. Accountability can be improved through strengthening mechanisms for individuals to voice opinions (especially through civic literacy and education programmes), open access to information, ensuring robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems both internally and externally, and by active integration of learning from M&E into future endeavours (UNDP 2008, p. 12; UNDP 2010, p. 11).

3 Governmental Strategies on ESC

The governments of China, Japan and Republic of Korea have all provided mandates to governmental agencies to promote SC. For instance, the newly formed Consumer Affairs Agency (established in 2010) of the Japanese Cabinet Office initiated inter-ministerial dialogues for better coordination on SC and established an ESC group in the Economic and Social Research Institute to support effective consumer awareness raising. At the Eleventh Conference of the National Party of

China in 2008, a mandate was agreed for "the promotion of green consuming" to correlate with the country's Circular Economy Promotion Law. The Korean Presidential Committee on Green Growth established a Green Lifestyles for Sustainable Development team which coordinates national activities on Education for Green Growth including SC.

All three countries have demonstrated interests and commitment towards shifting to more sustainable patterns of development and recognise the importance of SC in achieving this. Although the political mandate and will-power exists to enact ESC programmes, in many cases they remain unformulated because of the current lack of capacity and leadership for promoting responsible consumer behaviour. Despite diverse policy dialogues and many numbers of initiatives on SCP, there is a lack of knowledge and experience on how to implement effective ESC. In order to properly address this matter, it is first necessary to identify and assess the current governmental approaches and strategies for promoting SC.

3.1 ESC Strategies in China[1]

The national government of China identified four main themes to address in their efforts on SCP: (1) energy saving and emissions reduction, (2) conservation-oriented society, (3) low carbon society, and (4) tax preference. The Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) in China is one of the leading agencies to place high priority on promoting SC through advocating green lifestyles in both formal and non-formal education—initiating ESC efforts since 2004. Although many policy efforts have aimed at sustainable production and promoting green markets in China, the number of policies specifically related to SC is limited. Four national governmental agencies were identified as enacting specific policies for promoting consumer awareness and ESC. These agencies are MEP, the National Development and Reform Commission, the China Consumer Association, and the State Forestry Administration.

3.2 ESC Strategies in Japan[2]

The national government of Japan enacted several strong policies for institutionalising SC practices including the Fundamental Law for Establishing a Sound Material-Cycle Society (2000), the Green Purchasing Law (2000) and the Green

[1] Chinese country case study was conducted by Dr. Qing Tian of the Environmental Education Centre at Beijing Normal Education.

[2] Japanese country case study was conducted by Dr. Masahisa Sato and Prof. Hideki Nakahara of the Faculty of Environmental and Information Studies at Tokyo City University.

Contract Law (2007). These policies aim at developing infrastructures for SC and transitioning the practices of public bodies to provide leadership and models of best practice. In formal education, ESC is addressed in terms of consumer education based on protecting the individual's rights and preventing harm. This approach does not address prevailing socio-cultural factors of consumption, nor does it connect with aspects of ESD taught as environmental education in the natural sciences. The Japanese government enjoys strong cooperation with civil society organisations to promote and encourage participation in various campaigns for SCP. Although these efforts have led to a very high literacy on issues such as energy efficiency and three R's (reduce, reuse, and recycle) for a sound material cycle, these practices—much like the government's approach to SCP policies—remains compartmentalised.

3.3 ESC Strategies in Republic of Korea[3]

The national government of Republic of Korea enacted a Five-Year Plan for Green Growth in 2009. This plan sets out the main framework under which SCP and ESC are currently addressed. During the 1990 and 2000s, the government launched several acts addressing energy efficiency, resource savings, recycling, green procurement and environmental education. There have been several initiatives and campaigns corresponding with these acts to disseminate good practices to the public. However, the shift towards green growth has led to a decrease in prioritisation and understanding by the government on both sustainable development and SC.

The lack of a clear vision for the government's approach to SC and ESC under the Plan for Green Growth has resulted in limited coordination of policy efforts between ministries and also limited defining of the roles of various ministries in promoting SC. This includes a severe shortage of human resources dedicated to efforts on ESC. The government's approach to ESC is further challenged by a lack of multi-stakeholder dialogue and cooperation.

4 Assessment of Current Capacity for Implementing ESC

A comparative analysis was conducted as an assessment of the current governmental capacities for implementing effective ESC in the three countries. This utilised the levers of change from UNDP's capacity assessment framework. A ranking scale was prepared as follows: 0 = no identified examples; 1 = existing examples, but not

[3] Korean country case study was conducted by Dr. So-Young Lee and Dr. Jung Hwa Kang of the Consumers Union of Korea.

mainstreamed across system; 2 = existing examples and identifiable achievements/impacts, and; 3 = mainstreamed across system and high achievements/impacts. Though the ranking provides a comparable, quantified score, the issuance of such score is based on qualitative assessment of the available information.

The establishment of this assessment framework and scoring was based on a very ideal model of potential ESC implementation. In this manner, a 100 % score for the entire assessment would be extremely difficult to achieve. For these three countries that have only recently started focusing on ESC, scoring 2 in each category is praise worthy and even 1 shows good initiation. Since the highest score for each sub-component is 3, achieving this is akin to 100 % capacity in this category; however this requires not only good practice but also full mainstreaming across the political system which in turn would likely require substantial inter-ministerial cooperation. Thus, receiving a 100 % capacity rating across all levers would require ESC to be a top governmental priority, which of course it currently is not.

4.1 Institutional Arrangements

Under the lever of institutional arrangements both China and Japan scored 5 and Korea scored 4 out of a potential score of 12 (see Table 2). It is noteworthy that Japan due to the initiation of an inter-agency council for SCP in 2011 has made improvements in its capacity and is expected to make more as achievements and impacts become apparent. On the other hand, Korea's institutional arrangements have actually decreased in the past three years since the institutionalisation of the country's Green Growth strategy. The Green Growth strategy scores strongly for a clearly formulated vision under the leadership lever, but in this lever roles and responsibilities for ESC have been left unclear since the initiation of the new strategy.

All three governments do have streamlined processes for SCP and promoting green markets, but this is not the case for ESC. However, China's efforts in greening formal education institutions and Japan's efforts to reduce household energy consumption both demonstrate successful procedures. Korea has improved coordination under its vision for green growth, but improvements in the areas of management and communication need to be made for more procedural organisation.

Table 2 Institutional arrangements on ESC

Components of institutional arrangements	Country		
	China	Japan	Korea
Streamlined processes	2	2	1
Clear roles and responsibilities	0	1	0
Merit-based appraisal mechanism	2	1	1
Coordination mechanism	1	1	2
Total score for institutional arrangements	5	5	4

The lack of defined roles/responsibilities and a coordination mechanism are the institutional areas hindering progress in all three countries. Part of the reason for this is the inter-ministerial nature of where ESC fits into existing mandates on sustainable development, ESD and SCP. Because mandates exist across various ministries, it is difficult to define the roles on ESC as they apply to activities in multiple policy areas. The improvement of coordination mechanisms not just for ESC but for framing the wider sustainable development agenda could identify those areas where educational activities are needed and can be coupled with other policy instruments including economic incentives, regulations, information provision and cooperative agreements to increase dissemination of the concepts and desired learning outcomes.

4.2 Leadership

Under the lever of leadership Japan scored 7, China scored 6 and Korea scored 5 out of a total potential score of 12 (see Table 3). However, it was Korea that scored the highest for having a clearly formulated vision, and China that scored the highest for having good communication standards. While Japan has not achieved full points in any subcomponent, it showed the most balanced capacity assessment for this lever and is the only case to have existing examples covering all subcomponents.

China has a noteworthy strength in researching and piloting projects on ESC, developing specific communication standards, and disseminating these tools/mechanisms for wider implementation. Thus, many of China's projects aim to replicate good practice models. This approach means that the government does implement broad practical-oriented programs, but it is also challenged with reaching a real depth from these projects since they do not always correspond to a clearly defined vision.

The Republic of Korea, on the other hand, now has a clearly formulated vision in their Plan for Green Growth, but due to the lack of well-established communication standards and outreach mechanisms this vision has yet to substantially influence policy approaches. Furthermore, there remains a lack of clear understanding of this agenda. Capacity building efforts to strengthen the other

Table 3 Leadership on ESC

Components of leadership	Country		
	China	Japan	Korea
Clearly formulated vision	1	2	3
Communication standards	3	1	0
Management tools	0	2	1
Outreach mechanism	2	2	1
Total score for leadership	6	7	5

subcomponents of this lever could improve the dissemination of the vision and ensure its proper management.

Japan has been limited in this area due to the lack of inter-agency communication to manage responsibilities towards wider objectives, to coordinate cross-ministerial cooperation, and to share experiences and lessons learned. In fact, Japan's ministries are often more likely to share knowledge internationally with parallel ministries in other countries than they are to share with other ministries domestically. Hopefully though, this communication barrier and lack of knowledge sharing will be alleviated by the Inter-Agency Council on SCP. One of the objectives for the Inter-Agency Council could be to promote better cross-ministerial coordination to improve policy linkages and synergies across the government's SC and sustainable development strategies.

4.3 Knowledge

The total possible score for the knowledge lever was 9. For this lever, Japan scored 5, China 4, and Korea 3 (see Table 4). None of the countries have achieved mainstreaming of any sub-components for this lever. Korea has the potential of improving significantly over the next few years since several new projects and agencies for knowledge generation and dissemination on green growth have recently been initiated. Japan is strong in many aspects of the knowledge lever. As the different Japanese ministries have their own subsidiary research institutes, in general the research supply and demand linkage is fully mainstreamed in the country, but since ESC is challenged by a lack of inter-ministerial coordination it has made it harder for this system to appropriately address ESC research needs. China, as mentioned before, does significant work on piloting innovative projects and disseminating blue-print models, and in this way creates a good knowledge supply and demand aimed at establishing practical interventions. This approach has both its benefits and disadvantages though; as a drawback, this approach does not support knowledge retention nor does it develop a progressive knowledge generation strategy.

Addressing knowledge sharing tools, it is important to distinguish two aspects. The first form of knowledge sharing is to ensure that the best information and research is being input to decision and policy making processes. This is actually

Table 4 Knowledge on ESC

Components of knowledge	Country		
	China	Japan	Korea
Research supply and demand linkage	2	2	1
Brain gain and retention strategies	0	2	1
Knowledge sharing tools and mechanisms	2	1	1
Total score for knowledge	4	5	3

the area where all three countries are strong. The second form of knowledge sharing is the provision of essential information to the public on SC practices and lifestyle/behavioural responses for a low-carbon, sustainable society. To one extent this does occur, but only at the simplest level in terms of promoting single SC choices or promoting energy efficient products over less efficient options. At a more complex level of providing knowledge and tools for people to understand how lifestyle patterns can support transformation towards sustainable societies, this is not generated or promoted by any of these countries.

4.4 Accountability

The accountability lever is an area in which all three countries have very limited capacity. Out of a possible score of 9, Korea and Japan both scored 2 and China scored 1 (see Table 5). Japan and Korea both have identifiable examples of participatory planning and stakeholder feedback mechanisms. While only China has identifiable examples of audit systems and practice standards.

Table 5 Accountability on ESC

Components of accountability	Country		
	China	Japan	Korea
Audit systems and practice standards	1	0	0
Participatory planning mechanism	0	1	1
Stakeholder feedback mechanism	0	1	1
Total score for accountability	1	2	2

This core lever is a complex capacity area as it includes a system's built in mechanisms for auditing, monitoring and evaluating; along with also including aspects of multi-stakeholder participation in decision making processes. The first part of the lever, monitoring and evaluation, is not just about ensuring that what is planned is occurring properly; it is also about creating institutional learning systems that allow organisations to improve practices through subsequent rounds of activity, to appropriately deal with potential constraints, and to incorporate best practices into future strategies.

4.5 Overall Capacity Assessment of the Levers of Change

The total potential score for all four core issues was 42. Japan scored the highest with 19 thus achieving a 45.24 % capacity rating. China achieved 38.1 % capacity rating with a score of 16. Korea's total score was 14 and achieved a capacity rating of 33.33 % (see Fig. 1). It is also possible to look at the general capacity levels per each lever of change. The average capacity rating in regards to institutional arrangements was 38.9 % across the three country cases. Leadership had the highest average capacity rating at 50 %. For the knowledge lever, a 44.4 % average capacity rating was achieved. The accountability lever was substantially weakest across all country cases and only achieved an average capacity rating of 18.5 %.

Several important points are noticeable from this general comparison of the capacity assessment scores for the three countries. First, there is very little deviation between the three countries capacity scores; under each core issue, scores only deviate by a one point maximum from the median score (the average deviation from the mean score would be slightly less than one). Second, only in three places were capacity scores greater than 50 % of the potential score for the each lever (Japan scored 7 of 12 and China 6 of 12 for leadership, and Japan scored 5 of 9 for knowledge), thus in all cases there is still substantial opportunity for capacity building across all levers. Third, it is possible to calculate the average score for each country based on their capacity rating. All cases generally had identifiable examples of the various capacity aspects (more than an average score of 1 but these examples were not yet leading to identifiable achievements and impacts (less than an average score of 2. Of course this over simplifies the findings, and it is actually found that single sub-components are well developed but the overall lever scores low because of existing weaker sub-components and a lack of balance.

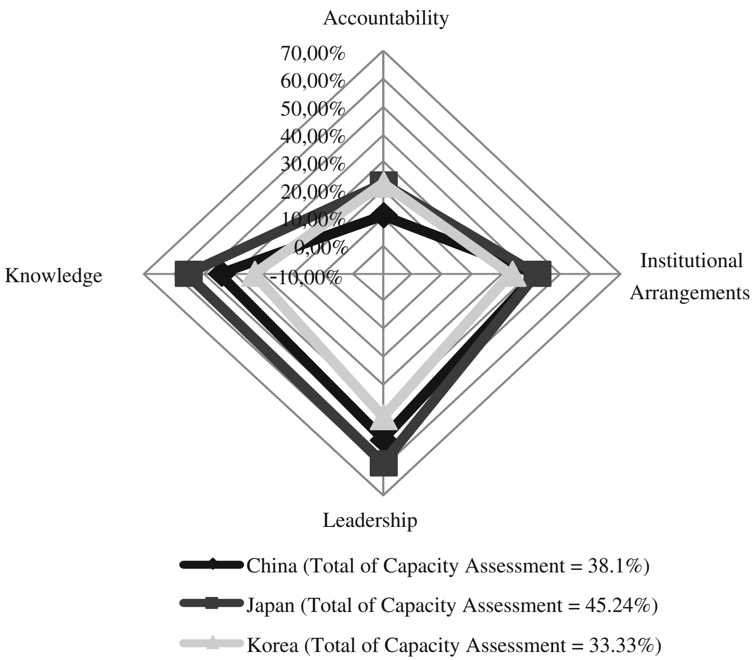

Fig. 1 Capacity rating (based on total possible score)

This comparison highlights accountability and institutional arrangements as the two levers needing greater capacity building. It is possible to link these two levers by framing accountability measures that also improve institutional arrangements by

(1) formulating visions and plans through multi-stakeholder participation which strengthens the coordination mechanism,
(2) greater defining of roles and responsibilities across diverse stakeholders,
(3) setting clear achievement targets that support merit-based appraisal, and
(4) ensuring systems learning and progressive improvements through effective monitoring and evaluation.

Of course, capacity building is needed across all core issues, however this approach also demonstrates how strengthening of the accountability lever can directly support stronger capacities under institutional arrangements.

5 Recommendations for Improving ESC Capacity

Strengthening governmental capacities for implementing effective ESC is a complex subject that must consider the diversity of potential capacity building that is feasible for governments. This section aims to detail several practical steps that these three governments could initiate to achieve not only better ESC implementation but to generally strengthen their capacities for long-term impact generation. Five recommendations are provided, including:

(1) expanding roles and responsibilities for ESC beyond national governments;
(2) applying multiple policy mechanisms and inter-ministerial/inter-agency approaches;
(3) defining policy priorities and target areas for SC;
(4) improving accountability as a means to strengthen the overall system, and
(5) addressing ESC as a thematic approach to ESD and SCP.

5.1 Expanding Roles and Responsibilities for ESC beyond National Governments

When we consider the highlighted actors and the proposed ideal roles that they are expected to play, it is striking how much responsibility is placed on governments—especially at the national level—for driving the major shifts in society's patterns of consumption and production. It is the role of government to coordinate the cooperation and participation of multi-stakeholders, but in doing so it may be important to consider how these roles and responsibilities can be better shared across the multiplicity of actors (see Table 6 identifying actors and their ideal roles in ESC).

Table 6 Actors and ideal roles in promoting sustainable consumption

Actor	Roles
National government	Conduct macro-level policy planning and coordination (including inter-ministerial efforts)
	Secure input of multi-stakeholders into policy formation
	Develop diverse policy instruments (i.e. educational, cooperative, information, economic, and regulatory)
	Develop legislative frameworks to promote green supply chain management
	Ensure sufficient funding and resources
	Exemplify best practice and be a proponent of progressive change
	Promote communication among diverse stakeholders
	Conduct international cooperation on SCP
Local governments	Provide main role for implementation of policies
	Translate policy statements into practical actions
	Promote procurement of green/sustainable products
Agencies for certification and monitoring of government programmes	Coordinate specific policy measures
	Provide accountability on environmental performance
	Control environmental standards and guarantee certification process
	Conduct monitoring and evaluation
Civil society and NGOs	Support project implementation
	Advocate for effective policy implementation
	Promote business to civil society communication
Business and industry	Strengthen infrastructure for SCP and green markets
	Provision of product information regarding environmental performance
Retailers and advertisers	Bring awareness to and promote options for SC
Media institutions	Promote public awareness on SCP
	Highlight good practices for sustainable consumption and lifestyles
Research and academia	Provide strong basis for policy decision-making
	Conduct research and innovation
	Visualise the efficiency of green supply chain management
	Measure/analyse impacts of various policy instruments

(continued)

Table 6 (continued)

Actor	Roles
Educational institutions	Integrate themes of sustainable development and SC across curriculum, through multiple disciplines Promote whole systems understanding in earth systems and natural science disciplines Promote social awareness of necessity to consider human development activities in relation to wider eco-systems Empower citizens to be active participants in achieving a sustainable society
Household and Consumption	Divided sense of responsibility: some literature places extensive responsibility on consumers as primary actors for driving change in consumption patterns, while others identify consumers as having limited roles in influencing consumption patterns Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge on what are ideal ways in which households can move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption

There are numerous actors who can contribute to the effective implementation of ESC, and in most cases rather than competing with one another these actors' various expertises strengthen the overall impact of these initiatives. For example, the first Green Purchasing Network was initiated in Japan (GPN-J) from the recommendation of the Ministry of the Environment (MOEJ), and now all three countries have similar networks. Though GPN-J was initially promoted by MOEJ and maintains close links, it fully functions as a non-governmental, membership organisation that includes an extensive network of partners from businesses, local governments, consumer groups, and environmental NGOs. This type of multi-stakeholder network has potential to create a powerful cooperative dynamic where major progress is not the burden of just one actor. Rather it can be the result of a snow-ball effect consisting of incremental improvements occurring from different sectors on a regular basis.

