

Factors Influencing Environmentally Friendly Behaviors. An Exploratory Study on Braşov Residents

by

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Abstract. The present paper aims to investigate the factors which influence the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors by the citizens of Braşov, as well as the means, resources and tools that local authority offers to residents in order to stimulate this behavior. In this sense, a qualitative research was conducted, using semi directive in-depth interviews, among 13 residents from the city of Braşov, Romania. The selection of the interviewed subjects was based on their involvement in environmentally friendly activities. The results outline several influence factors of the respondents' environmentally friendly behaviors, such as: the level of environmental education, the awareness concerning environmental problems, the time required for the adoption of environmentally friendly activities, the standard of living in Romania, development of specific local infrastructure, the institutional and legislative framework on environmental protection, the comfort and willingness to conform to group norms. Thus, the involvement of individuals in environmentally friendly activities should be based on the judicious combination of all factors that influence the adoption of such behavior.

Key words: Environmental Education, Environmentally Friendly Behaviors, In-Depth Interview, Residents, Specific Infrastructure

JEL classification: M31, Q56

1 Introduction

In the last decades, the international academic literature revealed an increased individual involvement in environmentally friendly activities. Numerous studies outlined the individuals' activities, aimed to protect the environment (Kinnear and Taylor, 1973; Ottoman, 1994; Martin and Simintiras, 1995). Other studies focused on the factors which stimulate, restrict or constitute significant predictors for individuals' involvement in environmentally friendly activities (Thøgersen, 2005; Steg, 2008).

The decision to adopt a pro-environmental behavior is influenced by the availability of appropriate infrastructure, facilities and sustainable options (Koos, 2011; Press and Arnould, 2009; Thøgersen, 2005). Even when sustainable options are available, they can be expensive or difficult to find compared to traditional products, thus reducing sustainable consumption (Tanner and Kast, 2003).

Thøgersen (2005) suggests that reducing the time and effort required for sustainable consumption - changing environmental

conditions - may be more important than price. Other external factors, such actions (or inactions) of government, business or culture may limit consumers' freedom to choose sustainable options in certain areas (eg, availability of quality public transport).

In addition, the specific literature includes a series of studies which outlined a classification of individuals in different categories, according to their level of involvement in eco-friendly activities (Stern, 2000; Ahmad *et al.*, 2012). Environmental commitment is defined as what individuals do or have done on environmental activities (Aragon-Correa, *et al.*, 2004; Henriques and Sadorsky, 1999). It includes actions such as changing consumer behavior and purchasing of environmental policy-based companies. As Rapert *et al.* (2010) argued, many individuals expressed intense environmental concern but recognized that it does not always translate into a change in behavior. Experian Research (2008) showed that a very small number of consumers (called Behavioral Greens) are concerned about the environment and change their behavior in accordance with it.

Considering these issues, this study aims to investigate the factors which influence the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors by the citizens of Braşov, as well as the means, resources and tools that local authority offers to residents in order to stimulate this behavior.

2 Review of the scientific literature

Ecological behaviour implies the preservation and protection of the ecosystem and biodiversity, including attitudes and activities oriented towards the conservation and promotion of natural environment values, in any situation, as well as the ability to influence its adopting by other individuals in the group and society (Petcu *et al.*, 2012, p. 134).

Individuals' awareness concerning environmental problems and its' reflection in the purchasing behavior were analyzed in the academic literature by several researchers (Dispoto, 1977; Hoch and Deighton, 1989; Park *et al.*, 1994; Schlegelmilch *et al.*, 1996). Some studies (Kinnear and Taylor, 1973; Ottoman, 1994; Martin and Simintiras, 1995) reported an increased public participation in eco-friendly activities, such as donating funds for environmental purposes, buying eco-friendly products, using clean fuels or organic food and recycling.

