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Wozniak B.,

Dr. Inz., Institute of Leather Industry, Lodz, Republic of Poland

Popovych N.,

Ph.D, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Department of Commodity Science and Technology of Non-food Products, Lviv University of Trade and Economics, Lviv, Ukraine; Institute of Leather Industry, Lodz, Republic of Poland

Bednarchuk M.,

Ph.D., Associate Professor, Professor of the Department of Commodity Science and Technology of Non-Food Products, Lviv University of Trade and Economics, Lviv

Shumsky O.,

Ph.D, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of Department of Commodity Science and Technology of Non-food Products, Lviv University of Trade and Economics, Lviv

SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH OF COMMODITY CHARACTERISTICS OF YOUTH FOOTWEAR

***Abstract.** The results of the research show that the most important criteria for the purchase of footwear by the youth is its cost and warranty term of usage. Considerable importance among the criteria of buying footwear by young people have the recommendations on the choice of shoes in size and fullness and the recommendations on the footwear use and care – is an objective basis for a detailed development of this problem by commodity footwear analysts, the theoretical development and practical implementation of the advisory function of commodity science. When using youth footwear, the hardest back and sock area wears out most. Most often, young people are buying footwear for men aged 27 and for women aged 24, who mainly live in district centers, towns and villages of urban type.*

Key words: youth footwear, consumer properties, sociological research.

Возняк Б.,

Dr inż., Інститут шкіряної промисловості, м. Лодзь, Республіка Польща

Попович Н.,

к.т.н., доц., доцент кафедри товарознавства та технології непродовольчих товарів, Львівський торговельно-економічний університет, м. Львів, Україна; Інститут шкіряної промисловості, м. Лодзь, Республіка Польща

Беднарчук М.,

к.т.н., доц., професор кафедри товарознавства та технології непродовольчих товарів, Львівський торговельно-економічний університет, м. Львів

Шумський О.,

к.т.н., доц., доцент кафедри товарознавства та технології непродовольчих товарів, Львівський торговельно-економічний університет, м. Львів

СОЦІОЛОГІЧНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ТОВАРОЗНАВЧИХ ХАРАКТЕРИСТИК МОЛОДІЖНОГО ВЗУТТЯ

Анотація. Результати проведеного дослідження свідчать, що найбільш вагомими критеріями купівлі взуття молоддю є його вартість та гарантійний строк експлуатації. Значна вага серед критеріїв купівлі взуття молоддю рекомендації щодо вибору взуття за розміром і повнотою та рекомендації щодо експлуатації взуття і догляду за ним – є об'єктивною підставою для детального розроблення цієї проблеми товарознавцями взуття, теоретичного розвитку і практичної реалізації консультативної функції товарознавства. При експлуатації молодіжного взуття найбільше зношується жорсткий задник та носкова ділянка. Найчастіше купують молодіжне взуття особи чоловічої статі віком 27 років та жіночої статі 24 роки, які проживають у районних центрах, містах та селищах міського типу.

Ключові слова: молодіжне взуття, споживні властивості, соціологічне дослідження.

Formulation of the problem. According to the current concepts of development and our country and cooperation with neighboring countries [1], the main task of the modern market of footwear products is a significant improvement in the quality of consumer footwear and related products (for the selection of footwear, footwear maintenance, shoe storage, etc.).

The state and prospects of the development of this process are determined by a system of factors, in particular, the formation and optimization of individual segments of the shoe market. The main market factors of commodity research are the needs of consumers of footwear and scientifically grounded requirements to it.

In the modern market these factors adequately outline 4 main characteristics of footwear as a market product: qualitative, quantitative, assortment, price. On the other hand, modern consumers are increasingly emphasizing the need to optimize the quality of shoes as a set of separate, clearly defined properties that ensure the ability of a specific pair of shoes to meet the needs of a particular consumer [2].

Analysis of recent studies and publications. The problem of the formation of the range and consumer properties of a special segment of the footwear market - shoes for young people - has been in the field of commodity scientists for a long time [3], and some aspects of it, together with commodity researchers, were explored by material scientists and shoe manufacturing technologists [4].

But in the last few years scientific sources do not address the problems of production and improvement of the quality of youth shoes, the solution of which ensures its competitiveness in the domestic markets of individual countries and creates prospects for successful entry into the world market (which is especially relevant after September 1, 2017, when Ukrainian goods have significant chances to obtain additional preferences in the EU markets) [5].

To establish the requirements of consumers to separate groups of shoes and the needs of the market for the appropriate footwear aeronautical variety of sociological research is increasingly used [2, 6].

Setting objectives. This article is devoted to the search for ways to improve the range and consumer

properties of youth shoes on the basis of the results of sociological commodity-oriented research.