Increased public participation in vision forming for a sustainable society supports greater public ownership and buy-in to this process. Facilitating this participation at the local level through various community groups also creates a further powerful actor that can take on responsibility for implementing ESC. The structures of multi-level governance are also important to consider for effective policy formation and implementation of ESC.

The relationship between national and local governments needs to be developed in regards to the promotion of SC. Local governments can initiate effective ESC projects as they are better situated to respond to local contexts and citizens' needs. Local governments can also form partnerships with NGOs and civil society groups to strengthen the practical implementation of many projects.

5.2 Applying Multiple Policy Mechanisms and Inter-ministerial/Inter-agency Approaches

The government has many available policy tools and mechanisms it can use to promote SC. Utilising a diversity of approaches helps to strengthen the overall effect. A report by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) identifies five policy instruments to support SCP. These instruments are: (1) regulatory, (2) economic, (3) educational, (4) cooperative, and (5) informational (Tyson 2006). In order to successfully implement a variety of policy tools and approaches for ESC, each government agency needs to support its most effective role in promoting SC and inter-agency coordination should establish policy integration.

The U.K. government outlined a strong policy strategy in Securing the Future (2005) based on five main objectives (adapted from HM Government 2005, pp. 24–41):

(1) *enable*: remove barriers to SC and develop a supportive infrastructure.
(2) *encourage*: reward good behaviour, penalise bad behaviour, and enforce minimum standards of practice.

(3) *engage*: involve the public and stimulate local, community action.
(4) *exemplify:* the government should lead by example by developing and implementing good practice and through achieving a consistency in their policy frameworks.
(5) *ectalyse*: once a critical momentum is achieved across the other steps, efforts should stimulate major shifts in social and cultural habits.

These five objectives provide a clear strategy for a holistic and integrative approach to promote SC by addressing the physical infrastructures for SC, encouraging individual practice, influencing socio-cultural values and traditions that frame current lifestyles, and improving political systems and institutions. A coordinated process can be visualised where the relevant ministries take efforts in areas of industry and infrastructure to ensure that greener consumption options are readily available. Coinciding with this process, economic and finance ministries can reward consumers who take substantial efforts towards SC, while environmental and educational ministries can engage the public in these new initiatives. Finally, as a whole the government should mainstream these practices across public agencies and encourage wider participation of multi-stakeholders.

5.3 *Defining Policy Priorities and Target Areas for Sustainable Consumption*

Confusion over what more-sustainable consumption means hinders effective policy formation. Generic definitions of SC are understood by government officials, however clear principles for SC and target areas are much less apparent. Governments must work to clearly define what they intend to achieve in promoting SC, taking into consideration both quantitative reductions in consumption levels and qualitative improvements in the sustainability of what is consumed. Also, identification of target consumption areas that currently have significant environmental impacts would distinguish clear issues and relevant actions that individuals could take towards achieving SC.

The vision for a sustainable society, or even just SC, must also be framed in a manner that promotes it as achieving something “better”. Consuming sustainably will of course mean consuming less of or giving up certain items and also in general consuming less of the total amount of material goods. However, it is fully possible to decrease consumption of products and then apply that excess capital to the consumption and valuing of human services, and in this way it is possible to envision a sustainable change in consumption patterns that could also increase the opportunity for well-paid and dignified livelihoods. The point is that SC can be aligned with another important social objective of improving overall quality of life along with improving the health of the environment we live in.

Government officials understand that SC should reduce the environmental impacts of modern consumption patterns through energy efficiency and resource savings, but there is no substantive identification of behaviours that need to be influenced to encourage this transition. Identification of behaviours and values that support proactive participation in SC would provide a better understanding of the types of socio-cultural transition ESC promotes. There is also no substantive public discussion on the types of sustainable lifestyles that their society desires. Public participation in forming national visions such as a “2030 Vision for a Sustainable Consumption Society” would greatly increase the sense of public ownership and responsibility for achieving this vision.

5.4 Improving Accountability as a Means to Strengthen the Overall System

Methods for building accountability capacities are based on three main project phases: as inputs to the planning phase, as throughputs of the implementation phase, and by conducting a review process based on the achieved outputs and results.

The addition of a participatory planning mechanism is a noted way to substantially increase capacity as it directly improves the accountability lever and indirectly adds strength to the institutional arrangements and leadership levers. Some of the more robust techniques for participatory planning aim at local-level planning and come from development practitioners’ field-based observation of the important benefits resulting from effective participatory processes (Chambers 2003; Kumar 2002). Acknowledging the important social learning benefits that participatory planning can engender (especially viewed from ELT perspective), there is strong justification for including this process into the vision forming for sustainable development and SCP. The participatory process itself can be broken down into three stages: (1) assessing the current situation, (2) creating vision, and (3) defining development goals and priorities.

Accountability in project implementation requires that activities are detailed in an easily implementable manner. There are two specific products that support this: (1) a work plan detailing actions to be taken, time frame for implementation, responsible actors, and required resources, and; (2) a set of target achievements and performance standards that provide guidance for project implementation and allows for quick assessment to see if things are occurring in a timely and efficient manner. When these two products are well prepared, they not only increase accountability capacities but also strengthen project management.

The important benefit of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes is the establishment of continuous learning cycles that initiate iterative action-reflection project cycles. To effectively establish this requires that M&E responds to the earlier two accountability phases by utilising the vision, goals and priorities, and performance criteria as the basis for establishing M&E indicators. The goal of M&E is to assure that development activities are being implemented to plan and that projects are resulting in the desired changes. Furthermore, a good M&E

system will identify potential threats or constraints before they cause serious impacts. Thus, M&E is applied both as a system of checks and balances and also as a learning tool to identify strengths and weaknesses of a given project.

5.5 Addressing ESC as a Thematic Approach to ESD and SCP

ESC can aid in synergising different aspects of the overall sustainable development agenda, especially SCP, ESD and sustainable lifestyles. The key activity here is to support opportunities for individuals to actively practice SC and to structure these experiences as unique forms of action/experiential learning for understanding the wider principles of sustainable development and SCP. ESC aims at providing a process of active and communicative learning that challenges traditional patterns of behaviour through a process of integrating science and values into a socially responsible worldview that places the student/consumer at the center of a dynamic system rather than as an outside observer of a stable system.

ESC provides a model for reversing the traditional abstract learning models by building from the idea of self-aware learners who are able to draw direct connections to the interrelationship between their own actions and the quality of the world around them. Ideally this process should engender the abilities for critical reflection and experiential learning that allows the students to apply their learning to their own behaviours in an empathetic manner. In its relationship to ESD and SCP, ESC is important for its ability to provide a personal perspective and relevance to individuals' daily lives. While ESD and SCP often take the approach of learning first and action second, ESC is able to reverse this process by starting first with action then moving on to deeper learning concepts that include the more complex principles and values that frame SC and sustainable development.

6 Conclusion

Throughout this work, ESC is promoted not just as an add-on topic for classroom education, but rather as an integral process for strengthening SCP and ESD systems by bringing relevance to people's daily lives. Educating citizens about their roles and responsibilities in achieving a low carbon, sustainable society is at the essence of what we understand as ESC. Of course, ESC provides many important learning opportunities when integrated into the formal education curriculum, but it also has potential that goes well beyond that single focus. ESC can be understood as a form of citizenship education, and at its core it is about encouraging active participation. This active participation can be in many areas: participation in forming the vision for a future sustainable society, in transforming consumption patterns, in supporting greener markets, and in strengthening communities to become the core social unit at which networks and relationships for responsible living are built.

The objective of this work is to provide practical means for improving governments' ability for effecting change at the level of socio-cultural values and more specifically at the level of individual behaviour and consumption choices. The purpose of ESC is not to tell people how they should behave, but rather to provide the learning methods and communicative opportunities to address the relationship between their own actions and the state of the world around them in a conscientious manner. Furthermore, it is about engaging people at a collective level to decide what type of future they want to achieve not only for themselves, but for their children and grandchildren, and in doing so opening consideration to what are their own responsibilities in achieving this desired future. Finally, ESC is about enlightening people about the choices they make in their daily lives in order to understand the impacts of those choices and to provide them with the ability to select their own choices in a way that is congruent with the future they would like to achieve.

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Part IV
Education for Responsible Living

Enabling Responsible Living by Increasing Social Awareness

Integrating Social Responsibility Projects into Undergraduate Curricula

Ilgin Gökler-Danışman and Özden Bademci

Abstract Social awareness can be defined as developing a meaningful relatedness to and taking responsibility in the surrounding social environment and social phenomena. It is usually referred to with the term “social consciousness”. Social consciousness requires becoming an active citizen by showing respect to human rights and basic freedoms; contributing to the development of social justice and solidarity; and participating in the process of decision-making and responsible living. Universities play a key role in the development of social awareness by providing opportunities for the students to internalize a sense of social responsibility and encouraging them to become engaged citizens, through developing and carrying out social responsibility projects. Integrating social responsibility projects into the graduate curriculum on the basis of such partnership promotes relevant knowledge and stimulates the will for responsible living and active citizenship. This chapter focuses on the important role of a university—non-governmental organization (NGO) partnership by providing a specific example of such a partnership between Maltepe University and Youth Re-autonomy Foundation of Turkey. At Maltepe University, psychology students are involved in an NGO-initiated “Youth Re-autonomy Project” by taking a “Social Responsibility Project Course”. Results of the qualitative analysis of the students’ personal experiences will be discussed in terms of “sources of motivation for project participation”, “personal and professional gains” and “expected contributions for beneficiaries”.

Keywords Curriculum development · Social responsibility · Active citizenship

I. Gökler-Danışman (✉) · Ö. Bademci
Department of Psychology, Research and Application Centre for Children Living and Working on the Street, Maltepe University, Marmara Education Village Maltepe 34857 Istanbul, Turkey
e-mail: gokler@maltepe.edu.tr

Ö. Bademci
e-mail: ozdenbademci@maltepe.edu.tr

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1 Introduction

It can be assumed that the higher education system can be a decisive factor in teaching active citizenship, supporting human rights, democracy, sustainable development and peace. This chapter explores the role of universities in education for active citizenship. By presenting the Youth Re-Autonomy Project as an example, this chapter focuses on the important function of a partnership between university and NGO. Through integrating social responsibility projects (SRPs) into the curriculum the partnership is expected to encourage students for responsible living.

The Youth Re-Autonomy Project is based at Maltepe University, Turkey. Within the project undergraduate psychology students attend together with their lecturers various activities with juvenile offenders in Maltepe Youth Detention Center. Juvenile offenders consist of one of the most marginalized groups of people in a society (Stathis et al. 2005). Additionally, there is a direct relationship between social marginalization, poverty and juvenile crime. What is more, juvenile offenders' exclusion from society contributes to their marginalization even more. The Youth Re-Autonomy Project aims to bring university students and juvenile offenders together in a friendly and egalitarian relationship. While, on the one hand this project is helping children in the youth detention centre to improve their psychosocial skills, on the other hand it is also providing the university students with an opportunity to get to know this marginalized population of adolescents and learn about their situation. This, in turn, is assumed to contribute to the development of the students not only socially but also personally and professionally. While this project aims to enable responsible living from the side of the university students it is also combined with re-socialization programs for the delinquent youth.

In the following, a study which aims to explore the impact on the students of taking an active role in such a project, together with universities' vital role in the citizenship education is presented. First, (1) a theoretical framework exploring the concepts of "active citizenship", "social awareness" and the relation of social awareness to university education is given. This is followed by (2) the presentation of the Youth Re-Autonomy Project. Subsequently, (3) findings of the qualitative study that focused on the outcomes of integrating a social responsibility project course (SRPC) into the curriculum in terms of the students involved is presented and its findings are discussed in an effort to explore the impacts on them. The chapter ends (4) with a conclusion and considerations of the limitations of the study.

2 Active Citizenship in Higher Education

The concept of "citizenship" is a central element of western culture. It first emerged from the classical ideas of democracy and participation in the city state ("polis") of ancient Greece (Turner 1993).

According to Owen (2009, p. 1)

> […] in its simplest meaning, 'citizenship' refers to […] being a member of a particular political community or state. Citizenship in this sense brings with it certain rights and responsibilities that are defined in law. […] The term 'citizenship' is also used to refer to involvement in public life and affairs—that is, to the behaviour and actions of a citizen. It is […] known as active citizenship […]. Citizenship in this sense refers not only to rights and responsibilities laid down in the law, but also to general forms of behaviour—social and moral—which societies expect of their citizens.

It is suggested that there is a conceptual difference between "citizenship" and "active citizenship"—the one is about rights and the other about taking responsibility. Active citizenship is about conscious practice of civil, political and social rights, recognition of status and participation (Németh 2010). It is about re-engaging citizens with decision-making processes, especially at the local community level, and sharing risks and responsibilities between citizens and state. With the perspective of active citizenship, citizenship is now conceptualised as both a status and an active practice (Jochum et al. 2005).

Although currently there has not been a universally accepted definition of "active citizenship", there are clearly strong links between each country's differing interpretation of active citizenship and approaches to citizenship education (Cleaver and Nelson 2006).

Democracy is well grounded in the concept of public participation in political matters. Print (2007) suggests that participation in a democracy can be identified in terms of three sets of engagement indicators: Civic indicators, electoral indicators, and political engagement indicators. Crick (1998) argues that students need to experience citizenship education at school so that they may become a competent citizen in a representative democracy.

Furthermore, Cecchini (2003) argues that learning to become an active and democratic citizen means becoming aware of one's rights and responsibilities and developing the capability for participation in society.

Social awareness can be considered as one of the key elements that triggers the motivation and the urge to become an engaged citizen. Therefore, raising social awareness constitutes the vital element in teaching active citizenship. Social awareness can be defined as developing a meaningful relatedness to and taking responsibility in the surrounding social environment and social phenomena. It is usually referred to with the term "social consciousness". Social consciousness requires becoming an active citizen by being respectful to human rights and basic freedoms; contributing to the development of social justice and solidarity; and participating in the process of decision-making and responsible living (Özdemir et al. 2008).

In order for individuals to become aware of their full potential and contribute to society in a meaningful way, incorporating active citizenship education into the higher education system is of significant importance.

Active citizenship education aims at training young people to become critical citizens, willing and capable of thinking and acting positively in democratic states (European Association of Teachers 2001). According to Guerra (2007) active citizenship education must incorporate two domains: Civic education and socio-political education. While the former is related to knowledge and practice about the system of laws, rules, conventions referring to a particular civil community; the latter is related to the awareness of being part of the system of cultural elements, values, traditions historically produced by the community itself.

2.1 The Role of Universities

University education can play a key role in developing social awareness of students by providing them with civic engagement opportunities to internalize the sense of social responsibility and encouraging them to become active citizens, through integrating social responsibility projects into their curriculum (Özdemir et al. 2008).

Print (2007) argues that students are likely to be more engaged when they participate in activities such as community based work. Similarly, Woodcock and Le Roy (2010) point out that learning outside of a classroom is thought to help students to explore and understand the key concepts of human rights by rooting them in everyday lives. They refer to this kind of learning as "informal education". Print (2007) goes on to argue that a greater encouragement of these types of informal elements in curricula is needed to be able to offer students, schools, and education systems an enhanced opportunity for "democratic participation" by young people.

2.2 Integration of Social Responsibility Projects into Undergraduate Curriculum

It is helpful for higher education institutions to engage with their host community in order to effect positive change. Therefore, major changes in curriculum development in health-care education have been recommended over the past two decades (Harden et al. 2000). From a contemporary perspective, the process of learning is considered as important as its product (McKimm 2007). Integrated teaching, problem-based and community-oriented learning are being advocated as powerful educational strategies (Harden and Crosby 2000; Harden et al. 1984, 2000). Health-care education has moved from the more didactic approach of "teacher as expert" style, to a more student-centred approach. This approach underlines the importance of adult learning methods and emphasizes active learning rather than treating students as passive receivers of knowledge (McKimm 2007, 2010). According to Bligh et al. (2001) recent trends emphasize that health care education should be practice-based and linked with professional development, be relevant to students and communities, and be interprofessional and interdisciplinary.

It is argued that learning is often most effective when it is based on experience (Spencer 2003). Bloom (1956, p. 200) suggests that learning occurs in four domains: (1) cognitive domain involving knowledge and intellectual skills; (2) affective domain related to feelings and attitudes; (3) interpersonal domain encompassing behaviour and relationships with others; and (4) psychomotor domain involving physical skills.

Stenhouse (according to Elliot 1995) identifies four major processes of education as training (acquisition of skills involved in the performance of a specific task); instruction (acquisition and retention of information); initiation (socialization and familiarization with and commitment to certain social norms and values) and induction (thinking and problem solving). It also fits with the contemporary perspective regarding health-care education as stated by McKimm (2007, p. 13):

> In […] healthcare education and training, the learners are required to acquire a complex mix of knowledge, skills and attitudes; they are expected to be able to synthesis and apply their learning to new and often demanding situations, they are also expected to be lifelong learners, acquiring and utilizing skills and attitudes such as study skills and self-motivation throughout their working lives.

In line with these recent trends in curriculum development, a Social Responsibility Project Course (SRPC) was developed and integrated into the psychology undergraduate curriculum. It is based on the idea that psychology students will learn better if they are engaged in a practice- and problem-based, community-oriented active learning process.

SRPC was designed to provide students with civic engagement opportunities including volunteering, community-based activism, and organizing for social change. It connects students with community needs to support a change in the system. These opportunities help to gain skills and experiences that guide and shape students' development as active citizens.

Henceforth, SRPC provides a hands-on learning experience for students to take active roles in their community, deal with various problems and work in cooperation with national and international NGOs and state institutions. SRPC assumes that individuals are responsible for the society and the world they are living in. It aims to contribute to students' understanding of the concept of "social responsibility" and its importance at individual, professional and social levels.

SRPC aims to provide an opportunity for experiential learning and integrates various domains of learning as suggested by Bloom (1956). When participating in SRPC, the cognitive domain stimulates acquisition of knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking in a particular topic. Students are expected to strengthen their empathy for and awareness of others in terms of affective domain, and develop regarding feelings and attitudes. SRPC also acts at the interpersonal domain by facilitating interpersonal interactions/relationships of the students.

3 The SRPC "Youth Re-Autonomy Project"

It is believed that everyone has the potential to make a contribution to society. Therefore, at Maltepe University Department of Psychology, a Social Responsibility Project Course (SRPC) was designed for the students to develop effective partnership with the local communities by taking part in community based activities, demonstrating personal and group responsibility in their attitudes to themselves and others and encourage critical and creative thinking.

As mentioned previously, the SRPC involves development and implementation of university-NGO based SRPs with the active participation of the psychology undergraduate students. The aim is to give students in the psychology department the opportunity to work voluntarily in the community as active members of an NGO. Thus, this opportunity can be identified as what Print (2007) calls "civic indicator" as a way of participation in a democracy.

Ross (2008) defines citizenship education as an educational process that empowers active citizens to become individuals who are able to critically engage with, and seek to affect the course of social event. In parallel to Ross's definition of citizenship education, the Youth Re-Autonomy Project is designed as process-oriented rather than product-focused. Students are given the opportunity to draw on their own experience and capacity, which enables them to think about ideological, social, and economic reasons (including local, national and international factors contributing to structural inequalities) that prevent effective inclusion and participation.