There are numerous citizens who strive to protect the environment and, at the same time, observe and perceive external constraints on the efficiency of individual consumers' actions (Thøgersen, 2005). For example, individuals may have limited resources in terms of time, money, cognitive capacity and abilities, for a sustainable lifestyle. Actual consumers have limited access to information regarding the origin of products and their environmental impact. At the same time, consumers support the so-called „ignorance cost”, explained by the extent to which they would make different choices if they knew sufficient details about the characteristics of the products they purchase (Chang and Lusk, 2009).

In order to explain individuals' involvement in environmentally responsible actions, most studies focused on the psychological and

contextual motives (Manzan and Zerom, 2006; Jakob, 2007; Rehdanz, 2007). In addition, several factors were identified, as significant predictors of environmental behaviors: knowledge and values, situational and economic barriers (Steg, 2008). The environmental behavior may be generated by factors such as the need to reduce costs (by minimizing energy and water consumption), but also by psychological factors (because the consumer thinks this is the best way). This indicates two types of environmentally friendly consumers (Ahmad *et al.*, 2012): (1) those who are constrained to adopt it (e.g. raising prices generates a reduced consumption) and (2) those who are willing to pay more for ecological products.

Petcu *et al.* (2012) conducted a holistic analysis of the inherent conditions specific to this field in order to identify the factors influencing environmental behavior. These authors considered that the ecological behavior of consumers is a variable associated with three groups of factors: external factors (regulatory framework, community organizing, information), psychosocial factors (which grouped social factors such as family, group, status and psychological factors - perception, motivation learning, attitudes, and beliefs) and economic factors (meaning constraints).

Stern (2000) observed three different types of pro-environmental behaviors:

1. Environmental activism (active involvement in environmental organizations);
2. Non-activist public behaviors (supporting public policies or the willingness to pay higher taxes)
3. Private environmentalism (buying “green” products, minimizing energy or recycling).

Environmental behavior was conceptualized in five behavioral categories as following (Asilsoy, 2012): energy saving, water conservation, waste management, green consumption and sustainable transportation.

Roberts (1996) indicated that consumers' attitudes are significant predictors of their ecological conscious behavior. The same author argued that environmentally conscious individuals are more likely to engage in eco-

friendly behaviors and individuals who think that ecological activities may determine a positive change, are more likely to engage in green behaviors.

3 Research methodology

In order to identify the factors which influence the adoption of an environmentally friendly behavior by Braşov residents, a qualitative research was conducted among 13 subjects, between November and December 2014, using semi directive in-depth interviews. The selection of the respondents was based on their involvement in environmentally friendly activities and from a total of 13 interviewed subjects, 6 of them are members of environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Data processing was done individually by analyzing responses from each interview and further on by centralizing the information based on its compatibility and convergence with the following research objectives:

- identifying the factors which have an influence on Braşov residents' involvement in environmentally friendly activities;
- identifying the means, resources and tools that local authority offers to Braşov residents in order to stimulate an environmentally friendly behavior.

After conducting the interviews, the authors of the present paper transcribed them and performed a content analysis.

4 Results and discussion

According to the interviewed subjects, the adoption of an environmentally friendly behavior is determined by different types of factors: economic, social, psychological, institutional, legislative etc., which support or discourage individuals. After grouping and analyzing the collected data, we identified several factors, which explain Braşov residents' low involvement in environmentally friendly activities, presented as follows.

a. Environmental education. According to the respondents, environmental education is a discipline which has not received sufficient

attention in Romanian education institutions as the number of hours allocated for it in the school curricula has decreased considerably and the theoretical aspects do not include practical activities which pupils can do, in order to learn and apply the conceptual framework.

S13: "When I was a pupil, I learnt about it [the environment], (...) but I have never studied the significance of an ecosystem."