Presentation of the main research material. To solve this problem, a special "Questionnaire for a Buyer" was developed by joint efforts of the specialists of Lviv School of Commodity Studies of Footwear, the Research Institute of Leather Industry in Lodz and trade workers, and a survey of 117 buyers of youth shoes in Ukraine. At the same time, buyers were able to examine almost 800 models of youth footwear in the autumn-winter season 2016/2017, most of which are executed in the popular style of "minimalism" (Fig. 1).

The developed "Letter for the survey of buyers" had three features: the use of the method of ranking indicators (the most significant in the opinion of the consumer, the indicator received rank 1, and the least significant - rank 10); use of the method of choosing the correct answer from the offered answer options; obtaining the necessary information about the consumers of youth shoes. In our opinion, such a structure of the letter allowed solving several actual problems of modern trade in footwear:

- to meet the needs of young people for shoes - to rank the main criteria for their choice and purchase by consumers: cost; warranty period of operation; top material; substrate material; material of the sole; company-manufacturer of footwear; the rating of shoes of this manufacturer on the market; appearance (attractiveness) of shoes; recommendations on the choice of shoes (in size and completeness); recommendations on the operation and care of shoes;
- to develop ways to optimize consumer properties of youth shoes - to formulate additional questions to consumers (for example, which parts of shoes are most wear out during operation, etc.);
- To assess the social age categories of young footwear consumers - to formulate questions that allowed getting the information about buyers (for example, age, sex and place of residence of the consumer, the approximate price of shoes, which can be paid by this consumer, etc.).

The results of processing the received data are shown in the table. 1-4.



Fig. 1. Typical models of youth footwear

In order to avoid the same ranks, in Table. 1 rank for each characteristic of shoes was assigned according to the value of the sum of ranks for all respondents, since the sum of ranks in percentage for certain characteristics is the same value.

The data in Table 1 show that when buying shoes young people do not pay any importance to the characteristic of shoes, since none of the characteristics has significant (for example, several times) advantages over the others. On the other hand, young people clearly distinguish the characteristics of shoes more significant for consumers (the sum of grades ranges from 7% to 9%) and less significant (the sum of ranks in percentage ranges from 11% to 13%).

At the same time, in both designated conditional groups, all characteristics are at a slight distance (1-2%) at the rating levels. In the authors' opinion, this may indicate that the nomenclature of the criteria for evaluating shoes, developed by the authors, reflects the

nomenclature of the criteria for assessing shoes by the youth, that is, the requirements of modern youth to their shoes.

Thus, the most important criteria for the purchase of shoes by modern youth is the cost, warranty period of use, top materials, appearance and materials of the sole, and less weight - the material of the substrate, recommendations on the choice of shoes (in size and completeness), the company-manufacturer of shoes, rating the shoes of this manufacturer among the analogues on the market and recommendations on the use of footwear and care for it.

Table 2 shows the results of youth assessment of the process of wearing footwear during operation, which are obtained on the basis of their own experience in the use of footwear by each consumer interviewed. The information on probable defects arising from the exploitation of shoes is obtained from the source [7].

Table 1

Selecting criteria for a consumer of youth footwear

The name of the characteristic footwear	Sum of ranks		Rank
	for all respondents, r	in percent, %	
Cost	317	7	1
Warranty period of usage	333	7	2
Appearance (attractiveness) of footwear	401	9	4
Material of the sole	422	9	5
Materials of the top of footwear	369	8	3
Lining materials for footwear	424	9	6
Rating of the footwear of this manufacturer in the market	594	13	9
Recommendations for choosing footwear (by size and corpulence)	497	11	7
Recommendations for the use and care of footwear	667	14	10
Manufacturer of footwear	555	13	8

Table 2

Data on the wear of parts of youth footwear during usage

The name of the item or the structural element of the footwear	Σ rank:		Rank*
	by all the respondents	per cent	
Hard back of the footwear	393	7	1
Hard footwear	729	13	8
Material of the top of the shoe in the part of the union	451	8	3
Material of the top of the shoes on the side	677	12	9
Material of the top of the shoes in the toe part	505	9	6
Footwear sole with running surface	224	4	2
Sole footwear on the side	954	17	10
Shoe sole by attachment	561	10	7
Stitches connecting the upper parts of the joint	449	8	4
Laces	673	12	5

Table 3

Data on the frequency of the purchases of footwear by young people depending on the price

Shopping frequency of footwear	The number of consumers who buy footwear with the specified periodicity, persons	Price * of one pair of footwear, €	The number of consumers who buy footwear of the specified value, persons
Every season and more often	28	Up to 1000	14
Once a year	33	1000-1500	54
As needed	51	1500-2000	43
Spontaneously	5	Over 2000	6
Total	117	Total	117

*Prices for the autumn-winter season 2016/2017

Table 4

Sexual-age groups of customers and their place of residence

Sex	Number of people	Place of residence	Number of people
Female*	69	Regional Center	39
Male**	48	Districts, city, town-type settlement (together)	41
		Village	37
Total	117	Total	117

*middle age - 24 years; ** middle age - 27 years

In addition, as in Table. 1, to avoid the same ranks, in Table. 2 ranks were assigned according to the sum of ranks for all the respondents, since the sum of the ranks in percentage for certain details or structural elements of the shoes is the same value.