The aim of the SRPC is to link the community service with the curriculum to enhance both individual development and academic skills of students. According to David (2009, p. 83)

> service learning can also go beyond these goals to prepare students to become engaged citizens, by expanding their understanding of social problems and the role of civic action in solutions to these problems.

In terms of linking the community service with the curriculum NGOs are major agencies and actors in civil society. Therefore, university-NGO-partnership is essential to build a bridge for reflecting civil society needs in the curriculum (Kallioniemi et al. 2009).

The Psychology Department and the Maltepe University Application and Research Centre for Children Living and Working on Streets, usually collaborate with an NGO to engage students in a social responsibility project (SRP). Each year the collaborating NGO may change, as the theme and the focus of the project changes. In the academic year 2009–2010, this collaboration was with the Youth Re-Autonomy Foundation of Turkey. The foundation was established in 1992 with the objective of rehabilitating children and juveniles between the ages of twelve and 18 who are in conflict with the law and whose development is under risk. The foundation aims to develop projects and implement them to rehabilitate the children in conflict with the law and to help them participate in the society again in cooperation with the universities

In conjunction with the Youth Re-autonomy Foundation of Turkey, the students have participated in an NGO-initiated SRP called "Youth Re-autonomy Project". The students were supervised by academic staff. The main purpose of the Youth Re-autonomy Project was to contribute to the post-release social adjustment of the children and adolescents detained in the youth detention centre, by promoting their social, emotional and cognitive development through the use of various group activities. The students have gone to a youth detention centre with their supervisors once a week for 3 months and have participated in group activities ranging from psychodrama to film discussions. Throughout the project students had weekly supervisions to promote ongoing reflection and critical analysis of the social environment and the social problems that they had witnessed. In the supervision groups, students were asked to present detailed accounts of their current work, based on a careful observation of interactions. Students were required to bring a written record to be discussed in the seminar to learn from reflective practice.

4 Qualitative Study Within the Project

This section presents a qualitative study regarding the outcomes of integrating a SRPC into the curriculum in terms of the students involved. It tries to understand the personal experiences of the students by exploring the sources of motivation for project participation, personal and professional gains and expectations regarding the contribution of the project to the beneficiaries.

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Participants

15 out of 80 2nd to 4th grade psychology students (14 female, 1 male) who took the SRPC have participated in the study. The age of the students ranged between 20 and 28. Six of the participants stated that they had previously participated in a similar project, whereas nine of them reported to the contrary.

4.1.2 Materials

Two questionnaires were prepared by the researchers in line with the purpose of the study to be used for pre- and post-project assessments. Each questionnaire was composed of open-ended questions inquiring into different aspects of project participation such as the reasons for project participation (i.e. “What are the reasons for you to participate in this project?”); emotions regarding the project participation (i.e., “What are dominant emotions you can recognize in yourself prior to the project?”); expected learning outcomes (i.e., “What do you expect to learn by the end of this experience?”); anticipated difficulties (i.e., “What kind of individual difficulties you think you may experience during this project?”); personal strengths and weaknesses (i.e., “What personal attributes of yours do you think would help you during this project?”; (“What personal attributes of yours do you think would hinder you during this project?"); rewarding aspects of the project participation (i.e., "What would be the rewarding aspects of participating in this project for you?"); personal gains (i.e., "What are the personal benefits you expect to gain by participating in this project?"); professional gains (i.e., "What are the professional benefits you expect to gain by participating in this project?"); and expected contributions for the beneficiaries (i.e., "What would be the contribution of the project for the children and adolescents in the detention centres?"). For the specific purposes of the current chapter, only the answers to some of these questions will be presented in the results section below.

4.1.3 Procedure

The qualitative study based on a survey was carried out by the authors of this chapter who were at the same time supervisors of the students. Students participating in the project were asked to complete surveys at the beginning and the end of the project. The questionnaires were sent to the students via internet with instructions on the aim of the study. They were asked to use a nickname on the questionnaires, so that it would be possible to match each participant's pre- and post-project responses. A content analysis was applied to analyse the data obtained through the open-ended questions.

4.2 Results

Results of the qualitative analysis regarding the students' personal experiences yielded important findings in terms of sources of motivation for project participation, personal and professional gains from the project and expected contributions for the beneficiaries.

According to the pre-project assessment "excitement" was found to be one of the most predominant emotions that students had at the beginning of the project, along with "hopefulness", "curiosity/concern", "pleasure to help others" and "anxiety".

According to the analysis of the surveys completed by the students, two main sources of motivation for project participation were identified: The first source of motivation was the desire to help people, which was reflected as "supporting disadvantageous groups", "supporting individual's personal development", "providing a role-model", "providing them with different life experiences", "creating a positive change in their lives", "preventing social stigmatization/ isolation" in students' and similar statements by the participating students.

The second source of motivation was identified as personal and professional development. Survey results pointed out that students had several personal gains due to the participation in the project such as having a significant life experience, personal development and awareness, appreciation of what they have in life, developing of communication and coping skills, improved self-confidence, strengthening emotionally, social awareness, overcoming prejudices, and learning from others.

The analysis was also helpful to document the perceived professional gains of the students. These were improvement of the professional skills (i.e., interpersonal communication skills, empathy, observational skills), opportunity to know alternative areas of work, experience of working with diverse groups, getting aware of and overcoming personal biases, putting academic skills into practice, developing new and wider perspectives, sense of professional confidence and growing aware of professional boundaries.

Post-project survey results were important to understand what the rewarding aspects of participating in such a project had been for the students. Students mentioned as the primary rewarding aspects of this project their emotional satisfaction, witnessing/creating a positive change, witnessing one's personal potential to support others, to be remembered by the children, getting to know new people, professional and academic gains.

Students concluded that the project helped the children and adolescents in the youth detention centre by providing them with socialization skills and learning experiences, creating hope and a sense of worth and encouraging them to develop future plans/expectations.

4.3 Discussion

The current study contributes to the related literature by revealing findings regarding sources of motivation for university students to participate in a social responsibility project; personal and professional gains from the project participation and expected contributions for the beneficiaries.

The results point out that university students get involved in social responsibility projects mainly with the motivation of helping people and contributing to their personal and professional development. Personal gains due to project participation were defined by students as having a significant life experience, personal development and awareness, appreciation of what they have in life, developing of communication and coping skills, improved self-confidence, strengthening emotionally, social awareness, overcoming prejudices, and learning from others. Professional gains were stated as the improvement of professional skills, opportunity to know alternative areas of work, experience of working with diverse groups, getting aware of and overcoming personal biases, putting academic skills into practice, developing new and wider perspectives, sense of professional confidence and getting aware of professional boundaries. These results can be interpreted as the stimulation of at least three major domains of learning (cognitive, affective, interpersonal) by the integration of SRPC into the curriculum.

The results of the current study are also enlightening in terms of understanding what the rewarding aspects of participating in such a social responsibility project would be for students. Emotional satisfaction, witnessing/creating a positive change, witnessing one's own potential to support others, to be remembered by the beneficiaries, getting to know new people, professional and academic gains were the mostly mentioned rewarding aspects.

As stated by Hutchinson (2003), motivational factors provide the ideal environment for the learner in terms of self-actualisation. It is important to motivate the students through inclusion and appreciating their contribution to a course. Such a learning environment contributes directly to the self-esteem through making the learner feel valued. Besides, being a respected member, having one's voice heard and attended to, being given a useful role and working with peers with similar experiences and goals' enhances the student's sense of belonging in a group (Hutchinson 2003).

Recently the problem-based learning, which aims to stimulate students to observe, think, define, study, analyse, synthesise and evaluate a problem, has been regarded as one of the most influential approaches to health-care education. According to David, "projects with civic engagement goals, expose students to social problems and to public agencies responsible for the amelioration of these problems" (David 2009, p. 83). Within this context, it can be inferred that Social Responsibility Project Course creates an experience of problem-based learning.

It is argued that curriculum in health-care education must be relevant both to students and communities. In other words, it must be inclusive enough to reflect the needs of communities as well as the learning needs of the students (McKimm 2010). The integration of Social Responsibility Project Course into the psychology undergraduate curriculum, not only helped meeting the educational needs of the students, but also empowered them as active citizens who are aware of and serve for the needs of the community.

There are also some implications of this study regarding "citizenship education" and "responsible living". A Social Responsibility Project Course provides a hands-on learning opportunity for students to take active roles in their community, deal with various problems and work in cooperation with a national NGO. The study findings clearly suggest that one of the effective ways to teach democratic citizenship to young individuals is to put them through social responsibility projects. Evidently, they do learn better if they are engaged in a practice- and problem-based, community-oriented active learning process.

Sustainable development can only be achieved if individuals take social, ecological and economic needs into account. This particular Youth Re-Autonomy Project has integrated a university, an NGO and a state organization, namely the Youth Detention Centre, in a joint activity in partnerships. This partnership has developed mutual understanding, respect and courage to co-create new opportunities for the stakeholders involved. Therefore this project can be taken as a good example for educating and training young individuals to engage in responsible living.

5 Conclusion

Over the last two decades, learning in the community has been regarded as having significant value for the undergraduate students as part of their undergraduate education (Worley et al. 2006). Community based education, where most of the learning is located in the community, is seen as a particularly relevant way of encouraging and supporting students and preparing them for graduate life (McKimm 2010). Integrating a Social Responsibility Project Course into the curriculum provided students with opportunities for participating within their wider communities.

In parallel to the existing literature, it has been shown here that attending SRPC increased not only the social awareness of the students but also their motivation to become engaged citizens by taking the opportunity of developing a meaningful relatedness to and taking responsibility for juvenile offenders. Therefore, as findings strongly suggest, raising social awareness constitutes the vital element in teaching active citizenship. In doing so, university education plays a key role in developing social awareness of the students.

Findings of the study show that by being involved in such a project, the students have not only broadened their professional experiences and knowledge but also contributed to their personality development and sense of social responsibility. These results imply that students involved in the project have become more knowledgeable, empowered, responsible and more likely to be engaged active citizens in the future. It is hoped that, this study has been encouraging to other higher education institutes in their efforts to facilitate active engagement, and to reinforce the students to come together to affect change collectively for the greater good of society.

Other studies should be carried out with more participants taking part in projects of much longer duration to produce lasting beneficial results for the society. Such imprinted results would certainly widen the participation of the student populations in the improvement of the society. Future studies, based on in-depth interviews with participants, would provide even further insight into how getting involved in these projects affects the students' way of looking at the world and their understanding of active citizenship.

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"Images and Objects"

A Tool for Teaching Education for Sustainable Development and Responsible Living in Home Economics

Helen Maguire, Amanda Mc Cloat, Miriam O'Donoghue and Mella Cusack

Abstract The "Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Images and Objects Toolkit" is a pedagogical resource, developed by the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) and used worldwide. This chapter presents an analysis of the original toolkit as a valuable basis for developing a new edition, specifically adjusted to the requirements of ESD teaching in the post-primary Home Economics curriculum in Ireland. The new adapted toolkit should provide support for initial teacher education and post-primary educators by helping practitioners to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development in the Irish Home Economics curriculum. The adaption and development of the toolkit is informed by an action research project which documents Bachelor of Education (Home Economics) student teachers' understanding of sustainable and responsible living, their evaluation of the "ESD Images and Objects" toolkit and the challenges associated with integrating the active methodologies presented in teaching Home Economics. The data analysis leads to recommendations from both student teachers and project partners to support the development of a Home Economics specific "Images and Objects" toolkit.

Keywords Education for sustainable development (ESD) · Teacher education · Curriculum development · Home economics

H. Maguire (✉) · A. Mc Cloat
The Home Economics Department, St Angela's College, Lough Gill, Sligo, Ireland
e-mail: hmaguire@stangelas.nuigalway.ie

A. Mc Cloat
e-mail: amccloat@stangelas.nuigalway.ie

M. O'Donoghue · M. Cusack
Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC), McCann House, 99 Marlborough Road, Donnybrook, Dublin, Ireland
e-mail: miriamodonoghue@cdu.cdvec.ie

M. Cusack
e-mail: mella.cusack@cdu.cdvec.ie

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1 Introduction

The Home Economics Department at St Angela's College, Sligo; the sole provider of Home Economics teacher education in Ireland and the Curriculum Development Unit of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC CDU), a centre for research, curriculum development and teacher education, are Irish members of the Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL) Network. The two institutions (henceforth referred to as the project partners) collaborated on a small-scale action research project aimed at embedding education for sustainable development (ESD) and responsible living in the Irish post-primary Home Economics curriculum. This project was part of a wider initiative to reorient teacher education and supporting curriculum resources to address ESD.

The project partners recognised that teachers are significant cultural multipliers who are influential in forming attitudes and values. Therefore, Home Economics student teachers were engaged in a critical analysis of their personal understanding of ESD concepts and themes. Student teachers took part in a series of workshops involving activities from the "ESD Images and Objects" toolkit developed by the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) (Cusack and O' Donoghue 2008; see Fig. 1). The toolkit supports the teaching of ESD by presenting activities where images can be utilised to develop an understanding of related ESD themes. Participation in these workshops stimulated discussion about the suitability of the active methodologies, the range of activities promoted in the toolkit and the potential of these to support the integration of ESD within the post-primary Home Economics curriculum.

Although the primary aim of the action research element of the project was that the emerging student teacher data would subsequently inform the development of an adapted "ESD Images and Objects" toolkit as a resource to support the teaching of ESD and responsible living in post-primary Home Economics, an important correlated aim was the integration of a curriculum development experience into an initial teacher education setting.

This chapter commences with a review of significant ESD policy initiatives and literature, followed by contextual background information on the development of the CCN toolkit and an overview of Home Economics as a field of study, with particular emphasis on the Irish post-primary Home Economics curriculum. Subsequently, the research methodologies employed are outlined; the data collected is discussed, and findings which have direct implications for the Home Economics specific toolkit are highlighted.

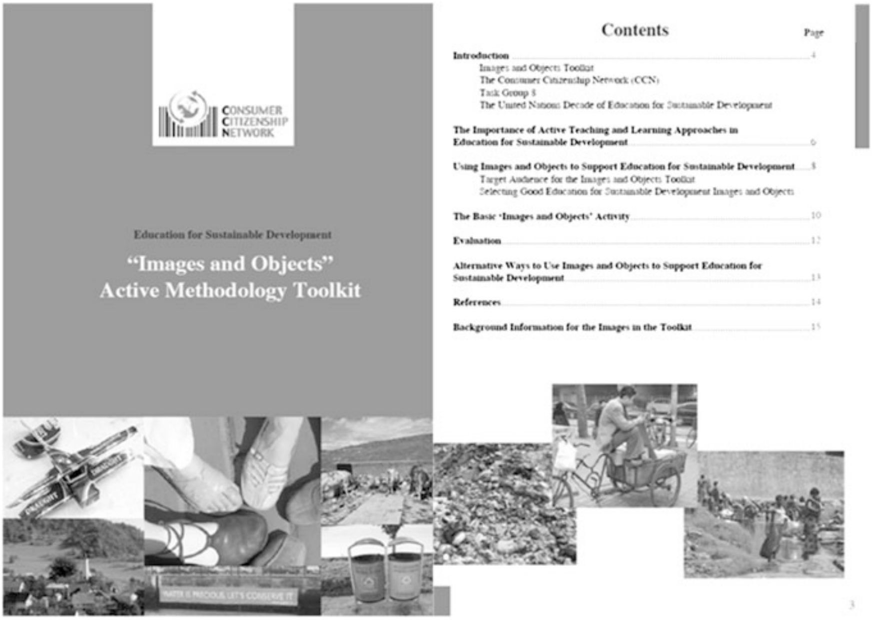

Fig. 1 Cover page and table of contents of “ESD images and objects”

2 ESD and Teacher Education

In recent decades schools have been called upon to tackle the global challenges associated with sustainable development as it is commonly recognised that possessing a clear understanding of the way personal choices and decisions impact on the world can equip and enable young people to make better personal and professional decisions (UNEP 2010). However, sustainability should not be just another issue to be added to an overcrowded curriculum, but a gateway to a different view of curriculum, of pedagogy, of organisational change, of policy and particularly of ethos (Sterling 2005, p. 50). As a consequence teacher education programmes must facilitate the empowerment of teachers to identify ESD links across the curriculum and to use the creative and innovative approaches necessary to promote transformative learning in their own classrooms (Cusack 2008, p. 2). A range of supranational policy initiatives and supporting literature serve as an important platform to underpin the reorientation of teacher education to address ESD, for the promotion of active teaching and learning methodologies on ESD themes and concepts, and as an impetus for curriculum innovation.

The Council of the European Union invited all member states to ensure that

> teachers and trainers are adequately equipped to teach complex issues linked to ESD, through initial education as well as in-service training, and providing them with appropriate and up-to-date tools and learning materials for ESD (Council of the European Union 2010, p. 6).

Previously, UNESCO (2005), in their guidelines on re-orientating teacher education to address sustainability, highlighted the importance of suitable ESD resources and methodologies. They recommended that materials should be made available to student teachers on local and global sustainability issues and that pedagogical techniques should be promoted that foster higher-order thinking skills, support decision-making, involve participatory learning, and stimulate the formulation of questions (UNESCO 2005, p. 44). Furthermore, Hopkins and McKeown (2005) stressed that reorienting teacher education must involve curricular change and ensure that the programmes and policies of teacher education providers address ESD concepts and themes in a critical and reflective process whereby appropriate and meaningful action is modelled and curriculum change is supported.

Grace and Gravestock (2008) describe transformative or transformational learning as "…learning that goes beyond factual knowledge to creating real change in the learner. It is learning that involves questioning assumptions, values, beliefs and so on" (Grace and Gravestock 2008, p. 30). Active and transformative methodologies of teaching and learning provide opportunities for learners to work in their preferred learning style together with enhancing interaction between educators and learners, learners themselves, and learners and the topic (Cusack and O' Donoghue 2008). This is in contrast to transmissive methodologies that involve more formal, teacher-centred approaches.

The methodologies employed by the project partners in the student teacher workshops and those for inclusion in the Home Economics specific toolkit therefore prioritise a type of education which

> moves away from conventional didactic teaching methods and towards more active, participatory and interdisciplinary approaches, and they promote learning that results in positive action for social and personal change (Hogan and Tormey 2008, p. 5).

3 Background

The project structure and methodologies employed to realise the project aims were influenced by a number of factors including the prior ESD resource development and dissemination experiences of the project partners and the curricular context (i.e. Home Economics in Ireland) within which the project is situated. This section gives background detail relevant to each of these factors.

3.1 "Images and Objects" Development

In 2008 a resource "Education for Sustainable Development: Images and Objects" active methodology toolkit was published by the CCN to support the delivery of ESD in the classroom. This toolkit was developed by a CCN task group made up of members from eleven countries across Europe who developed teaching/learning resources focusing on the use of active and transformative methodologies. One of the project partners was a member of this task group and took responsibility for both leading the toolkit initiative, and the compilation and editing of the resource. The production of the toolkit was funded by both the CCN and by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in Ireland as part of its commitment to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014).

The success of the toolkit as an ESD teaching and learning resource is based on the fact that it focused on the use of visual stimuli and incorporated a set of images with supporting activities to provide a "quick start" for teachers, in both formal and informal education settings, wishing to integrate aspects of ESD into their teaching and learning environments. All of the activities were piloted in a variety of educational settings (post-primary, teacher education, adult education etc.) prior to the publication of the final resource. The information and activities presented in the toolkit are therefore accessible and user-friendly. The toolkit was disseminated to all post-primary schools in Ireland and was utilised in initial teacher education programmes and in a variety of teacher continuing professional development contexts.