Individuals' increasing awareness concerning the importance and necessity of environmental conservation, as well as the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors is based on the existence of certain environmental courses in the school curricula. Studying of such courses is a necessary condition, but insufficient, for the theoretical concepts to be transposed in real life. In this sense, according to the respondents, it is necessary to put the newly learnt information in practice, so that pupils/students can better understand the environmental effects of their positive or negative actions.

b. Individuals' little knowledge about environmental problems. The low importance given to individuals' environmental education in Romania resulted in a decrease of their awareness about environmental issues.

S10: "There are cases where people really do not care or are not informed or do not realize the effects of their behavior. (...) I think there's the problem, we do not see, do not really see how much we are wasting ... and it is difficult to inform. (...) we do not know, because if we knew and see (...), so individuals should seek information on this subject."

According to some respondents, the elder persons have a lower degree of awareness regarding environmental issues. The low level of knowledge of elder people on environmental issues could be determined by the peculiarities of the education institutions they attended and by the context they studied in, as environmental protection was not a priority area for the development decades ago because of a lower level of environmental pollution. On the other hand, there are a number of international studies showing that young people are more concerned to environmental issues compared to the elderly.

According to the results of this study, there were opinions that the involvement of youth in ecological activities is higher compared to other individuals. However, one respondent - member of an environmental organization and engaged in pupils' / students' educational activities on environmental issues - found that among young people, there is a low level of information about the activities of greening taking place locally.

c. The indifference, people's carelessness towards real environmental problems.

Putting environmental education on the second place in educational curricula may explain individuals' attitude of indifference / carelessness to environmental problems, but also to the less friendly implications which their behavior may have on the environment.

S7: "It is clear that many young people do not realize that there is pollution and what effects it has on the environment. Everyone talks about global warming but do not actually realize what it is. Nobody is interested in that. (...) we are not aware of the benefits of selective waste collection (...) we are not aware of how much we pollute the environment when one person rides a car. "

d. The lack of sufficient time or the existence of other priorities that justify individuals' low involvement in environmentally friendly activities.

According to one of the interviewed subjects, the adoption of environmentally responsible behavior requires allocation of additional time or submission of a larger effort in specific activities. In other words, environmental protection is not a part of their activities, but an "annex" to which they must devote more time and effort. Also, with the increasing number of individual responsibilities, the time devoted to protecting the environment decreases. This behavior may be determined by the place of environmental protection in Romania's development priorities, which does not encourage / involve individuals in environmentally friendly activities.

S6: "Other people find my attempt to protect the environment quite strange: "Do you have time for this? or do you think about that as well?" especially as, generally, we are all busy, in a

hurry. I think they see this behavior as something you cannot do every day, constantly associated with any activity, but as something you have to deal specifically to protect the environment ... which, in their view, requires additional efforts. "

Placing environmentally friendly activities on second place in individuals' behaviors is also demonstrated by other respondents' opinions. Reviews such as "as far as my daily program is not very busy" or "I am in a rush, I do not have time" demonstrate that environmental protection is not, at least in the city of Braşov, part of the normal activities carried out by the city's residents.

The adoption of an environmentally friendly behavior is considered by retailers or by respondents' friends to be an exception to individuals' normal behavior. Refusing to buy / receive bags for product packaging / storage / transport or attracting the attention of others when they behave less environmentally friendly, are some of the specific situations that highlight the place of environmental protection in Braşov residents' concerns.

S10: "[in the store]" Want bag? ", " I do not! "(...) we try to protest, but people are strange ... yeah, we're freaks, what you mean you do not want a bag, it is free."

e. The standard of living in Romania.

Another issue mentioned by the interviewed subjects concerns the low standard of living specific to their country. In their view, individuals' involvement in environmentally friendly activities is closely related to the existence of a higher level of socio-economic development. In other words, the higher the level of socio-economic development of a country, the bigger are the concerns of individuals regarding environmental protection as they have the necessary resources (time, money, effort, etc.) for the adoption of a specific behavior. These opinions confirm the results obtained by other authors in similar studies which highlight the close relationship between the two components (Kemmelmeier, Król and Kim, 2002; Franzen and Meyer, 2010; Givens and Jorgenson, 2011).