Data in Table 2 show that a hard substitute (rank 1) wears out the most when exploiting youth shoes. This applies to lacing shoes (samples 4, 6-12 in fig. 1), on elastics (samples 2, 3, 5, 13 in Fig. 1), on the Velcro fasteners (samples 6, 8 in Fig. 1) and shoes without holders (samples 1, 14-16). In the authors' opinion, this is the result of a special fashion on the lacing of shoes by young people, which gives the opportunity to weave and scatter without excitement and lacing shoes.

With such a peculiarity of excessive loading, a rigid back is experienced, since it is practically always bent internally, and when crushed against it, it is squeezed by the toe part of the sole of the other pair of shoes or with the toes of the leaning leg. Therefore, the improvement of the hardness of the hard back stiffness should be considered as the most important element in providing a high level of consumer properties of youth shoes of the above-mentioned structures.

At the youngest footwear, the soles of the youth wear the least (grade 10), but this does not apply to those varieties of shoes used by young people for amateur skate skating [6] - for example, Model 4 (Fig. 1).

Data in Table 2 also characterize the wear characteristics of individual parts, knots and accessories for youth shoes. In particular, it has been found that intense wear in the youth's shoes undergoes seams that connect the upper parts of the joint (rating 4).

In addition, consumers note that intensive physical wear and no less intense moral wear in modern youth shoes, compared with adult shoes, undergo modern lacing: physically, they relatively quickly fail due to the heavy load and somewhat excessive length; they are morally aging due to rapid changes in fashion trends. In the authors' opinion, this conclusion is confirmed by the fact that online stores often sell fashion collections of laceware [8].

Data on the peculiarities of buying youth shoes are given in Table. 3-4.

Data in Table 3 show that most young people buy shoes when they need it, and the least often - spontaneously; the cost of the purchased shoes is often from 1,000 ₴ to 1,500 ₴, and least often - over 2,000 ₴.

From the data in Table 4 it is evident that buyers of youth shoes are almost equally inhabitants of the regional center (39 people, or 33%); district towns, cities and towns (41 people, or 35%) and villages (37 people, or 32%).

In general, the results of the survey of youth shoes consumers show that in the current economic situation, the most important criterion for choosing shoes for young people is its price and warranty period of use. In the authors' opinion, such priorities are a positive characteristic of young people as a separate group of consumers: firstly, after the introduction in Ukraine of a single warranty period for shoes 30 days. young people tend to buy shoes that have at least minimal guarantees; and secondly, it is known [8] that a certain proportion of

youth shoes in the domestic market has no manufacturer's guarantees.

In addition, the results confirm the stable demand of young people for shoes, which have a relatively low cost and a sufficiently high level of consumer properties. But the high level of individual groups or indicators of consumer properties (eg, operational) can not fully guarantee the overall high quality of individual models or collections of youth shoes, as this defines a comprehensive quality score [10]. From this, in the authors' opinion, it follows that high-quality shoes are beginning to be understood by modern youth as a market product with a complex of high-quality consumer properties, the hierarchy of which varies according to the purpose and operating conditions of a particular pair of shoes [11].

The results of the survey also show that the worst wear in modern youth shoes is the toe part This can be explained by the peculiarities of the exploitation of footwear by young people, in particular, by intense long-term use during the day, by the attachment to one pair of shoes during the season, etc. [9]. Therefore, for the development of trends in the wear resistance of the youth footwear, it is necessary to constantly analyze the advanced foreign experience of introducing the latest technologies for the improvement of individual footwear knots [12].

Conclusions and perspectives of further research in this direction. The data obtained suggest that the main potential consumer of youth footwear in the West of Ukraine is a person of middle-aged man of 27 years old and a female of middle age of 24 years. In the authors' opinion, this certainly must be taken into account when designing domestic footwear for youth. For example, when designing specific structures, it is necessary to take into account the anthropometric features of young feet, as it is known [13] that young people after a full-day intensive functional load on the foot, experience a significant decrease in the arch of the foot is observed.

Given that the main consumer of the studied shoes is the youth, we consider the important functions of this footwear, an educational function, which consists in the formation of the aesthetic taste of the young men, the acquisition of their own skills in the right choice and use of shoes, careful care for them, etc. [11].

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