In Ireland CDVEC CDU staff pursued an experiential approach in the distribution of the resource whereby many teachers participated in sample activities when receiving a copy of the toolkit and were therefore more likely to utilise the resource in their own teaching. The toolkit was also widely disseminated throughout Europe by members of the CCN network and has subsequently, been translated into several languages. In Australia the toolkit was reproduced by The Home Economics Institute of Australia (HEIA) in their journal and PDF versions of the toolkit were disseminated globally.

3.2 Home Economics in Ireland

Although no one discipline or subject can claim ownership of ESD, Home Economics is of special importance since it is a field of study and a profession which is situated in the human sciences and draws on a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living. It is therefore an ideal curricular space within which to address issues related to sustainable development. The International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) identifies Home Economics as a "field of study that draws from a range of disciplines to achieve optimal and sustainable living for individuals, families and communities" (IFHE 2008, p. i). Pendergast also notably emphasises that Home Economics as a curriculum area:

> Does not teach a skill for the sake of that skill, it teaches for application, it teaches informed decision making in endless scenarios, it teaches evaluative and critical thinking skills, it empowers individuals – no matter what their context is (Pendergast 2001, p. 8).

Students who study Home Economics can cultivate an understanding of the interdependence of their everyday lives with the wider environment and with that of other human beings (HEIA 2002). Home Economics education, nationally and internationally, has established ESD as a core value.

Compared to some other European countries, Home Economics in Ireland has developed as, and remains, a unified field of study. Essentially, this means that the core areas of the field; family resource management, food studies and textile studies are practiced together for the betterment of individuals and families and provide “a holistic and integrative understanding of everyday life within an ecological system of interdependent parts” (Dennehy 2007, p. 63). The holistic and integrative approach of Home Economics across these areas means the subject is ideally placed to integrate a wide range of sustainable development principles (Tormey et al. 2008). At post-primary level in the Republic of Ireland, Home Economics is offered as an optional curriculum subject at Junior Cycle (12–15 years) and Senior Cycle (15–18 years), and is also frequently offered as shorter, locally developed Transition Year (gap year) modules.

The interlinking areas of textile, consumer and food studies in the Irish Home Economics curriculum generate awareness regarding the positive consequences of sustainable and ethical consumption and use of textiles, clothing and food globally. As every consumer decision is a principled decision with ethical and ecological implications, the core areas of Home Economics are charged with developing morally conscious consumer behaviour.

4 Research Objectives and Methodology

The objectives of the action research element of the project included the provision of opportunities for students to:

- critically analyse ESD concepts and themes;
- discuss the applicability of the “ESD Images and Objects” toolkit activities and the potential of these to support the integration of ESD in the post-primary context; and
- contribute to the evolution of ESD curricular resources specifically for Home Economics.

The research project involved 52 first year Bachelor of Education (Home Economics) student teachers in St Angela’s College, Sligo, Ireland. It was undertaken in three phases during the 2010–2011 academic year. A mixed method approach to the collection and analysis of data was utilised.

In *phase one* student teachers were informed of the aims and objectives of the research project. They were asked to complete a questionnaire which required the identification of words/phrases that they associate with Sustainable Development and to indicate whether they had studied aspects of Sustainable Development previously. This assisted in building a profile of the background knowledge of the participants in relation to Sustainable Development.

Phase two involved a half-day workshop with 52 student teachers. Participants were divided into ten groups of five. Using a range of active and transformative methodologies, with a focus on visual stimuli, the students discussed their understanding of issues related to sustainability and responsible living. Additionally, they debated the potential for the integration of ESD within the Home Economics curriculum and the challenges associated with teaching ESD in a post-primary context.

During *phase three* student teachers reviewed the toolkit in an interactive discussion forum. They used a framework with predetermined criteria which facilitated critical discourse about the applicability of the toolkit approaches and methodologies, and the potential of these to support the integration of ESD in the Home Economics post-primary context.

It is important to consider the profile of the student teachers taking part in the project as they are at the start of their professional careers and therefore, just beginning to develop their professional teacher identity. Consequently, it could be argued that they may not have sufficient teaching experience to identify ways in which the activities detailed in the toolkit could be facilitated with students across a variety of ages and learning styles. However, the project partners considered that, as recent graduates of the post-primary sector, student teachers are a valuable source of information about the experiences of young people in both Junior and Senior Cycles. In addition, they provide the perspective of future teachers as they participate in the creation of their own curriculum content and methodology. The data discussed below will therefore be considered by the project partners in the development of a Home Economics specific toolkit.

5 Findings and Discussion

Fifty two student teachers participated in the study (51 = female; 1 = male). 42 of these student teachers were aged between 17 and 19 years old; eight were aged 20–23; one was in the 20–23 years age bracket and one student teacher was 34 years old.

5.1 Student Teachers Understanding of the Term "Sustainable Development"

Only 20 of the student teachers had previously studied topics relating to sustainable development in their post-primary education. Home Economics, Geography and Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) were cited as the only subjects where these topics were discussed and were the source of the students' knowledge in relation to Sustainable Development. The majority (N = 32) indicated that they had no previous experience of studying topics related to sustainable development. Of this group thirteen student teachers further reported that they "do not know what sustainable development means".

In order to ascertain the student teachers' understanding of the term sustainable development, students were presented with a list of 67 words/phrases. The list was sourced originally from a compilation of documents and papers relating to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Student teachers were asked to select the words/phrases that they associated with Sustainable development. 47 selected "Environment" and 41 selected "Conservation" as the words/phrases they most associated with sustainable development. "Sustainability" was ticked by 36 student teachers. Other words/phrases they closely associated with sustainable development included: "Recycle" (N = 36); "Reduce" (N = 34); "Responsibility" (N = 25); "Home Economics" (N = 22); "Education" (N = 6) and "Action" (N = 14). Only 3–4 students identified sustainable development with words such as "Human Rights"; "Ethics"; "Law"; "Society"; and "Conflict". Words such as "Spirituality" and "Hunger" were not selected by any student teacher as being associated with sustainable development.

As outlined in a similar study by Cusack (2008) with primary student teachers, the Home Economics student teachers placed a greater emphasis on the environmental words/phrases associated with sustainable development rather than the social or economic elements. This is obviously problematic since:

> It is imperative that student teachers are enabled to identify the relationship between the environment, society and the economy. True understanding can only be achieved through critical engagement with the interrelated impact of environmental, socio-political and economic factors and a commitment to make a positive difference (McCloat and Maguire 2008, p. 6).

This finding again highlights the importance of re-orientating teacher education programmes to equip teachers to teach about the complex issues linked to ESD (Council of the European Union 2010).

5.2 Impressions of the "ESD Images and Objects" Toolkit

The student teachers participated in group discussions and recorded their impressions of the toolkit. They were asked to respond to a series of statements related to the toolkit. Each statement was designed to elicit information that would inform the later adaption and development of a toolkit for Home Economics. Groups were asked to rate and comment on: (1) the level of clarity of the information and (2) instructions presented in the toolkit; (3) the range and (4) quality of the photographs included; (5) the applicability of the specific methodologies detailed in the toolkit; and (6) the general relevance of the toolkit to the post-primary classroom. The six statements were rated on a scale from one to five, with one being a poor rating and five denoting an excellent rating. Table 1 indicates the rating allocated to each statement by the groups of students:

Table 1 Student teachers' rating of the toolkit (Number of groups)

Statement	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
Clarity of information provided in the toolkit	0	1	4	4	1
Clarity of the instructions provided in the toolkit	0	0	1	4	5
The range of photographs provided in the toolkit	0	1	0	4	5
The quality of the photographs provided in the toolkit	0	0	2	4	4
The applicability of the methodologies/approaches outlined in the toolkit for use in the post-primary context	0	0	4	6	0
The relevance of the toolkit for use in the post-primary context	0	0	3	5	2

5.2.1 Clarity of the Information and Instructions in the "ESD Images and Objects" Toolkit

Regarding the overall clarity of the information in the toolkit eight groups rated the clarity as either average or good. Some comments indicated that participants experienced varying levels of understanding about some of the concepts and language in the resource, for example: "The information was clear in some parts but unclear in others"; "[…] the words were a bit complex"; "Clarity was good throughout however some phrasing should be explained […]".

One group of participants recorded concerns about the opening sections of the toolkit stating "there was a lot of information on the first few pages which was a little confusing at times". This was a reference to: detail about the CCN; the task group that developed the "ESD Images and Objects" toolkit; information about Sustainable development and the UN Decade of ESD; and, brief references to theory on the role of active teaching and learning approaches in ESD.

Among participants there was a higher level of satisfaction with the clarity of the instruction with regards to the educational activities in the toolkit with nine groups rating the clarity as good or excellent. Comments reflecting this high satisfaction level included "very good instructions and easy to understand"; "all steps were outlined very clearly on what to do in an easy to follow method and reason for each step given"; "tells you what you need for activity and benefits of each step".

5.2.2 The Range and Quality of the Photographs in the "ESD Images and Objects" Toolkit

With regard to the bank of photographs provided in the toolkit nine groups rated the range as good or excellent and eight groups felt that they were of good or excellent quality. Positive comments about the range of photographs included that "they were clear, descriptive and colourful, very appealing and good for facilitating different types of learning"; "they are diverse, interesting […]"; "all very different which was good". In contrast one group felt that the photographs were: "nearly all too structured, to an extent too perfect […] they were nearly too obvious as regards message depicted". Most participants indicated that the images were of good, clear quality: "very good quality, allowed me to look at a picture in different perspective"; "very detailed and life-like. All were clear and visible"; "very clear interesting pictures […]".

5.2.3 Applicability of the Methodologies Outlined in the "ESD Images and Objects" Toolkit for Use in the Post-Primary Context

In relation to the methodologies outlined in the toolkit six groups stated that the approaches were applicable in the post-primary context. Comments included: "[…] it puts emphasis on getting learners more involved, it also puts emphasis on group work". Four groups rated the resource as having "average" applicability. Two groups felt that the methodologies and approaches were more suited to higher order learners or learners in more senior classes. However, this was contrasted by other groups who saw the benefits of using "photographs for visual learners, also students with language differences", and the "range of methodologies for using pictures so you can pick the best one that suits the class".

Overall relevance of the toolkit for the post-primary context was rated as excellent by two groups while five groups rated it as good and three groups as average. In their comments student teachers indicated a range of areas of relevance. These included the curricular subjects of Home Economics; CSPE; Social Personal and Health Education; English; Religion, Woodwork etc.; relevance for students with different learning styles; and age relevance in terms of being more suitable for older learners rather than younger learners. Other comments from groups regarding relevance of the resource for post primary included that the toolkit "highlights the importance of sustainable development"; "develops thinking in relation to the topic" and "all different types of activities [are] included for each style of learning and all individuals can have perspective".

5.3 Relevance of the “ESD Images and Objects” Toolkit to the Home Economics Curriculum

Student teachers engaged in critical discourse in relation to the potential for the integration of ESD within the Home Economics curriculum and the challenges associated with teaching ESD in a post-primary context. Statements in relation to potential integration of ESD themes at Junior and Senior Cycle were rated on a scale of one to five, with one indicating strongly disagree and five indicating strongly agree. Table 2 indicates the rating allocated to each statement by the groups of student teachers.

Student teachers were asked to identify the potential for use of the toolkit in the Home Economics curriculum at Junior Cycle on a five point rating scale. Interestingly, only three groups “strongly agreed” that there was potential for the use of the toolkit at Junior Cycle and outlined “it [is] relevant to all Home Economics core areas and includes all kind of learners and some images catch your attention”. One group strongly agreed with the potential use of the toolkit “as sustainable energy is part of the Junior Cycle curriculum” while another questioned whether the “environment section of the Junior Cycle Home Economics” is sufficient for integration of a worthwhile ESD exercise.

Four groups “disagreed” that there was any potential for the toolkit to be used at Junior Cycle because a “bright class and excellent teacher” [would be] required. Furthermore, a group outlined that “we feel that some of the content was too difficult for people of this age group and would not be suitable”. The suitability for Junior Cycle level was also questioned by another group who stated the toolkit was “too complicated, too high pitched and long”.

Contrastingly, nine groups either “strongly agreed or agreed” that the toolkit would have potential for use in the Senior Cycle Home Economics curriculum since “people at this stage might be able to understand more of the content. It would also help in home management and the housing elective”. The presentation of the complexity of concepts incorporated in the toolkit to Senior Cycle students was not a concern with one group of participants stating “it [is] pitch appropriate” and another group commenting that the activities within the toolkit were interesting and that “children are at a higher level and so could comprehend images better”. However, a third group recommended that “there needs to be more relevance to learners lives”.

Table 2 Student teachers’ rating of the potential use of the toolkit in the home economics curriculum (Number of groups)

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Potential for use of the toolkit in the home economics curriculum at junior cycle	1	4	2	0	3
Potential for use of the toolkit in the home economics curriculum at senior cycle	0	1	0	5	4

Participants were asked to suggest any changes which needed to be made to the toolkit to make it suitable for a Home Economics teacher to use in their classroom. Two of the ten groups stated that the use of "simpler language and clearer steps that students can make" would improve the toolkit and specified that "some of the information needs to be clearer and simplified for use in the classroom". It was mentioned that the toolkit required more "relevance to teenager's lives" and to be "more Home Economics centered". As an additional resource one group suggested to "put pictures in CD for PowerPoint".

When asked to identify specific Home Economics themes and curriculum content which needed to be included in the toolkit participants responded with a variety of different suggestions. Three of the groups identified "energy conservation", while four of the groups suggested "waste" and "waste management". Other suggested themes included: "ethical fashion", "energy in the home", "citizenship" and "sustainable food practices".

Participants also suggested the addition of images specific to teaching and learning in Home Economics. Other ideas for possible images included: "windmills" "solar panels" "large appliances" and "compost bins".

6 Recommendations and Conclusion

Two specific sets of recommendations have emerged from this project. The first set arose from the very concrete suggestions from student teachers with regards to the development of the Home Economics specific toolkit while the second is based on the analysis undertaken by the project partners of the effectiveness of the research process.

The research participants suggested that during the development of the Home Economics toolkit consideration should be given, in particular, to making the materials more user-friendly for those new to ESD language and concepts. A number of additional specific suggestions were identified, including the following:

- Information regarding CCN/PERL should be minimised and situated on the inside front cover of the Home Economics toolkit.
- The adapted toolkit should have a concise introductory section which is specifically tailored for a Home Economics teacher.
- The toolkit should include a brief explanation of the United Nations Decade of ESD and an explanation of sustainable development which will be appropriate to teaching and learning in the post-primary Home Economics context.
- Home Economics specific themes and curriculum content identified by research participants should be considered for inclusion e.g. energy and waste management topics.
- Although the new toolkit is Home Economics specific, references to other relevant post-primary curricular areas should be made, thus highlighting the potential for cross curricular linkages.

- A"taking/making images" section should be included to describe how photographs can be taken, collected or downloaded from the internet.
- The range and standard of photographs is crucial as the quality of some toolkit images was questioned.
- The use of bullet-points in the activities instruction section should be included to ensure maximum clarity for users.
- An extended range of colours other than the black and green used in the original toolkit should be considered.

Following an analysis of the three phases of the project, the project partners decided to re-run the action research element. The second iteration of the project included additional phases as a means of further linking teacher education and curriculum development elements of the project. The additional phases involve student teachers' participating in a competition to submit photographs that they associate with ESD and subsequently, using the draft Home Economics toolkit while on teaching practice. They are required to keep a reflective diary, and encouraged to reflect on the curricular relevance, and the use and effectiveness of the toolkit after each lesson. The final phase involves a re-administering of the initial questionnaire, an analysis of the reflective diaries and conducting a further series of focus groups in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Home Economics specific toolkit as a classroom resource.

The on-going process of engaging with student teachers will help to ensure the production of a valuable Home Economics toolkit which will benefit teaching and learning in the classroom. It is also evident that participation provides student teachers with opportunities to develop capacity to engage with sustainability and responsible living themes; to consider how these might best be integrated in the post-primary context; and, to contribute to the evolution of curricular materials which will have real relevance to their teaching careers.

The project provided participants with opportunities for professional development through involvement in a curriculum development initiative. However, it is also important to highlight that for the wider cohort of Irish Home Economics teachers, professional development seminars exploring the new Home Economics toolkit will be critical in embedding toolkit themes and activities into Home Economics classroom practice. This focus on teacher professional development is an investment in the future and a means of resourcing the education system to deal with some of the key issues facing society today.

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Promoting Sustainable Consumption in Educational Settings

Daniel Fischer

Abstract In the debate on sustainable consumption there is broad agreement that a concerted and multi-faceted policy approach is needed to motivate people to consume sustainably. The role of education and educational organisations is commonly confined to that of a provider of formal tuition and as a trainer of skills. This article argues for a broader understanding of educational organisations' contribution to the promotion of sustainable consumption. It argues that the established settings approach from public health research offers an alternative perspective on educational settings that can help to gain a more comprehensive understanding of consumption-related learning processes in educational organisations. Drawing on the framework of educational organisational culture of consumption, educational settings are described as formal and informal learning occasions that frame students' consumer learning in distinct organisational contexts. A case example is introduced from the transdisciplinary research and development project BINK that illustrates how this analytical perspective can translate into a more comprehensive approach to school and university development and the promotion of sustainable consumption in educational settings.

Keywords Education for sustainable consumption · Consumer education · Settings · Culture of consumption · School development

D. Fischer (✉)
Institute for Environmental and Sustainability Communication (INFU),
Faculty of Sustainability Sciences, Leuphana Universität Lüneburg,
Lüneburg, Germany
e-mail: daniel.fischer@uni.leuphana.de

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1 Introduction

Today's consumer society (Schor and Holt 2000) with its consumer culture (Featherstone 2001) is characterised by the fact "that the world of goods and their principles of structuration are central to the understanding of contemporary society" (Featherstone 1987, p. 57). With this came a tremendous increase in consumption levels particularly in the industrialised countries after world war two. Today, several syndromes of global change, such as overexploitation of natural ecosystems and environmental degradation through depletion of non-renewable resources (WBGU 1996) posing major threats to the very existence of humanity in the twenty-first century have been linked to affluent consumption patterns. In light of this, the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns was identified as a crucial task by the world leaders in Chap. 4 of Agenda 21 (UNCED 1993). Research on drivers and barriers of more sustainable consumption patterns has identified a number of individual and contextual factors (e.g. Jackson 2005) and pointed to the need for a systems-thinking approach that allows to view them in their complex interplay (Mont and Power 2010; Power and Mont 2010). In order to provide policy makers with a heuristic that could inform a more "concerted strategy […] to make it easy to behave more sustainably" (Jackson 2005, p. iii), the model of 4Es has been developed: It has become highly influential since its first use in sustainable consumption policy by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in the United Kingdom (UK DEFRA 2005). According to the model, a concerted policy strategy should seek to

- *encourage* people to consume sustainably and favour such options,
- *enable* access and capacity to make sustainable consumption choices,
- *engage* people in initiatives to help themselves, and
- *exemplify* the desired changes within the governing body's own practices.