S10: "(...) we should not forget that Romania does not all have this level of welfare (...) it is also the problem of the rural population and poor people who do not have these thoughts (...) meaning they have basic needs, have nothing to eat, they do not have a place to sleep, or they are cold (...), and automatically link all to their standard of living (...) it's not anyone's fault that people generally have other priorities."

The standard of living in Romania, the low income per capita, coupled with high prices of organic products sold on the Romanian market, were mentioned by the interviewed subjects as other issues which have to be considered when evaluating citizens' involvement in environmentally friendly activities. In this respect, respondents referred to cleaning products, local food products, but also the necessary equipment they would need to adopt a more environmentally responsible behavior.

S11: "I do not use green cleaning products that are more expensive."

f. Developing ineffective and / or insufficient local infrastructure.

An environmentally responsible behavior cannot be achieved only through education, information or by increasing awareness of the importance of protecting the environment; it also needs the intervention of local public administration. Its role is to ensure adequate infrastructure to encourage citizens' adoption of such behavior.

The study results reveal the existence of an underdeveloped specific infrastructure in the city of Braşov. Thus, in terms of means that local authorities have so far made available to citizens to become more involved in environmental protection, the following issues were mentioned: bicycle lanes, car traffic management - the number of roundabouts and parking places, specific infrastructure for disabled people or people who use wheelchairs for transporting children and special containers for selective waste collection.

According to the respondents, bike trails designed so far do not cover all the main roads of the city. The infrastructure created and made available to citizens is not continuous; it exists only in certain areas of the city and does not offer the possibility of safely transporting bikes

from one side of the city to another. For this reason, the interviewed subjects considered that the use of bicycles (a clean alternative for transportation in the city) is discouraged and potentially interested citizens use other means of transport which are safer, but with a higher degree of pollution (e.g. bus, private car) to move from one point to another of Braşov city.

Another problem that the interviewed subjects reported about the specific infrastructure is that in Braşov the number of cars has increased in recent years, causing a corresponding increase in the number of parking spaces. According to one of the respondents – who is a member of an environmental non-governmental organization – in order to protect the environment and, at the same time, to ease traffic congestion, fees charged for the use of cars in the city should be applied or increased, especially in crowded areas, in order to discourage such behavior. According to the same subject these fees should increase progressively, considering the degree of car agglomeration in the area.

Also, in the same context, the interviewed subjects raised the issue of specific infrastructure necessary for the movement of people with disabilities or those who use wheelchairs for transporting children. In this respect, it is considered that the currently existing infrastructure is not yet adequately developed for these individuals.

Concerning the selective waste collection bins, most respondents noted the existence of several problems that local authorities should solve in order to encourage citizens' environmentally responsible behavior, including: insufficient containers in the city, the fact that they do not exist in all city neighborhoods or the fact that wastes, once selected, are mixed in the same container to be then transported in special places for waste disposal.

S13: "I noticed that when they were taken from the house [wastes] they were put in the same place anyway, and it was one of the reasons I stopped recycle (...) in my neighborhood [from the city of Braşov] there are no bins for selective collection, frankly, will not transport the garbage in other neighborhoods, given that

I am not convinced that waste is processed correctly."

Respondents also discussed the involvement of retailers in environmentally friendly activities. In this respect, the remark of one of the subjects should be mentioned, referring to the specific infrastructure that some retailers put it at the disposal of their clients (e.g. returning plastic bottles). The mentioned subject considers that Braşov residents are less involved in such activities for two reasons: first, because the involvement effort in such activities is higher than the amount of money they would receive in exchange for the return of plastic bottles, and on the other hand, because the specific infrastructure is not organized in order to encourage such behavior.

g. The desire for comfort, familiarity to do the same every time, the effort implied by a lifestyle change or a desire to conform to a particular group is, according to the respondents, other reasons explaining the low involvement of Braşov residents in environmentally friendly activities. The comfort of using their private car, ease and speed of movement from one point to another of the city or to various other destinations in the country and abroad, and time savings resulting from the choice of means of transportation are grounds for which Braşov citizens are behaving less environmentally responsible.

S12: "It's convenient, it's my car, I get on it in front of my building, so it's all about convenience (...) I think I'll never give up the car to give due to the idea that it pollutes, we have not reached that level ecological consciousness, I only leave the car home when I need transportation in the city."

The services offered by retailers to attract and retain consumers such as availability / advantageous geographical position, close proximity to housing, indoor and outdoor facilities, how they organize their stands - to meet the needs of comfort, convenience and speed in terms of purchasing, are other reasons why Braşov residents are less involved in environment-friendly activities.

S9: "(...) it's easier to go to the supermarket and get ready packaged products than to go to the market with your own bag."

Respondents considered that the adoption of a less environmentally responsible behavior by Braşov residents should be determined by their willingness to comply with the rules of the groups they belong to. The general conception that the country's economic growth is more important than protecting the environment, coupled with the desire of individuals to comply to group pressure, would probably explain the low involvement of the citizens in environmentally friendly activities.

S10: "(...) it is more convenient to do what everybody does!"

h. The absence or inefficiency of the implementation of institutional and legislative framework on environmental protection. Regarding the activities which have a lower or higher impact on the environment, Braşov citizens' behavior neither is, sufficiently monitored, nor penalized when not complied with legislation. To be more environmentally friendly behavior, Braşov citizens should be obliged, constrained in various forms (through higher fines, through greater supervision of outdoor activities and charges for the use of green spaces).

S9: "I think people cannot change unless they are pushed from behind (...) no one can be like that [behave environmentally friendly] on their own initiative. (...) I am not against those who do barbecues, but I think taxes should be put on such activities (...) you are not allowed with loud music on the mountain (...) to monitor these areas, because there are many people who leave trash, and I think fines should be given for such behaviors. "

Respondents were asked to describe the means, tools and resources displayed by local authorities in order for Braşov citizens to protect the environment and the main categories which were mentioned relate to: containers for selective waste collection, street garbage bins, bike trails, local public transportation and the urban mobility plan which was applied by the city's public administration in order to decrease

car traffic and to stimulate alternative ways of transportation (e.g. walking, cycling).

As regards **selective waste collection**, the results of this study reveal the importance of an institutional framework in Brasov required for the completion of such activities as the interviewed subjects noted that such containers are present in several districts of the city. Although the benefits of locating such containers inside the apartment blocks are indisputable, there are, according to the respondents, some issues that local authorities should deal with. First, it was found that selectively collected waste is taken out by authorized firms by mixing them in the same container with non-selected waste. For this reason, the usefulness of such an approach is questioned by the subjects who stated that they engage in this activity, hence the need to ensure greater transparency in the conduct of selective waste collection.

S13: *"They were open and authorized more electronic waste collection centers, which are independent. (...) I saw some bins for paper, glass etc. I'm a little skeptical that really get separated."*

S11: *"I understand that selective collection is done, but all the garbage goes to a place (...) no sense of selective collection only from the perspective that can train a bit."*

S12: *"I want to know that when you go waste selectively take place, be several such containers do not know why they disappeared from the city. I, for example, I go to collect paper and throw it away, just drive there, is not normal."*

Secondly, it was found that such containers are not present in all city neighborhoods. Since there are several neighborhoods that lack such means to collect waste selectively, subjects are forced to travel greater distances (using mostly personal vehicle) in order to deposit their selectively collected waste.