In policy discourses, education is commonly understood to have an enabling function as "one of the most powerful tools for providing individuals with the appropriate skills and competencies to become sustainable consumers" (OECD 2008, p. 25) and as a key strand of action to protect consumers by enabling them to make informed choices (European Commission 2007).

In their review of different major societal institutions, the authors of the Worldwatch Institute's report on the state of the world 2010 criticise such understanding of education as an enabling tool as reductionistic. The report proposes a different conception of education as a key facilitator of a cultural transformation towards a sustainable consumer society. Contemporary education is criticised for not fully tapping its potentials as a catalyzing change agent. The authors even go so far as to content that it "plays a powerful role in cultivating consumerism" and that "schools […] represent a huge missed opportunity to combat consumerism and to educate students about its effects on people and the environment" (Assadourian 2010, p. 15). What is needed and sought for, though, are more comprehensive approaches to educational organisations' effects on the socialization of sustainable consumers.

A number of initiatives have sought to address this shortcoming. Among the most prominent ones is the United Nation's world decade on education for sustainable development (ESD). ESD covers a broad field. While its main roots lay in the fields of environmental education and global learning respective development education, ESD also addresses aspects of other so-called adjectival educations such as peace education, human rights education or intercultural education (Wals 2009).

At the heart of the UK's sustainable schools program is the concept of care that comprises care "for oneself, care for each other (across cultures, distances and time) and care for the environment (far and near)" (UK DfES 2006, p. 2). The notion of caring for one's own well-being, for the well-being of others and for a healthy environment is also central to the health promotion movement. Despite apparent similarities in the conceptual developments of health promotion and ESD (Jensen 2000), synergies and joint-up approaches are so far only poorly developed. Rather contrarily, it can be summarised that "work on sustainability and work on health have tended to happen in parallel rather than as integrated efforts" (Poland and Dooris 2010, p. 287).

This article argues that in light of the growing interest in and need for more comprehensive approaches to promote sustainability and sustainable consumption in schools (Henderson and Tilbury 2004; UK DCSF 2010), much can be gained and learned from the health promotion field and its vast experiences with respect to promoting human well-being and healthy lifestyles. One contribution from the health promotion field that is deemed particularly beneficial is the settings approach.

The objective of this conceptual article is to show how a settings approach can inform a more comprehensive engagement of educational organisations with their contributions to the socialization of sustainable consumers. This is done in three corresponding steps. In a first step, the key principles of a settings approach are briefly summarised and discussed with regard to their potential for the promotion of sustainable consumption. In a second step, the article investigates the specifics of educational settings focusing on schools. Adopting a whole system perspective, the article proposes a framework of educational organisational culture of consumption that seeks to conceptualise relevant domains of formal and informal consumer learning in schools. In a third step, a case example from the project BINK is introduced to illustrate how the foregoing theoretical considerations can translate into a comprehensive approach to the promotion of sustainable consumption in educational settings.

2 Contributions of a Settings Approach to Promote Sustainable Consumption

The settings approach emerged during the 1990's and can today be considered as "one of the best developed and most popular expressions" (Whitelaw et al. 2001, p. 339) of health promotion efforts that focus on contextual factors beyond the individual. Settings comprise discrete places where people live and work, for example cities, hospitals, prisons or schools. This is not to say that other approaches have been insensitive to contextual factors. Yet, the distinctive feature of a settings approach is that it "views the physical, organisational, and social contexts in which people are found as the objects of inquiry and intervention, and not just the people contained in or defined by that setting" (Poland et al. 2009, p. 506). Hence, the aim is to work on the setting itself to ensure that it is health promoting, and not just to use settings in order to reach and work on captive audiences within these settings. In order to gain a better understanding of those local contexts that people live in, it is necessary to adopt a sensitive whole system perspective and to collaborate closely with relevant stakeholders within these settings. Table 1 provides a condensed description of six key principles of a settings approach to health promotion according to Poland and Dooris (2010) and its transfer to the promotion of sustainable consumption.

The focus on everyday settings as a starting point for the promotion of sustainable consumption has gained recent interest in the scholarly debate. According to Muster (2011), a main advantage of a settings approach is that it does not focus on individuals primarily in their roles as consumers, but rather asks how (sustainable) lifestyles are enabled, encouraged, engaged and exemplified in the everyday locations and contexts in which people live and work.

The following section explores how educational organisations can be conceptualised as a distinct setting for a more comprehensive promotion of sustainable consumption.

Table 1 Six key principles for a settings approach to promote sustainable consumption (according to Poland and Dooris 2010, p. 289ff)

Principle	Seeks to…
1 Adopt an ecological "whole system" perspective	… go beyond single issues and linear causality to address the complex interaction of environmental, organisational and personal factors within the contexts and places in which people live
2 Start where the people are	… listen to, respect and reflect the lived experience and diverse forms of knowledge that people have in the work within the setting
3 Root practice in place	… acknowledge that everyday knowledge is socially located and practice anchored in the unique specifics of the place
4 Deepen the socio-political analysis	… move beyond addressing symptoms to identify broader root causes and connect the lived experience to that of others and to the practices and structures that create and sustain inequity
5 Build on strengths and successes	… find value within groups and organisations, make it visible, build upon those and develop it further
6 Build resilience	… overcome the dominant objective of performing efficiently within a narrow set of operating conditions and to (re)develop the proactive capacity of groups or organisations to withstand or even embrace change

3 Educational Organisations as Settings of Consumer Learning

Educational organisations such as schools are places in which students live, learn and work for a considerable period of their lifetime. In order to better understand how learning in schools takes place both within and outside the classroom, a careful analysis of the distinct settings and specific features of educational organisations is needed. This section introduces a framework for such analysis.

It can be assumed that schools have an effect on students' consumer learning in a twofold way. On the one hand, schools are understood to act as a facilitator of educational offers related to sustainable consumption that make students reflect and render their own consumption patterns more consciously (formal learning). On the other, schools themselves are consumption households and as such places in which their members consume and communicate about consumption (informal learning). It is through their twofold character, being both a place of learning and a life world in itself, that schools bring about distinct ways of relating to consumption and youth consumers that have socializing effects on students. Drawing on research into the genesis and characteristic fields of school culture (Helsper et al. 2001), these contexts and processes have been perceived of as educational organisations' culture of consumption and conceptually elaborated in an analytical framework (Fischer 2011). Drawing on Schein's model of organisational culture (Schein 2004), the framework distinguishes between six domains on three levels (see Fig 1).

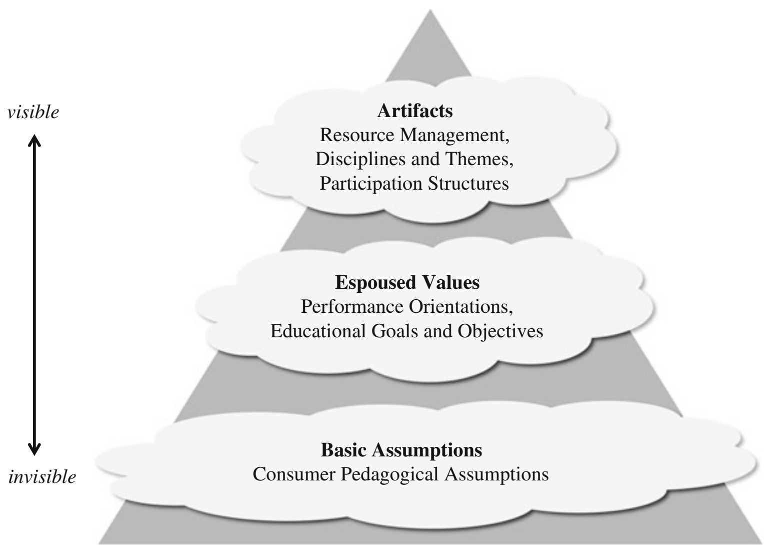

Fig. 1 Analytical framework of educational organisations' culture of consumption (Fischer 2011)

The top layer consists of artifacts in the domains of *resource management*, *disciplines and themes*, as well as *participation structures*. Artifacts in these domains are visible manifestations of how an educational organisation manages its operations and resource usage (e.g. the school's solar panel), what disciplinary perspective it presents to students on consumption issues and which themes addresses (e.g. teaching resources on consumption) and what mechanisms it has put in place to invite the participation of the school community (e.g. the feedback box in the cafeteria). Yet, they cannot be easily decoded without further knowledge of the educational organisation and its contexts. For example, the feedback box in the cafeteria could be an expression of the caterer's customer-orientation and quality development efforts and a formal act of fulfilling a contract obligation that has no further consequences for a factual change in the cafeteria's services. In this view, artifacts represent only the visible top of the organisational iceberg, and their meaning can only be interpreted in light of the bigger carrying part under the water surface.

The intermediate layer hosts values and norms that manifest in the aspects of consumption-related *performance orientations* as well as *educational goals and objectives*. Educational organisations differ with respect to the degree to which the organisational actors perceive of sustainable consumption and consumer education as an educational mandate, which objectives they pursue and in how far this is part of grading and assessment routines and practices. Espoused norms act as a mediator between artifacts above and basic assumptions underneath the water surface.

Basic assumptions are the condensed, unconscious and taken for granted essence of experiences that organisational actors have made interacting with and within the school environment. In a consumer educational perspective, they can relate to teachers' assumptions about youths' and young adults' value orientations and consumer attitudes or to evaluations of the general impact that schools can have on these. As taken for granted *consumer pedagogical assumptions* have an orienting function for the actions of teachers, students and other school members, they exert a pre-forming influence on interaction processes and pedagogical practices in the school in which recognition or denial of youth identity constructions expressed in consumption practices are negotiated.

The following section introduces a case example from the project BINK to illustrate how the framework of organisational culture of consumption can translate into a comprehensive approach to the promotion of sustainable consumption in educational settings.

4 Designing and Changing Educational Settings in the Project BINK

The research and development project BINK explored ways to transform educational organisations into places that promote the acquisition of consumer competencies and a more sustainable lifestyle among young adults by systematically aligning formal and informal learning processes. In the course of three years, an interdisciplinary team of researchers (sociologists, environmental psychologists and educational researchers) and members of six educational organisations from different educational sectors (two secondary schools, two vocational schools and two organisations of higher education) collaboratively developed a set of interventions and an accompanying empirical design to initiate, stabilise and evaluate change processes towards a culture of *sustainable* consumption in the participating educational organisations. Collaboration between researchers and practitioners in the project was underpinned and informed by the notion of transdisciplinary partnership (Fischer 2010b).

The following cursory explanations of project activities illustrate how the transdisciplinary project approach reflects and realises key principles of the settings approach (see Table 1) for the promotion of sustainable consumption in schools.

4.1 Adopt an Ecological "Whole System" Perspective

The idea of educational organisations as cultures of consumption (see Sect. 3) was developed in the early phase of the project as a boundary object (Bergmann et al. 2010) in the collaboration between practitioners and researchers. The framework guided the process of analysing existing structures and initiatives in the organisation and for creating a vision for a desired state for the further development of a culture of sustainable consumption. From that vision, sub-goals as well as short-term and intermediate-term objectives were successively derived and defined to eventually inform the collaborative design of a package of intervention measures to be implemented in the organisation. The framework ensured that the change processes in the participating schools and institutions of higher education were built on a "whole system" perspective on consumption-related organisational culture. Consequently, the packages of interventions developed were not restricted to single intervention issues (e.g. to change the food outlet of the cafeteria), but directed towards stimulating a comprehensive change in the culture of consumption of the educational organisation.

4.2 Start Where the People Are

The mode of action in the project BINK was situated locally in each of the six participating educational organisations. Within the affiliated organisations, steering committees were formed that comprised of representatives of all relevant groups of actors (e.g. administration, management, teachers, students, parents). The steering committees were in charge of the change process within their organisation. They were open to new members that had the opportunity to join the process at any time with full voting rights. The interdisciplinary team of researchers conducted empirical studies in the organisations, for example qualitative interviews with students or a quantitative analysis on student perceptions of their school's culture of consumption. The aim of this transdisciplinary project architecture was to ensure that the expertises of different stakeholders as well as their perspectives on the organisational issues at stake were adequately reflected in the change process.

4.3 Root Practice in Place

A place- and community-based approach (Smith and Sobel 2010) was chosen to inform the change processes. A series of workshops was held at each organisation. In the workshops milestone products such as a steady-state-analysis of the organisational culture of consumption and a collaborative design of a set of intervention measures were developed (see also Sects. 4.1 and 4.2). The object of inquiry was thus always the characteristics of the local organisation. The workshops were held by external moderators to avoid role conflicts. The contributions of the research team in this process mainly related to the short presentation of their research findings and theoretical considerations from the literature. The presentations were followed by discussion of possible practical implications for the local situation. It remained up to the practitioners to eventually decide upon the implications of these deliberations for the design and implementation of measures of intervention in order to ensure that the measures taken corresponded to local needs and could best be embedded by the local actors in their everyday routines and interactions. Apart from the local steering group and the researcher team, the project also involved a task force practice that involved experts from the green economy, the media, marketing firms and consultancies. The task force consulted the practitioners and researchers in their work. Finally, the practitioners were actively encouraged to collaborate with experts from their local communities in the planning and delivery of their interventions.

4.4 Deepen the Socio-Political Analysis

Apart from organisation-based workshops, network meetings were conducted to which representatives from all steering committees of all participating organisations were invited. These meetings served as a platform to address and discuss broader thematic issues in the context of sustainable consumption, for example on inequity, socio-political strategies and their underpinning ideologies (e.g. reform vs. transformation) in order to facilitate exchange on those issues (Fischer 2010a).

4.5 Build on Strengths and Successes

One main activity in the kick-off workshops was to discuss the theoretically derived framework of educational organisational culture of consumption with the steering committees at each organisation. The framework was then applied to perform a qualitative steady-state-analysis of the culture of consumption of each participating organisation. In the analysis, practitioners were first asked to collect and list examples of existing and well-performing structures and initiatives in the different domains of their organisational culture of consumption. This step served to appreciate and to build on existing efforts in the further process.

Several project-related activities aimed at valuing and cherishing successful initiatives. For example, practitioners were asked to present exemplary well-functioning interventions from their organisation. A selection of examples of good practice was documented in a practice book (Nemnich and Fischer 2011) and in a professional film that was produced as a project documentary. The final conference of the project was targeted at practitioners from other educational organisations. At the conference, practitioners from the BINK project were delivering workshops on successful initiatives from their organisation.

4.6 Build Resilience

The participatory project approach aimed to build the respective capacity and structures among the organisational actors to design, implement and evaluate interventions to change their organisation's culture of consumption so that they could sustain the change process beyond the three-year project period. It provided opportunities to reflect on experiences made, to modify or complement interventions already put in place and to learn from the experiences of other practitioners. Apart from celebrating successful initiatives, the practitioners also exchanged on barriers that they have faced in the process and on possible responses to such challenges.

The overall project goal was to create an educational setting that is in itself exemplary for and supportive of sustainable consumption. From an educational perspective, the long-term purpose was not solely to nurture more sustainable consumption practices in the school setting, but also to establish learning environments in schools that enable students to acquire competencies needed for exercising sustainable consumer citizenship. In the Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) competencies were conceived of as a dynamic combination of attitudes (e.g. values and personal commitment), abilities (e.g. skills) and attributes (e.g. knowledge and understanding) (Thoresen 2005, p. 22). As the definition of such competencies for the specific contexts of sustainable consumption was still premature, researchers and practitioners in the project worked together to specify and operationalise those competency facets (attitudes, knowledge and skills) that they deemed most relevant for their educational patronage. The purpose of this approach was to strengthen the local capacity to tailor educational interventions more closely to the competence development of their students.

5 Synthesis

A settings approach to the promotion of sustainable consumption in schools builds on the insight that it takes multiple and concerted efforts to promote sustainable consumption in the very everyday settings where students live and learn. Despite a growing number of initiatives and projects that have sought to implement the notion of sustainable development in all aspects of school life (Henderson and Tilbury 2004; Hren et al. 2004; Shallcross 2006, Transfer-21 2007; UK DfES 2008), the mainstream in educational and consumer policy still conceives of consumer education as the delivery of relevant consumption knowledge for informed consumer choices in structured (and often instructive) formal tuition contexts (for example, see European Commission 2007). A settings approach to the promotion of sustainable consumption in schools bears the potential to broaden this narrowly confined understanding and to provide an elaborated starting point for more comprehensive educational approaches.

The foregoing considerations suggest a broader view on educational organisations as cultures of consumption and as settings of consumer learning. In this perspective, educational organisations do not only play an enabling role for the promotion of sustainable consumption. Rather, they are conceived of as settings in which students (and school staff) “learn, work, play and love” (WHO 1986, p. 3) as the Ottawa Charter poetically phrased it. Hence, in order to work towards settings that foster sustainable consumption, educational organisations need to consider all four Es of the DEFRA model. Synthesizing the foregoing considerations, Fig. 2 presents a heuristic map that identifies different fields of action for sustainable school governance as starting points for the initiation of whole school approaches to motivating sustainable consumption in educational settings, considering all four Es of the model.

Approaches seeking to promote sustainable consumption in educational settings would thus need to

- *encourage* students and organisational actors to actively take on the issue and reflect on sustainable consumption matters in their organisational setting (e.g. by introducing it into assessment procedures and grading and award schemes or by including it in job descriptions and promotion policies);
- *enable* students and organisational actors to develop the knowledge needed for active participation in and contribution to initiatives seeking to promote sustainable consumption (e.g. by providing formal and informal learning activities that nurture students’ consumer competencies, teacher in-service-training and adequate resources and funds for such activities to take place);

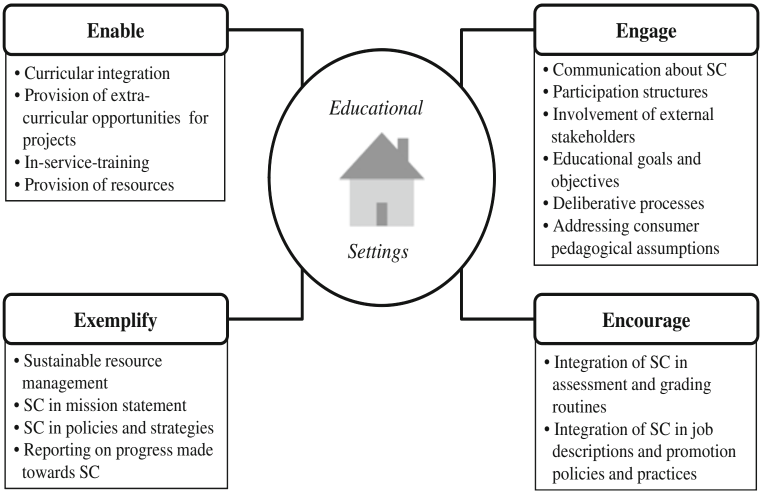

Fig. 2 Education's 4 E: Promoting sustainable consumption in educational settings (structure adopted from UK DEFRA 2005, p. 26)

- *engage* students and organisational actors in initiatives seeking to change the organisational culture of consumption and to enhance the actors' skills as change agents for bringing about more sustainable lifestyles (e.g. by communication means and campaigns, by installing participation and feedback mechanisms, by involving external stakeholders and by confronting and, in a constructivist view, perturbating underlying consumer pedagogical assumptions);
- *exemplify* to students and organisational actors how the organisational culture of consumption and the inherent norms, practices and policies can be re-aligned to favour more sustainable consumption (e.g. by implementing auditing and resource management schemes, by disclosing sustainable consumption in their mission statements and policies, and by reporting on progress made); and
- *catalyze* these efforts in school development approaches that follows the key principles of a settings approach (see Table 1).

As the evaluation of the BINK project shows, settings-based approaches like the participatory BINK approach bear great potentials to promote sustainable consumer citizenship. Results from the accompanying empirical study indicate that the BINK project's approach was successful in initiating changes in the educational settings of the affiliated organisations. The data also suggest that active participation in and the perception of changes in their school's culture of consumption corresponds with more self-reported sustainable consumption awareness and sustainable consumer behaviour among students (Barth et al. 2011). It must be taken into consideration though that the study was conducted while the interventions were still being implemented. It remains a field of future studies to further investigate into the long-term effects of intervention programmes into educational settings and organisational cultures of consumption.

6 Closing Remark

The conceptual considerations unfolded in this article point to a potentially fruitful new direction for the advancement of approaches to ESD in schools. Certainly a settings approach to promoting sustainable consumption in schools needs both further conceptual elaboration and further empirical research. A promising path for further efforts in this field could be to draw on the more than 20 years of experiences with settings-based work in health promotion. Possible synergies are obvious and seem well worth taking this path: to utilise schools' full potential as settings that encourage, enable and engage sustainable lifestyles and that take the lead by cultivating and exemplifying an ethic of care and responsibility—for oneself, for others today and in the future and the environment that sustains us.

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Part V
Corporate Responsibility for Responsible Living

Is Engagement in CSR Motivated by the Defined Values of Entrepreneurs?

An Analysis of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Germany

Monika Eigenstetter and Silvia Zaharia

Abstract Companies have a high impact on responsible living while caring for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Entrepreneurs engaged in CSR often claim that they act on the basis of ethical values, namely through value orientations such as "Universalism" and "Benevolence". In this investigation, the value orientations of the entrepreneurs, managing and owning small or mediums sized enterprises (SMEs), have been measured with the Schwartz Values Survey and have been related to their engagement, e.g., for the environment and their employees. The results are: Greater engagement for the environment and employees is correlated with greater "Universalism" and "Benevolence". Unexpected positive correlations were found between the values "Security", "Tradition", "Stimulation" and "Engagement to Employees" respectively "Engagement to the Environment". No correlations were found in the categories "Achievement" or "Power". CSR finally does correlate with some desirable results of the companies, such as profit or a reduction in customer complaints. Therefore, CSR should be of strategic relevance to the entrepreneurs of SMEs.

Keywords Entrepreneurs · Small and medium enterprises · Social values · Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

M. Eigenstetter (✉) · S. Zaharia
University of Applied Sciences Niederrhein, Reinarzstr. 49, Krefeld 47805, Germany
e-mail: monika.eigenstetter@hs-niederrhein.de

S. Zaharia
e-mail: silvia.zaharia@hs-niederrhein.de

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1 Corporate Social Responsibility to Enable Responsible Living

Companies have a strong impact on their various stakeholders (Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; Crane and Matten 2010). In a negative manner, companies use and destroy resources such as energy, water and air, and pollute the environment through their products and production processes. In a positive manner they may create working environments for supporting the health and safety of their employees, create innovations to protect the environment, and often they serve the wellbeing of their community (Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; European Commission 2002, 2003a). Such an engagement, generally labelled as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), is defined

> as a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and into their interaction with stakeholders on a voluntary basis. [..] Being socially responsible does not only mean fulfilling legal expectations, but also going beyond compliance and investing 'more' into human capital, the environment and the relations to stakeholders (European Commission 2001, p. 6).

Facing the different ways in which companies act, Carroll (2008) derived four levels of CSR: economic responsibilities, legal responsibilities, ethical responsibilities, and philanthropic responsibilities. Even though the Carroll model may have meanwhile been criticised for being inadequate, since it can only apply to companies acting at national level (Assländer and Löhr 2010) it still offers, after all, a basis for assessing the activities undertaken by organisations.

Economic responsibility ensures that the company is consistently profitable and ensures that its staff does not become unemployed. Paying taxes gives communities the opportunity to follow their duties, for example to procure infrastructure such as schools and kindergartens. Legal responsibility means that companies are expected to respect their legal obligations, like caring for the health and safety of their employees and the environment, for example to avoid noise and air pollution. Ethical responsibilities face social norms and often reflect a higher standard than legal obligations. Companies may engage in the work-life-balance of their employees and help the people to succeed in their responsibilities towards their families and neighbourhoods. The opportunity to participate in organisational decisions may strengthen social competencies and democratic attitudes and thus help to build social capital (Moldaschl 2004; Putnam 2000). And by creating working environments that are not only safe but also healthy for older people, it helps the people to be active longer. At last, philanthropic responsibilities enhance the communities' quality of life by means of donations or other voluntary activities. Some companies support schools and sports activities, or engage in cultural activities (Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; Crane and Matten 2010; European Commission 2002). In view of what companies can do for the environment, people and the community, it is possible to conclude that encouraging companies to engage in CSR is a major contribution to responsible living.

The European Union supports the companies to take part in CSR-activities for many years. Within that encouragement, a special focus is on the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs with fewer than 249 employees account by far for the greatest proportion of companies in the European Union and Germany with a 99.8 % share. Of these, in turn, almost 90 % are micro companies with fewer than ten employees (European Commission 2003b). And since in the case of an entrepreneur, and in contrast to management in large companies, the functions of ownership and management coincide most. So in Germany, 95 % of companies are family owned (IFM Bonn 2007). The entrepreneur influences the management behaviour in the company itself with his or her personal interests and values.

Entrepreneurs are forced to gain profit. But they are also citizens. So it is of interest to know to what extent they are acting profit maximizing and to what extent entrepreneurs are acting as "Honourable Merchants", based on values like altruism and responsibility for others. This gives rise to the question which values and principles are evinced by the entrepreneurs in SMEs. And another question is, whether and how the values of the entrepreneurs und their engagement in CSR are connected: Do entrepreneurs engage in CSR because of enlightened self-interest, as the Bertelsmann Stiftung (2007) named it, or do they engage because of a true and sincere motivation for the common good?

2 CSR in SMEs

SMEs differ from major companies in several characteristics: They are embedded in the local community in which they offer their products and from which they recruit their staff and employees. This means they rely more than others on direct and trustworthy contacts and cooperation, and all the more so since much fewer material and human resources are available to them than to large companies (European Commission 2002). CSR in German SMEs tends towards being apolitical and not strategically motivated (Braun 2010). Local problems are addressed in the education and training field, for example (Dannenbring 2010). In a German-wide survey 147 entrepreneurs took part (Gilde 2007): hereby, 71 % of the entrepreneurs made donations for social initiatives 69 % invested in training and professional development and 59 D in sport events. Material and financial donations generally do not seem to be strategically motivated (European Commission 2002). However, it seems remarkable that SMEs here seem to donate much more in comparison with the economic capacity of major companies (Hofmann and Maas 2008).

On the one hand, SMEs are highly engaged in philanthropic activities. On the other hand, it is known that they have deficiencies in parts of their governance. It cannot be assumed that the legal requirements and standards are indeed always implemented, although German and European countries have integrated human and environmental rights into their legislations and so offer a regulatory framework. The report of the European Commission (2002) speaks of a vulnerable compliance of SMEs, since companies often lack the knowledge needed to implement statutory provisions, but are generally willing to do this. In the field of health and safety at work, for example, only some companies meet the legal requirements (European Commission 2002).

2.1 Values and CSR in SMEs

It is particularly in SMEs that senior managers and decision makers shape both the climate and the culture of the company, be it through a role model function or in organising and directly implementing the rules (Mendoca and Kanungo 2007). Reference is repeatedly made to the "Honourable Merchant", who acts responsible on the basis of individual ethical values. It is said that this type of entrepreneur is often found in SMEs (Wieland et al. 2009). Indeed, entrepreneurs and managers of SMEs state that they commit themselves to ethical reasons giving donations or engaging for the well-being of their employees (European Commission 2002). Thus ethical values seem to motivate the entrepreneurs' engagement.

But what are values? Values are regarded as being overriding, relatively abstract orientations or mental programmes for a wide range of different situations that act like action objectives or targets (Schwartz 1992). Values are

> (1) concepts or beliefs, (2) about desirable end states or behaviours, (3) that transcend specific situations, (4) guide the selection or evaluation of behaviour and events, and (5) are placed in order by relative importance (Schwartz and Bilsky 1987, p. 878).

Values are characteristic of the actions taken by individuals; they have a steering role to play so they can orientate individuals' own (economic) action, and fulfil a common fundamental understanding at the social level. Without reaching consensus on the values and the action that is based on this no community can survive and managing becomes impossible. For example, they support collaboration and confidence-building beyond contractually governed agreements (Parsons 1964).

The Schwartz model is well-suited for understanding the value orientations of both individuals and organisations, and describes a value circumplex (Schwartz 1992). It represents the diversity of individual values in ten motivational types of values on two orthogonal value dimensions. One of the value dimensions is called "Self-Transcendence" versus "Self-Enhancement", the other is called "Openness to Change" versus "Conservation". Within this two-dimensional space, ten types of values can be arranged in order: Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, Security, Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation and Self-Direction. Adjacent values exhibit the similarity, while opposing values indicate a state of "incompatibility" (see Fig. 1).

It seems plausible to assume, that values like "Universalism" and "Benevolence" should be accompanied by a higher engagement for the employees and for the environment, because "Universalism" and "Benevolence" are characterized by helpfulness for others, universal justice and the environment protection.

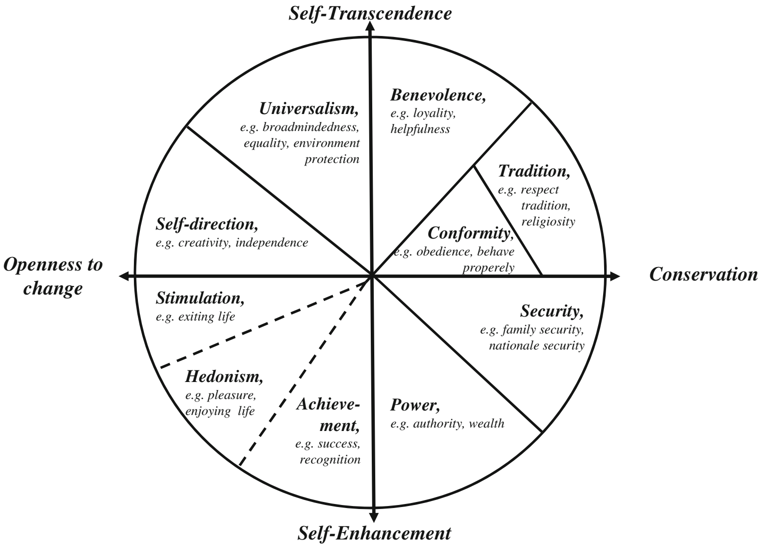

Fig. 1 Value circumplex of Schwartz (1992)

2.2 Possible Benefits of CSR in SMEs

Whether CSR is compatible with economic action is an important topic in the current discourse on CSR (Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; Maaß 2010; Schreck 2011; Vogel 2005). It is presumed that indirect effective relations exist between CSR and economic factors. Some effects that are also of importance for SMEs will be addressed in the following.

The discussion initially revolves around the benefit of CSR as a contribution to risk management. Since companies face ever increasing pressure to act responsibly, the consideration of ethics and social responsibility contribute to risk management in companies by preventing customers from boycotting companies or refusing to buy their goods (e.g., Leisinger 2003). Secondly, a greater reputation is expected by customers and the social setting. Reputation is seen as an immaterial asset and acts, for example, by building trust and confidence as well as an identification in business-to-business activities on the behavioural intentions of customers and clients (Keh and Xie 2009). This also holds true for SMEs: One third of the SME entrepreneurs expect customer bonding to be a relevant benefit from CSR activities (European Commission 2002). Improved relations with local authorities and institutions are also reported by 28 % of the respondents (European Commission 2002). Thirdly, an impact on human resources management is cited. Reputation bonds highly-qualified staff (Smith et al. 2004). This raises the employer attractiveness as a whole, something that is of importance in times of increasing competition for specialised staff. Enhancing the staff-orientated climate in companies is discussed too. A commitment to CSR is accompanied by an enhanced identification, which may possibly have an impact on the innovative climate in companies (MacGregor and Fontrodoan 2008).

3 Empirical Study on CSR and SME

3.1 Research Questions

The presented background gives rise to the question of whether the values and principles of the entrepreneurs in SMEs exhibit a direct link with CSR and how CSR can benefit the company. The latter seems important to encourage SME entrepreneurs to establish CSR within their companies.

The first research question aims to gain an impression of how entrepreneurs engage in CSR according to the levels of Carroll. Do the entrepreneurs in SMEs fulfil legal expectations better than ethical expectations, or are they vulnerable compliant (European Commission 2002)?

Second, we are interested in whether specific value orientations lead to a more pronounced manifestation of CSR at SMEs. Ethical values should be related to various aspects of CSR because CSR in SMEs seems not strategically motivated and thus not specific (Braun 2010). Our hypothesis is that entrepreneurs who report extended engagement in CSR refer to specific value orientations, namely “Universalism” and “Benevolence”. However, in order to be able to act in accordance with the economic requirements, it must also be assumed that the value of “Achievement” is highly pronounced among companies.

The third question is whether the entrepreneurs and leaders in SMEs experience a benefit which can be related to their engagement in social responsibility (Schreck 2011).

3.2 Sample

More than 2000 SMEs in the German federal states North Rhine-Westphalia (West Germany) and Thuringia (East Germany) were contacted via email based on the address pool of the local Chambers of Trade and Commerce. Another acquisition was performed by the media of local Chambers of Trade and Commerce. Half of the companies questioned are based in North Rhine-Westphalia (55.6 %), further 28.4 % are from Thuringia. Few other federal states are represented in the survey because the questionnaire was freely accessible via Internet.

Companies from the services sector were most prolific in taking part in the survey, which provided nearly half of all those interviewed (48.1 %). Industry and crafts and account for around 22.2 %, banking and trades (11.1 %). The remaining companies included agriculture, education, construction, non-profit and others.

The variation in the fields of activity is very high. It extends from internet shops to cleaning companies, from foundations with an educational mission to textile finishing and mechanical engineering.

81 entrepreneurs participated in the study. Those who reported their demographic variables, were aged between 30 and 70 (mean = 48.3 years), 25 % of them were females. 80 % of the entrepreneurs and executives work in small enterprises with up to 49 people.

3.3 *Questionnaire*

SME entrepreneurs received an online questionnaire about the CSR activities in their companies. The items were assigned to four thematic fields "Customer Orientation and Product Safety", "Environment", "Dealing with Suppliers", and "Employees". Participants were asked, inter alia, about processes and procedures on quality, dealing with clients and suppliers, environment, corporate health promotion as well as health and safety at work. These thematic fields cover most of the issues which are treated in standard textbooks on business ethics (e.g., Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; Crane and Matten 2010), and had some similarities to the awareness-raising questionnaire, presented by the European Commission (without year).

Each of the four thematic fields was divided into three responsibility levels in accordance with Carroll's model: legal requirements, ethical expectations, philanthropic activities (the economic level was omitted). Thus, a matrix was produced into which all the questions could be categorised. The classification of the items in line with the legal requirements, ethical expectations, and philanthropic activities was carried out by three experts, all working as scientists as well as entrepreneurs. Because typical activities should be questioned, the number of items was not the same in each cell of the matrix, (see Table 1 and Appendix). The participants were allowed to skip items and scales that were not relevant to them, so varying N occur.

The items were to be answered as follows on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "agree fully" (5) through to "do not agree at all" (1). The higher the mean value in each cell, the higher the manifestation (positive approval).

Finally, the entrepreneurs were asked about their personal values referring to the Schwartz Values Survey (1992). The values of ten value orientations had to be answered on a nine-level scale (ranging from "in contrast to my values" = 1 to "of supreme importance" = 7).

3.4 Results

3.4.1 CSR-Engagement in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

Activities in CSR in general: On average, the reported legal requirements on "Customer Orientation and Product Safety", "Environment" and "Employees" seem to have been largely fulfilled, whereas philanthropic activities are less common. The results (see Table 1) show that the engagement for the "Employees" is manifested most, followed by the activities in the field of "Customer Orientation and Product Safety". The weakest engagement is found for "Suppliers".

Table 1 Results in self-reported activities in CSR: means and standard deviation

CSR-level issue	Legal		Social/ Ethical		Philanthropic		Overall mean value	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Customer orientation and product safety (N = 81)	4.02	0.85	4.29	0.74	3.57	1.13	4.08	0.73
Environment (N = 72)	4.44	0.78	3.68	0.99	2.51	1.19	3.66	0.89
Supplier relations (N = 56)			3.60	0.58	2.90	1.32	3.51	0.62
Employees (N = 58)	4.06	0.66	4.10	0.69			4.09	0.63

Response format: do not agree at all = 1, agree fully = 5. Empty cells: no items generated

These results need deeper, field specific considerations (see also Appendix).

Customer Orientation and Product Safety: Both the legally and the ethically expected requirements can be taken to mean "probably fulfilled" (with a mean value of 4 on average) in the self-perception of the entrepreneurs. The contextual analysis based on the items which, on average, lie below "4", (meaning that the judgement is not made on the basis of "tend to agree" or "agree fully") is nevertheless enlightening. The statement on the risk assessment of the products (QM2) with a mean of 2.92 can probably be traced back to the fact that most companies are based in the services sector. However there were some further statements that were approved only to a lesser degree which relate to the customer orientation. This covers available offerings for customers that extend beyond the statutory guarantees (QM9: mean = 3.21) and the existence of routines in order to overcome changes in the complaints rates (QM7: mean = 3.82).

Environment: In the field of the environment, ethically expected requirements reach a mean of 3.64, which means there is still substantial leeway available for corporate action. In the environmental field, further areas have not been fully completed yet: The environmental risks of the products are only partly explicitly considered (EM2: mean = 3.21), as is the consideration of ecological aspects when purchasing (EM3: mean = 3.00), or when developing new products (EM4: mean = 3.43) or controlling the transport processes (EM8: mean = 3.62). Information for customers about the ecological effects of the products and services as well (EM10: mean = 2.87) as the cooperation with communities and schools are also hardly present (EM11: mean = 2.15). This may perhaps also be due to the high proportion of service companies.

Supplier Relations: Companies working together with suppliers report in 45.7 % of the cases of certified suppliers: Certifications are mainly found in the field of ISO 9000, ISO 14000 and SA 8000. According to the reports published by companies, suppliers are hardly visited at the production sites (SR1: mean = 2.82), nor is the assurance of health and safety at work aspects considered (SR2: mean = 2.27). Know-how is partly passed on (SR3: mean = 2.90) and only in some cases arrangements on openness and transparency are agreed in the contracts (SR4: mean = 2.95).

Employees: Only four companies have a works council. A glance at the statements regarding employees shows: Special offers for corporate health protection are represented at least with a mean of 3.10 (E2), possibly because it is assumed that the work can be performed until retirement age (E7: mean = 4.36). Statutory required risk analyses are partly carried out (E1: mean = 3.45), as are corporate re-entry programmes for those who fall ill (E8: mean = 3.08). It also seems to be relatively unusual to ask the employees about their satisfaction and identification with the organisation (E13: mean = 3.44).