S10: *"There are some selective waste collection bins, I just hope the waste is collected accordingly (...) In my home I put the waste in specially divided areas (...) and I have the advantage of living just across such containers, but they cannot be found in each city districts."*

S8: *"I think that local authorities do not provide sufficient means for citizens to protect the environment, for example, selective waste collection bins."*

On the other hand, there is a general opinion that the specific infrastructure which includes **waste collection bins** is well managed, with a sufficient number of bins in the city. The effectiveness of such infrastructure is demonstrated by the fact that "Brasov is a clean city", in the opinion of one of the respondents, but also because the frequency of bins location is large enough so that it provides residents with the opportunity for immediate disposal of waste.

S12: *"There is a sufficient number of bins, at least in Brasov. Thus, Brasov is a clean city."*

S4: *"I think Brasov is a clean city (...) we do not see garbage on the street as bins can be found everywhere (...); Local authorities have taken steps to encourage the responsible environmental behavior of Brasov citizens."*

Involving people in environmental protection entails the **use of less polluting or "green" means of transport**. Among these, an important place is taken by biking. In the city of Braşov, specific transport infrastructure does not encourage the use of bicycles for making local trips as it is "very short and chaotic." This is caused by the fact that **bicycle lanes** are only present in certain areas of the city and do not offer individuals the opportunity to move safely from one point to another in the city by using exclusively the bicycle. Involving people in environmental protection should entail encouraging them to use the bike for local transportation.

S12: *"The bike lanes are very short and chaotic in Braşov (...) there is no continuity. Many residents would like to go by bike but they do not feel safe."*

S11: *"We have too few bike lanes in Braşov and too little encouragement of such transportation."*

The services offered by the Autonomous Transportation Company in Braşov represent another component of alternative local transport available to citizens, with a low negative impact on the environment. According to the respondents, the services offered by this

company were significantly improved in recent years, meeting consumer requirements, by organizing bus lines which ensure that individuals can move anywhere in the city without. From this point of view, local authorities have created the conditions for city residents to be more involved in environmental protection by choosing public transportation, with the aim of minimizing air pollution. S12: "Public transport is very well developed, residents have a choice, and they do not necessarily have to use their private car for local transportation."

S10: "The local transport is very good in Braşov, you can actually rely on buses. (...) It seems to me that it is fair, decent, has Internet, it is safe, and I'm really pleased. "

Although Braşov is providing good local public transportation alternatives with a low environmental impact, there are a number of other problems that local authorities should resolve for a higher involvement of citizens in environmental protection. In the opinion of one of the interviewed subjects - member of an environmental organization - Braşov is now "a city of cars" and this is explained by the increasing number of cars per capita, thus exceeding the capacity of existing infrastructure currently in this area. Increasing the number of parking spaces is not a viable solution for car traffic congestion in our city; instead there should be increased taxes for car use in congested areas (ex. Center) and some restrictions of car use in such areas.

S10: "(...) the City Hall is now working urban mobility plan which will take into account bicycle use, people with disabilities, pedestrians, but at present Braşov is a car traffic city. The biggest problem is the old center, at times it gets very crowded, and this is not good for the environment because they are not some large negative emissions. In the future, we hope to work with the City to assure a more prohibitive access to the old center. (...) People must have priority, which will also mean that we'll have a much healthier city. If you manage to keep the car a little further from urban areas, automatically you start changing things. "

The plan / program to improve urban mobility that local authorities have already implemented to transform a city of Braşov, aims to improve the infrastructure needed to encourage greater use of less polluting transport means (ex. bicycle) or even discard them in favor of walking.

S10: "(...) even bicycle lanes are a necessity for the city (...) They can do more, especially for people with disabilities or mothers with children in the stroller (...) and encourage people to walk (...)."

Other programs / measures that local authorities should implement to contribute more to environmental protection are linked to the existence of greater transparency in consultations between them and local environmental organizations. This should be done in order to increase citizens' environmental awareness and involvement, with a more strict supervision of compliance with the rules relating to keeping the town clean by citizens or payment of fees for non-compliance rules, but also with the aim of installing solar panels for street lighting, as well as conducting frequent natural areas hygiene works.