22.8 % work with temporary staff and 64.9 % with interns. All the companies working with temporary staff state that the temporary staff do not have the same status as other staff. The demand for equal pay and equal treatment for the temporary staff is thus not fulfilled. 90 % of the companies ensure that no individuals holding a degree (e.g. Bachelor’s degree) are used as interns and that they are appropriately paid with at least 500 EUR per month.

Links between the thematic fields of CSR: All in all, strong and significant correlations (Pearson’s r) appear between the overall means of the contextual thematic fields: The higher the engagement in one field, the higher it is in the other fields (see Table 2).

Table 2 Correlation of engagement in different thematic fields of CSR

	Environment	Supplier relations	Employees
Customer orientation and product safety	0.493[b]	0.362[a]	0.619[a]
Environment		0.502[b]	0.546[b]
Supplier relations			0.362[a]

N varying between N = 46 and N = 72; [a] significant at 5 %, [b] significant at 1 %

3.4.2 Values of the Entrepreneurs in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

63 people agreed to answer questions about their individual values. The highest values reported by the entrepreneurs are “Benevolence” and “Self-Direction”; “Universalism” came third, “Security” ranked fourth, “Achievement” comes fifth (orientation towards ambition and success) (see Table 3).

The hypothesis was made that specific value orientations and the characteristics of engagement in CSR are interconnected. Together with this, the interest focuses on the values of “Universalism”, “Benevolence” and “Achievement”. The overall mean values for the contextual fields were considered in connection with the value orientations. As assumed, “Benevolence” and “Universalism” are positively correlated (using Pearson’s r) with “Engagement to Employees” and “Engagement to the Environment”. Unexpected, but plausible positive correlations were found between the values “Security”, “Tradition” and “Engagement to Employees” and “Engagement to the Environment”. “Tradition” is due to Schwartz (1992) closely related to religiousness. According to the findings of Kaufmann et al. (1986) religious executives engage more than non-religious executives in common goods e.g., for democracy or working in an honorary capacity.

The “Self-Direction” value is also important and correlates positively with both, “Engagement to Employees” and “Engagement to the Environment”. No significant correlations occur between “Achievement” and any CSR-Engagement.

Engagement in CSR therefore seems primarily be motivated by altruistic values, such as “Universalism” and “Benevolence”, and other values such as “Tradition”, “Conformity”, and “Security” and “Self-Direction”.

Table 3 Values of the entrepreneurs and the correlation with their engagement in CSR

	Mean	SD	Customer orientation and product safety	Environment	Supplier relations	Employees
Universalism	5.13	1.19	0.141	0.378[b]	0.151	0.482[b]
Benevolence	5.65	1.27	0.176	0.431[b]	0.138	0.385[b]
Tradition	3.62	1.23	0.218	0.357[b]	0.359[b]	0.424[b]
Conformity	4.95	1.15	0.191	0.429[b]	0.205	0.340[a]
Security	5.36	1.09	0.072	0.313[a]	0.141	0.336[a]
Power	3.49	1.41	−0.164	−0.033	0.094	−0.250
Achievement	4.97	1.09	−0.016	0.217	0.062	0.135
Hedonism	4.75	1.33	0.039	0.295[a]	0.001	0.196
Stimulation	4.68	1.27	0.006	0.224	0.113	0.331[a]
Self-Determination	5.61	1.14	0.096	0.359[b]	0.139	0.355[a]

N varying between N = 60 and N = 49: [a] significant at 5 %, [b] significant at 1 %

3.4.3 CSR and Benefits

Even if the cost-benefit calculation often seemed to be of limited relevance to the respondents, the benefit aspect is often addressed in the literature: The questionnaire asked about some results from the past year that are easy to remember. A strong and significant correlation occurs between "Customer Orientation and Product Safety" and a reduction in complaints by, respectively increased profit (see Table 4). The engagement to the "Environment" has a positive relationship with the quality of the products and services. Furthermore, a positive relation exists between engagement for the "Employees" and a fall in complaints by customers. So it can be concluded that CSR seems more to be an opportunity for SME rather than a hazard.

Table 4 Correlations between corporate results and organisation of corporate structures

Corporate results	Customer orientation and product safety	Environment	Supplier relations	Employees
Quality of the product or service increased	0.121	0.297[a]	0.093	0.187
Turnover increased	0.179	0.149	0.021	−0.046
Profit increased	0.269	0.050	0.239	0.102
Number of staff increased	0.176	0.179	0.111	0.241
Absenteeism	−0.286[a]	0.080	0.173	0.047
Fewer industrial accidents	0.212	0.119	0.307	0.272
More improvement proposals	−0.178	0.027	0.079	−0.175
Fewer complaints by customers	0.411[b]	−0.117	−0.156	0.493[b]

Spearman's Rho; N varying; at least 31 cases per cell. [a] significant at 5 %, [b] significant at 1 %
Levels of corporate results: "reduced" = 0, "no change" = 1, "increase" = 2

4 Discussion: Engagement and Values in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises

The results suggest the existence of a link between the dimension of "Self-Transcendence" and the corresponding values of "Universalism" and "Benevolence" and a greater "Engagement to Employees", which confirms the research hypothesis. By contrast, no links were found to "Achievement", which evidently only plays a subordinate role in comparison to some other values. Interestingly, one value of the dimension "Self-Enhancement", namely "Power" is the least pronounced value in the self-reports submitted by entrepreneurs. The results confirm what previous surveys have implied (European Commission 2002): Entrepreneurs attach great priority to ethical values and do not seem to expect a direct benefit, for "Achievement" does not appear to correlate with CSR. CSR in SMEs does not therefore seem to be caused or driven less by "enlightened self-interest", but more by altruistic values. This provides promising opportunities for engaging in credible reputation management in SMEs: Entrepreneurs could use this to draw positive attention to themselves, and so derive long-term benefits. With the emerging lack of specialised staff, this can help to attract applicants and bond their employees.

An engagement in CSR is always associated with the use of resources which can have a negative impact on the economic performance. Accordingly, uncertainty, a lack of time, and costs are cited as the main arguments for a lack of CSR (European Commission 2002). The connections between a company's desirable results and the commitment to CSR show some positive correlation, but rarely negative correlations. That is in contradiction to the argument put forward by Vogel (2005), who states that CSR is not necessarily connected to company success and corresponds more with a kind of ideal of CSR advocates. Of course, it is sensible not to link particular success expectations with engagement to CSR. An immediate benefit only rarely shows itself through empirical actions; however CSR should at least not have a damaging effect on companies.

The results are also of significance in other ways. Both German and European policymakers are trying to support the CSR-engagement by SMEs. The question as to what forms of support have greater effects is still a question of controversy in the current CSR discussion: regulations or support for self-commitment. Since "Self-Determination", "Universalism" and "Benevolence" as well as "Security" and "Tradition" correlate with an "Engagement to the Environment" and "Engagement to Employees", a mixed strategy might possibly be reasonable: In security-critical fields, statutory requirements should be defined, while in other areas it is possible to rely on the creativity and personal initiative of the entrepreneurs. Which fields these might relate to are suggested in the data: the engagement to environmental protection is higher on the legal level than on the ethical level. On the other hand, no significant differences appear regarding the "Engagement to Employees" at the responsibility level of legal versus ethical. So a natural interest in employees seems quite high and has perhaps to be less supported. The result also confirms previous findings (e.g., European Commission 2002).

Multinational and major organisations are using CSR for their public relations work and are documenting responsible action in various forms, such as ethic-codes, corporate philosophies, or vision-mission-values-statements (Carroll and Buchholtz 2002; Talaulicar 2006). They use CSR to expand and widen their reputation. Reputation requires values such as trustworthiness, reliability and credibility on the one hand, but is reliant on intensive and credible communication on the other hand (Hutton et al. 2001; Keh and Xie 2009). Specific corporate action therefore has to be accompanied by communicating the activities and the engagement of CSR. But SMEs—often due to a lack of resources—cannot perform like this. This is perhaps why it is quite frequently that SMEs refer to a lack of qualified staff; an aspect which has hardly become noticeable in major companies so far.

Experience has shown that German SMEs often do not exactly know what to do with the concept of CSR and react critically or dismissively (Gilde 2007), although they seem active (European Commission 2002). Their engagement seems without a strategy and somewhat arbitrary. So—as already seen elsewhere—reference to an action aid or guide as well as general information on the benefits of CSR can hardly achieve anything. By contrast, intensive communication with the companies is necessary. Papers on health and safety at work would indicate that interested SMEs often need free-of-charge external consulting stimuli in order to be able to change their daily routines, but then continue to develop sustainably with their own incentive and drive (Laumen et al. 2012). An overriding interest derives from this problem: Based on the knowledge and insights gained from research, companies are to be given a simply structured practical guide and handout at no cost, which (1) makes it possible for them to recognize central areas of CSR in their company (each measurement is also an intervention), (2) by comparing themselves with other players and so being able to define their own position for a benchmark, (3) being able to derive action fields for themselves, and (4) receiving support and assistance for communicating their activities.

Politics and research should encourage responsible entrepreneurs, because they may act as models and multipliers for their employees and their community. Employees, for example, are liable to socialisation processes by which they are threatened at their workplace (Moldaschl 2004). It can be assumed that the employees carry away the ideas in their workplaces back to their homes, e.g., on how to save energy or to live a healthy life. This is expected the more they can participate in their companies. Entrepreneurs are—as noted before—embedded in their local communities. Depending on their communities' attractiveness and wealth (affluence), they often behave like social entrepreneurs in helping the communities to improve (European Commission 2003a).

5 Limitations of the Study

All participants volunteered to report on their enterprises, which means only a self-selected, biased sample was acquired. All instruments are based on self-reports and thus are highly subjective and may show socially desirable responding (Paulhus 1991): Entrepreneurs may perhaps judge their pro-social values too positively and overreport their activities in CSR. Maybe this effect can be treated as a scaling effect which causes no serious problems because the ranking of activities between the individuals has not changed.

A more serious problem seems to be the common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003). It could be that the correlations are overestimated because of the lack of different methods and the order of the sections of the questionnaire. Having reported high engagements may lead to an attribution bias in reporting ethical values, so that "Achievement" is underestimated in comparison to values like "Universalism" and "Benevolence". The study at hand is—as many other studies in this thematic field—, a correlation study in which certain causal relations are underlined as plausible. Values are seen as a motivational basis for action, which is why a causal relationship with action is considered probable. However, alternative explanations are also possible (e.g., Schwartz 1992). We know from the European Commission (2002) that findings indicate that companies report a clear increase in philanthropic behaviour patterns as from a term of existence of 5 years and more. Possibly, very young companies do not face any particular expectations of society, which is why fewer inquiries and demands are made of the companies. Therefore, they also see themselves under less pressure to respond to public inquiries. Conversely, successful companies are more often the addressees who give donations. Therefore, public attention could be a key factor for whether and how entrepreneurs and managers are willing to make commitments. These relations are of further interest.

Appendix

Mean Values and Standard Deviations in the Scales on Engagement in Customer Orientation and Product Safety, Environment, Supplier Relations, Employees
Do not agree at all = 1, Agree absolutely = 5.

Customer orientation and product safety	Level	N	Mean value	Stand. dev.
QM1. Regarding the products/services of our organisation only negligible residual risks arise for the customers	Legal	79	4.23	1.09
QM2. Regarding the products/services of our organisation a risk assessment was carried out	Legal	76	2.92	1.70
QM3. The reliability and quality of our products/services is checked regularly when delivering products/services	Ethical	78	4.03	1.38
QM4. Customer details are treated with the strictest of confidentiality	Legal	81	4.77	0.64
QM5. Complaints are answered quickly and precisely within a few days	Ethical	81	4.73	0.57
QM6. Complaints are analysed in the company from a customer orientated perspective	Ethical	80	4.31	1.09
QM7. Routines exist to change processes in order to clearly reduce the complaints rates	Ethical	79	3.80	1.42
QM8. We survey the requirements of the customers in respect of the services/products of our organisation in order to secure customer satisfaction	Philanthropic	77	3.96	1.16
QM9. We have offers for customers which extend beyond the statutory Warranties	Philanthropic	71	3.21	1.50
QM10. When marketing the products, only product or service features are described, which our products or services actually achieve	Ethical	73	4.52	0.82

Environment	Level	N	Mean value	Stand. dev.
EM1. The statutory provisions for the manufacturing of our Products/Services regarding conditions applicable to the protection of the environment (Air, Water, Working Materials …) are systematically implemented	Legal	70	4.41	1.00
EM2. We always enclose a description with the product (e.g. Safety Data Sheet), which clearly describes the environmental risks	Ethical	62	3.21	1.54
EM3. Our purchasing department has rules to ensure that ecological aspects are systematically considered	Ethical	63	3.00	1.28
EM4. When developing new products, ecological aspects are systematically considered equally to other product characteristics (e.g., energy consumption, disposal)	Ethical	60	3.43	1.32
EM5. There are rules on how waste products have to be disposed of in accordance with statutory conditions	Legal	69	4.42	0.85
EM6. There are rules to keep minimise wastes	Ethical	66	3.92	1.06
EM7. There are rules to minimise energy consumption in the company	Ethical	68	4.10	1.01
EM8. The transport processes were examined in order to minimise the energy costs	Ethical	68	3.62	1.27
EM9. Employees are instructed how to deal carefully with natural resources	Ethical	67	3.88	1.11
EM10. Customers, Supplier and Local Authorities receive information on the environmentally-related impacts of the Products/Services which they receive from our company	Philanthropic	62	2.87	1.43
EM11. We regularly (at least once a year) support projects financially or with human resources (e.g. at schools and local authorities), in order to promote environmentally compatible behaviour	Philanthropic	62	2.15	1.38

Supplier relations	Level	N	Mean value	Stand. dev.
SR1. We regularly visit suppliers in their production facilities	Ethical	55	2.82	1.09
SR2. Suppliers are checked to ensure they maintain the rules to ensure they meet the regulations on the health and safety of their employees	Ethical	52	2.27	1.14
SR3. Our Company/Our Organisation passes Knowhow on to Suppliers, in order to support them	Philanthropic	52	2.90	1.32
SR4. We have rules to secure the openness and transparency in the contracts	Ethical	53	2.96	1.16
SR5. Our Company/Our Organisation has rules to quickly meet the requirements of its suppliers (6 weeks max. after receipt of the invoice)	Ethical	54	4.17	1.09
SR6. Our Company/Our Organisation aims for long-term relations with suppliers	Ethical	56	4.64	0.59
SR7. The Company/The Organisation engages in regular Dialogue with the Suppliers, in order to improve mutual relations	Ethical	55	4.51	0.72

Employees	Level	N	Mean value	Stand. dev.
E1. In the Company/In the Organisation regular risk analyses are carried out at the work desks	Legal	53	3.45	1.39
E2. Special offerings are made to keep the employees health, such as industrial health promotion measures	Ethical	52	3.10	1.38
E3. Employees work the legally prescribed working hours	Legal	58	4.55	0.75
E4. Necessary recovery hours (breaks, rest times) are fully met	Legal	56	4.30	0.87
E5. Additional work times are not permanently demanded to employees	Ethical	56	4.59	0.76
E6. Procedures are in place to ensure that employees of differing Gender, Race, Disability, Origin, Religion, Age or Sexual Orientation are treated equally	Legal	54	3.94	1.34
E7. The work has been arranged in such a way for older employees as well (>50 Years) that it can be practised through to pension age	Ethical	56	4.36	1.00
E8. Special measures in the field of company re-integration are in place for employees who have fallen ill	Legal	51	3.08	1.37
E9. Employees are paid in accordance with the defined minimum wage for the industry. If not applicable: Where no minimum wages apply, wages are not paid at a level of less than 8 € per hour)	Ethical	55	4.47	1.10
E10. Employees are paid on a performance/achievement basis	Ethical	56	3.88	1.27
E11. Employees are supported if they wish to gain further qualifications	Ethical	55	4.38	0.83
E12. Employees receive many kinds of support in order to agree on private and professional goals and objectives	Ethical	55	4.22	0.94
E13. Employees are asked about their identification and satisfaction with the organisation and management and are informed about the results	Ethical	54	3.44	1.34
E14. Organisation development measures are—if required—carried out with the participation of employees	Ethical	53	4.11	0.85
E15. Employee details and data are treated confidentially	Legal	57	4.79	0.65

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Empowering Responsible Consumers to be Sustainable Intrapreneurs

Ulf Schrader and Christoph Harrach

Abstract Responsible consumers are often employees, spending more time in their professional life than in their private life. Many of them are willing to live up to private values, attitudes and experiences during working hours as well. Some even would like to act as sustainable intrapreneurs and pull and push colleagues and management towards increased sustainability of their organisation. Empowering responsible consumers to act as sustainable intrapreneurs has the potential to support job satisfaction and retention, i.e. typical goals of human resource management (HRM). It can in addition prevent that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is considered to be greenwashing only. In this chapter we will show—after a short introduction—how private life and working life generally interact with each other. Then, we will concentrate on the outside-in spill over effects, i.e. on how private responsible behaviour might be utilized by HRM and CSR management. For that purpose, we will first present the concept of sustainable intrapreneurship and then the determinants of psychological empowerment. We combine these two by showing how relevant HRM measures might create and increase empowerment for sustainable intrapreneurship. After that, we will discuss chances and risks of this approach before we finally give some conclusions for managers and researchers.

Keywords Responsible consumers · Corporate social responsibility (CSR) · Empowerment · Human resource management (HRM) · Intrapreneurship · Lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS)

U. Schrader (✉) · C. Harrach
Economic Education and Sustainable Consumption, Technische Universität Berlin, Marchstraße 23 10587 Berlin, Germany
e-mail: ulf.schrader@tu-berlin.de

C. Harrach
e-mail: christoph.harrach@tu-berlin.de

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1 Introduction

This work has been inspired by the formula "CSR − HR = PR" which was first published in a report by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (2005). The authors highlight the importance of human resource (HR) management and the creation of an internal bottom-up process in order to develop a credible Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) management. An employee-driven CSR management has a greater chance to avoid the image of "greenwashing" than a purely management-driven approach:

> If employees are not engaged, Corporate Social Responsibility becomes an exercise in public relations. The credibility of an organisation will become damaged when it becomes evident that a company is not 'walking the talk' (World Business Council for Sustainable Development 2005).

In the past, CSR was often regarded as a concept with relevance for marketing or product development only. To integrate CSR fully in an organisation requires contributions from people across all functions and departments (World Business Council for Sustainable Development 2005). Consequently, authors like Boudreau (2003) have claimed that "sustainability […] must become a part of HRM". Today, the topic of sustainability has eventually reached many human resource management departments (Ehnert 2009), but still it is usually restricted to "HR policies and practices, such as child labour, worker representation, health and safety" (Boudreau 2003). These are important issues, but there is a much greater potential if HRM and sustainability were linked more comprehensively.

An important step in that direction would be to consider employees not only in their role as workers but with regard to their whole living, including private experiences, values and attitudes connected to sustainability (Muster and Schrader 2011). Thus, "green" or "sustainable" HR managers should be aware that at least some of the employees they deal with are people who try to practice sustainable consumption in their private life. In surveys like the Eurobarometer, more than 90 % of the respondents declare that they are interested in environmental issues (European Commission 2011). The World Values Survey (2010) also shows high levels of acceptance for sustainability oriented values on a global level. Even when a social desirability bias is taken into account it is obvious that sustainability orientation is no longer restricted to a small niche of eco-pioneers. Not only sustainability marketing but also HRM could build on this relevant and growing segment of people. This points to an important link between responsible private living, The Partnership for Education and Research about Responsible Living (PERL) usually deals with, and working life.

Employees acting as responsible consumers in private life might have or could develop the willingness, the ability and the freedom to foster sustainability within their corporations by pulling and pushing colleagues and managers. If so, they are empowered to act as sustainable intrapreneurs.

This chapter will discuss the concept, the implementation, and possible effects of the empowerment of responsible consumers to be sustainable intrapreneurs.

In the following we will first clarify, how private life and working life generally interact with each other and how this could be fertilized by HR and CSR management. After that we will show how a stronger influence of sustainable private life on working life could be generated by clarifying the concepts "sustainable intrapreneurs" and "empowerment of responsible consumers as employees". Then, we will present a synopsis of possible chances and risks and finally propose conclusions for management and research.

2 Interdependencies of Private Life and Working Life

Work-life research in the fields of sociology and HRM has shown that the different life spheres and roles of employees are interdependent (e.g. Edwards and Rothbard 2000; Kanter 1977; Lambert 1990). Challenges and experiences related to working life can influence the private life and vice versa. Numerous studies on work-life-balance (WLB) reflect on these interdependencies. They present measures how both life sphere can be balanced—in favour of companies and employees alike (e.g. Kossek and Lambert 2005; Ryan and Kossek 2008). However, up to now sustainability aspects have been neglected in WLB research (Muster and Schrader 2011).

Similarly, research about sustainable consumption has hardly considered the influence of and on work behaviour. An exception is the study by Berger and Kanetkar (1995), which has shown, that successful recycling programmes at work can have a positive spillover effect on private recycling behaviour at home. However, this effect at home was not the goal but a positive collateral effect of the CSR activity. Other studies have concentrated on negative effects of modern working life on sustainable consumption (e.g. Reisch 2001; Muster 2012).

Against this background, Muster and Schrader (2011) proposed the concept of a green work-life-balance which includes measures to consciously stimulate

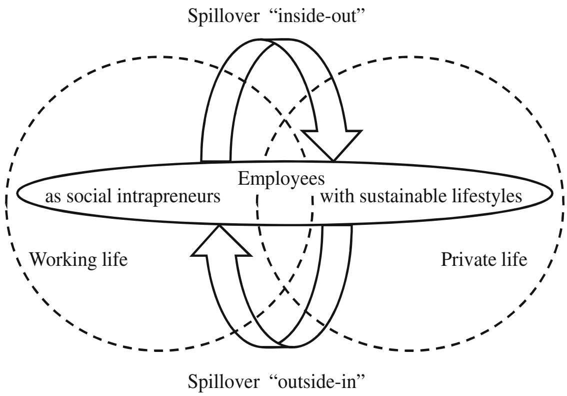

Fig. 1 Interdependencies of private life and working life (according to Muster and Schrader 2011)

sustainability related spillover effects between the two life spheres. In this context, spillover effects can occur either “inside-out” or “outside-in” (see Fig. 1).

Muster (2011) focused on the inside-out perspective and analyzed how the workplace could be better developed as a place to learn for sustainable consumption. This chapter now focusses on the outside-in perspective and will show, how the employer and the employee could profit from better integrating private values, attitudes, and experiences into working life. Employees with sustainable lifestyles who are successful in generating the described outside-in spillover effects for themselves and others can be described as sustainable intrapreneurs.

3 Sustainable Intrapreneurs

Based on an extensive review of existing intrapreneurship definitions, Antoncic and Hisrich come to the conclusion that the most common description of the concept is “entrepreneurship within an existing organization” (Antoncic and Hisrich 2003, p. 9), i.e. acting like an innovative owner-manager and not like a risk-avoiding clerk. The idea of intrapreneurship goes back to the year 1978, when Gifford and Elizabeth Pinchot wrote a paper titled “Intra-Corporate Entrepreneurship”. In that paper the authors argue that the large corporations are too big to be innovative and that a “free market entrepreneurship within the corporate organization” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978) is demanded. This would ultimately lead to a “social invention of considerable importance, both for the individuals in it, and for the productivity and responsivity of the corporation” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978).

In their research paper, Pinchot and Pinchot already refer to a “new class of information and idea handlers” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978) in corporations, whose “achievement needs are not primarily for money, but for having their ideas acknowledged and used” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978). Pinchot and Pinchot write that these employees are idealistic and have a very strong yearning for freedom.

Although the concept originally was not founded as an element of environmental or responsible management, but focussed on innovativeness and competitive advantages of companies, Pinchot and Pinchot have already claimed that intrapreneurs have a strong social and environmental motivation and that they “need to feel sure they can avoid creating effects in the environment or in society that they consider wrong” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978).

Pinchot and Pinchot (1978) identified two major challenges for corporations dealing with this “new class of intra-corporate entrepreneurs”. The first challenge is to give those employees the most possible freedom in their work without losing track of the corporation’s goals. The second challenge concerns the innovativeness of the corporation and how to maintain it. Pinchot and Pinchot recommend to set up a system in which those employees could act just as independent as entrepreneurs “while still holding over them the technological, financial, and perhaps most significant, the informational umbrella of the corporation” (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978).

Although the social and environmental motivations of intrapreneurs were described by Pinchot and Pinchot already in 1978, the intrapreneurs in general are not specifically focussed on sustainability. Thus, this paper refers to a new and specific form of intrapreneurs, the so-called "social intrapreneurs". According to SustainAbility (2008, p. 4), a social intrapreneur is

1. Someone who works inside major corporations or organizations to develop and promote practical solutions to social or environmental challenges where progress is currently stalled by market failures.
2. Someone who applies the principles of social entrepreneurship inside a major organization.
3. One characterized by an 'insider–outsider' mindset and approach.

To make clear that we consider environmental as well as social effects, we prefer the term "sustainable intrapreneur", similar to Gerlach (2003) who uses the expression "sustainability intrapreneurship". Thus, in the following we call our object of analysis sustainable intrapreneur, not social intrapreneur.

Our definition of a sustainable intrapreneur refers to SustainAbility (2008), but is slightly different:

(1) A sustainable intrapreneur works in a corporation (or organisation) to develop and promote practical solutions for social or environmental challenges.

SustainAbility has focussed on intrapreneurs, setting up social businesses in the name of major corporations. However, the original idea of intrapreneurship is not limited to major corporations but can be also be applied to active employees in smaller corporations or (non-profit) organisations. In addition, there is no justification to reduce social intrapreneurship to "challenges where progress is currently stalled by market failures". Thus, we take all opportunities to create social or environmental progress into account.

(2) Someone who is able to push and pull management and colleagues towards these sustainable solutions.

We want to make clear what SustainAbility means with "the principles of social intrapreneurship", i.e. the way how entrepreneurship within an organisation works. The motivation of a social intrapreneur is to "incubate and deliver business solutions" (SustainAbility 2008, p. 7) and to solve social or ecological problems (Gerlach 2003). Social intrapreneurs work in the corporate world and understand business processes as well as sustainable issues. The social intrapreneur has the same characteristics as a social entrepreneur with the slight difference that he or she is working within a corporation. Scientific research in the field of social or sustainable entrepreneurship is mainly focussed on the social and environmental dimension of the sustainable development scheme. Thus, Hockerts (2003, p. 50) defines sustainability entrepreneurship as

> the identification of a sustainability innovation and its implementation either through the foundation of a start-up or the radical reorientation of an existing organization's business model so as to achieve the underlying ecological or social objectives.

To be able to re-orientate the business model of an existing organisation—or at least parts of it—, a sustainable intrapreneur needs to convince others. How this is possible can be described according to Ray and Anderson's study of "The Cultural Creatives. How 50 Million People are Changing the World" (Ray and Anderson 2000). Intrapreneurs with a strong sustainability agenda, based on personal core values, attitudes and experiences are able to pull and push colleagues and management towards social and environmental progress. With visible actions (like cycling to work, eating vegetarian in the canteen or turning off lights and heating when leaving the office) he or she might act as a role model. It might pull colleagues who are already "in transition" (Ray 2008, p. 6) towards a "lifestyle of health and sustainability" (LOHAS) in private and working life. With convincing arguments the intrapreneurs can additionally push others towards more sustainability. Both, the push- and the pull-effect can contribute not only to additional social business solutions, but to a "greening" of the core business.

(3) One with a sustainable lifestyle and characterized by an 'insider–outsider' mindset and approach.

For the described approach of bringing private sustainability conviction into the workplace and use it as a resource for sustainable intrapreneurship a sustainable lifestyle is crucial. Private experiences and efforts to live more sustainably serve both as a learning opportunity and as a source for credibility to be used at the workplace. When the private life is the starting point for business development the maintenance of an outsider perspective as a complement to the insider perspective of the employee is inevitable. Thus, sustainable intrapreneurship and the spillover effects between private and working life, described in Sect. 2, have the potential to fit well together.

As mentioned before we assume that the type of employee who would like to act as a sustainable intrapreneur is in fact rising in numbers, due to the expanding ecological and social awareness of consumers in the private sphere and the natural spillover of values, attitudes and experiences to working life. The key question for organisations now is how to deal with this new situation of "substance seeking" employees and how to integrate their talents into the organisation's CSR management. An important motivational theory that could be used in this context is psychological empowerment theory (Spreitzer 1995). There are good reasons to link sustainable intrapreneurship with the psychological empowerment theory. Intrapreneurship and empowerment are both positively related to innovativeness (Antoncic and Hisrich 2003; Spreitzer 1995) and to intrinsic motivation (Pinchot and Pinchot 1978; Zhang and Bartol 2010). Sustainable intrapreneurship depends on intrinsically motivated and empowered employees. Thus, it is relevant to know how employees, acting as responsible consumers in their private life, can be empowered to be sustainable intrapreneurs in their working life.

4 Empowerment of Responsible Consumers as Employees

Psychological empowerment at the workplace is described by Spreitzer (1995) as a motivational construct with four dimensions, namely meaning, competence, self-determination and impact. Her model is based on an extensive review of empirical studies and has been tested and validated (Spreitzer 2007). We will show that all dimensions can be applied to sustainable intrapreneurship. In addition we will give examples of how HRM can empower responsible consumers as employees to act as sustainable intrapreneurs.

Meaning "is the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's ideals or standards [… It] involves a fit between the requirements of the work role and personal beliefs, values, and behaviours" (Spreitzer 1995, p. 1443). Thus, for an empowered sustainable intrapreneur it is personally meaningful to foster social and environmental change at work. Companies that want this kind of employees especially need to consider the respective personal beliefs, values, and behaviours in their recruitment policy, e.g. by addressing them explicitly in their job advertisements, interviews, and recruiting decisions. The willingness to act as a sustainable intrapreneur can also be increased by an adequate incentive and reward system. However, employers need to be careful not to destroy the intrinsic motivation and create crowding out effects by offering purely monetary rewards (Frey 1994). Incentives and rewards like allowing time and budget for "own" sustainability projects and corporate volunteering activities (e.g. Lee and Higgins 2001) might be more appropriate.

Competence "is an individual's belief in his or her capability to perform activities with skill" (Spreitzer 1995, p. 1443). Accordingly, an empowered sustainable intrapreneur knows that he or she has the skill to use private knowledge and convictions to support the CSR management of a corporation. It is not a question of objective competences, but of the employee's subjective conviction of his or her ability to act. Thus, Spreitzer's understanding of competence is synonymous with Bandura's concept of self-efficacy (Bandura 1997). The competence dimension has to be considered in the recruitment process. It can be fostered by companies via different measures of HR development, especially specific trainings to improve professional and social competences—and to increase the awareness of having the skills to act as a sustainable intrapreneur and being able to push and pull the corporation towards sustainable solutions.

Self-determination "is an individual's sense of having choice in initiating and regulating actions" (Spreitzer 1995, p. 1443). An empowered sustainable intrapreneur knows that he or she has the freedom to decide how to develop sustainable solutions for the company. HR and organisation management can increase self-determination by reducing regulation and delegating responsibilities to employees and by considering this within job descriptions. This should go along with a more frequent and intensive interaction of (top) management and interested employees (Sahoo and Das 2011). In addition, employees with sustainable lifestyles can be stimulated to bring in their private experiences via innovation workshops, idea competitions and other innovative instruments of suggestion schemes. Access to specific tools for internal sustainability communication (e.g. intranet-platforms, newsletters, and personal dialogues) also allows empowered employees to influence their colleagues.

Impact "is the degree to which an individual can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes at work" (Spreitzer 1995, p. 1443f). For a sustainable intrapreneur impact means that he or she can influence other co-workers and the company towards sustainability. With performance appraisal, i.e. by measuring and accounting the effects of employee-driven activities on the CSR performance of the company and by making this transparent via internal communication, HR and CSR management can assure that sustainable intrapreneurs know about their impact.

To sum up, responsible consumers who are willing, able, and allowed to have a relevant impact on the CSR of their employer are empowered to act as sustainable intrapreneurs.

Figure 2 summarizes how HRM can empower employees. Only the most important relations are indicated since the mentioned HRM measures all have the potential to influence the complex construct of empowerment (Sahoo and Das 2011).

Struzyna and Marzec (2003) give empirical evidence that the four dimensions of empowerment have indeed a significant relationship with intrapreneurial behaviour. Thus, empowering responsible consumers as employees means turning them into sustainable intrapreneurs.

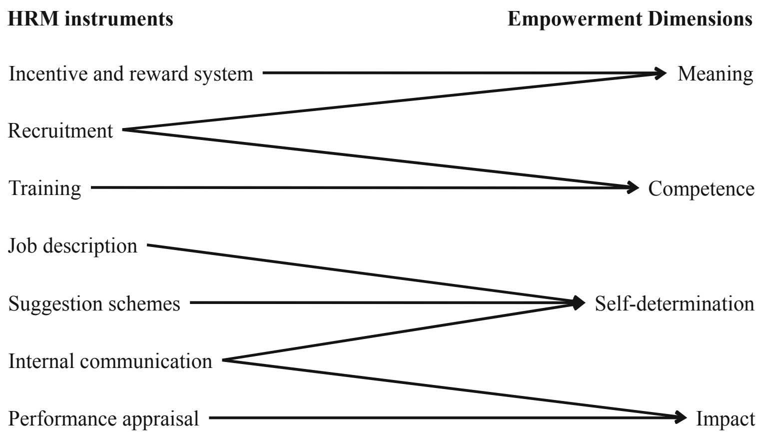

Fig. 2 Most important influences of HRM on empowerment

5 Chances and Risks

Reflecting on what has been said so far, several chances and risks of the presented concept can be highlighted.

If employees are empowered to actively create and implement bottom-up suggestions towards sustainable development, the first direct effect is the chance that the CSR performance of the organisation will be improved.

In addition, empirical studies have shown that empowerment can lead to more creativity and innovation (Amabile 1996; Antoncic and Hisrich 2003; Spreitzer 1995; Zhang and Bartol 2010). It can be expected, that this general increase in innovativeness is also valid for empowered sustainable intrapreneurs.

Both, the CSR performance and the ability to offer innovative products and services are important dimensions of corporate reputation (Fombrun et al. 2000; Walsh and Beatty 2007). As stated in the introduction, the integration of employees into all CSR activities reduces the risk that CSR is assessed by stakeholder as pure PR or "greenwashing". Sustainable intrapreneurs have the potential to act as authentic brand ambassadors being engaged in positive word-of-mouth in favour of their employer. This most credible form corporate communication might further increase the organisation's reputation.

Empowerment and intrapreneurship are also positively related to typical objectives of HRM. It has been shown that they can increase workplace commitment (Rhoades et al. 2001; Sahoo and Das 2011) and intrinsic work motivation (Antoncic and Hisrich 2003; Zhang and Bartol 2010). These general findings should also be true for sustainable intrapreneurship. In this case, positive effects on job satisfaction and retention, which have been found for CSR (e.g. Riordan et al. 1997; Maignan et al. 1999) and for work-life-balance activities (Forsyth and Polzer-Debruyne 2007) are also expectable.

There are also risks and challenges when empowering employees to be sustainable intrapreneurs. Usually there are costs (time and money) incurred, which are measureable and directly relevant. In contrast, positive effects that occur in the future are more difficult to measure and are uncertain. Thus, the investments in empowerment might be considered to be inadequate costs.

In addition, empowerment could possibly raise unreasonable expectations of employees that cannot be fulfilled by the organisation. The goal of an organisation usually is different from the (diverse) goals of its members. A strong conviction for sustainability does not mean that an organisation is able to put all ideas of their employees with sustainable lifestyles into practice.

What is more, some employees might even evaluate the request to utilize their private ideas and experiences in their working life as an intrusion into their private affairs. The attempt to foster the spill-offer effects between life spheres and to reduce the borderline between work and free time might be perceived as exploitation of private life and a reduction of freedom—which could create reactance

Table 1 Synopsis of possible chances and risks of empowering responsible consumers to be sustainable intrapreneurs

Chances	Risks
Improved CSR performance	Inadequate costs (time & money)
Innovativeness in the field of sustainable development	Increasing/unreasonable expectations of employees
Improved corporate reputation	Reactance of employees against exploitation of private life
Commitment, motivation, satisfaction, and retention of important employees	

(Brehm et al. 1966; Muster and Schrader 2011). Thus, the offensive demand of employers to bring in private ideas might result in employees' wish of an even clearer demarcation of work and private life.

Table 1 summarizes the mentioned chances and risks of empowering responsible consumers to be sustainable intrapreneurs.

6 Conclusions for Managers and Researchers

The challenge for managers is to take the chances of empowering responsible consumers as employees while reducing the risks. An important condition to prevent reactance is to find employees who would like to be empowered as sustainable intrapreneurs and to bring in their private experiences and ideas. This can be realized by involving employees in CSR activities on a voluntary basis. Then, potential intrapreneurs can be identified in a self-selection process. Additional tools, described in Sect. 4, allow empowering those employees who can really improve the CSR management of the company. These employees can support each other in inter-divisional working groups. To start a bottom-up process, it is important that the working groups stay open for other interested employees. Intensive exchange with top management would confirm that these activities are of high importance for the company. Top managers who could show a private sustainability interest themselves and relate this to their professional goals and activities can be helpful to guarantee the credibility of endeavors to empower responsible consumers to be sustainable intrapreneurs.

The corporate activities should be accompanied by scientific evaluation, since the proposed measures and effects still require conceptual foundation and empirical validation. The empirical results we refer to are related to our concept, but the specific measures and effects of empowering responsible consumers to be sustainable intrapreneurs have not been completely implemented and tested yet.

Thus, the next step should be cooperation of companies and researchers to implement and test the presented ideas. Maybe not all effects will turn out to be as relevant and successful as we have proposed. However, we are convinced that the idea of empowering responsible consumers to act as sustainable intrapreneurs deserves further consideration. It has the potential to complement existing sustainability initiatives and to bridge the established areas of sustainable consumption and sustainable management.

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