S13: "Let there be a real consultation process to help citizens and environmental organizations, to be more transparency in this process (...). We, in fact, sometimes we fail to do more than is necessary precisely because of little transparency in decisions and consultations. "

S7: "Local authorities should increase the environmental awareness of Braşov residents, through billboards, through ecological actions in the Braşov area by installing more selective waste collection bins (...)."

S9: "Let there be more strictly monitoring of compliance with rules, to levy fines, otherwise (...) to introduce fees for the purchase of cans and plastic bags."

S8: "I propose (...) the installation of solar panels for street lighting, frequent cleaning of natural areas and of garbage left by tourists or residents."

The need and importance of involving local authorities in protecting the environment through infrastructure and activities mentioned above are therefore of major importance.

Environmental education, increasing awareness of Braşov residents about the importance of protecting the environment and, especially, their involvement in environmentally friendly activities must be supported by the existence of appropriate infrastructure and an institutional and legislative framework in order to encourage them to perform an environmental behavior.

An important role in assuring necessary conditions for the implication of Braşov residents in environmental protection is the existence of a relatively high number of ecological non-governmental organizations. A key proof of local involvement in environment-friendly activities is the involvement of these organizations in activities to educate children in schools and kindergartens, in cleaning actions of some public areas, in the promotion of activities related directly or indirectly to environmental protection etc. However, according to one of the members of such organizations, these activities require considerable financial resources and should be supported, at least partially, from the local budget.

S13: "I know many environmental organizations that are active in Brasov for a long time (...) I think that in general, compared to other cities, we are more advanced from this point of view, there is a much stronger civil society, in the environmental field."

Besides the above mentioned issues, there are a number of strengths and opportunities which Brasov holds regarding environmental protection. In the opinion of respondents, the main strengths are related to: its geographic location (being surrounded by mountains), thus having a low level of pollution, clean air, and several opportunities for environmental organizations to achieve public environmental education activities in Brasov etc.

S9: "I think in Brasov residents have a highly developed civic spirit, (...)."

S2: "Brasov is a clean city; it is not very polluted because of its geographical position (...) those who live here are more educated in this regard."

One of the respondents identified opportunities that benefit the city to contribute more to

environmental protection. They are linked to the existence of a relatively high number of producers and farms, partially covering the food demand of the population of Brasov, thus reducing pollution by a significant decrease in volumes transported to greater distances.

S13: "It seems to me that Brasov residents are a bit more eco (...), perhaps because there are many small producers in the area (...) there are several farms around us."

4 Conclusions

The results of this qualitative research outline that individuals' adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors is the result of a series of economic, social, psychological institutional and legislative factors. In addition, we outlined the necessity of a combination of all the factors that contribute to educating, informing and raising awareness of individuals about the importance of protecting the environment and their participation in environmentally friendly activities in order to stimulate such behaviors among citizens. Keeping a clean environment can be ensured only through the voluntary participation of a small percentage of individuals but it must be supported by the entire community. When encouraging the involvement of all members of society in activities which support environmental protection multiple perspectives must be taken into consideration: family and school based environmental education of children, raising citizens' awareness concerning environmental problems, promoting the advantages of having a clean environment, general and specific provision of infrastructure by local authorities to support the display of environmentally friendly behavior by individuals, but also providing a proper institutional and legislative framework.

The present paper has a series of limits, especially given by its exploratory character, as the results are not representative for the studied population. However, the resulted information may be valuable for the specific literature as they outline several weaknesses of the economic and administrative activity which

limits citizens' possibilities to display environmentally friendly behaviors. Future qualitative studies may focus on the investigation of environmentally friendly behaviors of different consumer segments either with a local or national focus. Another future research direction may be the study of local authorities or tourism businesses representatives' attitudes towards consumers' environmentally friendly behavior. Other studies (based on multiple regression models) may identify and measure the factors which influence individuals' environmentally friendly behavior.

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