

UDC: 355.1(497.11)+316.644-057.36
DOI: 10.5937/pnb29-58263
Original scientific paper

The Policy of National Security
(Политика националне безбедности)
Year XVI vol. 29
No. 2/2025
pp. 155-183

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CONSUMER ETHNOCENTRISM AND LIFESTYLES OF MEMBERS OF THE DEFENSE SECTOR***

(Translation in *Extenso*)

Abstract

Consumer ethnocentrism is a form of economic patriotism and awareness of the significance of buying local products to develop the domestic economy. Since consumer habits are closely linked with consumers' lifestyles, and that lifestyles, besides socio-demographic aspects, represent an important determinant of consumer market behaviour, this paper aims to determine whether there are differences in consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles of members of the defence system compared to the civilian population. The research included 180 respondents in total, members of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces, and civilians employed in other fields of the economy. Independent variables defined in the research were gender, education, generational affiliation, and belonging to the defense system, while dependent variables were

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*** The paper was written within the project "Value Orientations and Attitude towards the Tradition of Military Academy Cadets", Military Academy, University of Defence, BA/ДХ/1/24–26.

the scores on the consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyle preferences subscales. The data was processed with the help of descriptive statistics, *t*-tests for independent samples, and linear regressions. The results show differences in preferences of specific lifestyles between members of the defense sector and civilians, but not in consumer ethnocentrism. There are also statistically significant differences regarding consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyle preferences regarding socio-demographic variables. Moreover, even the preferences of specific lifestyles, as a form of consumer behavior, have been shown as statistically significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism. Therefore, it is only justified to dedicate more attention to future research to examine the lifestyles and consumer habits of specific groups of inhabitants to raise their awareness of the importance of purchasing domestic products to strengthen the domestic economy.

Keywords: consumer behavior, military, Serbia, values, lifestyles, Millennials, Generation Z.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer ethnocentrism

Consumer ethnocentrism represents a form of applied economic patriotism and is a legitimate field of research in three sciences: psychology, sociology, and economy. Namely, the term ethnocentrism comes from economics. It was defined in 1906 for the first time, as “a point of view in which a person believes that the group to which they belong is the center of all events and makes their judgments based on that, with all other groups being those to which they do not feel a member and which are therefore less important” (Sumner 1906, 13). Koudelka (Koudelka 1997, 25) defines ethnocentrism as favoring one’s own culture, preference, and the attitude that all other cultures are inferior. The issue of consumer ethnocentrism emerged for the first time in the economy in 1987 when Shimp and Sharma (Shimp and Sharma 1987) defined it as “the attitude of consumers that it is a non-patriotic and immoral act to purchase foreign products since it weakens the domestic

economy and influences the loss of jobs.” Stere and Trajani believe that it represents a tendency to boycott all imported products, no matter their price and quality, due to nationalism (Stere and Trajani 2015). What is common to both terms is the assumption that they are both formed in early childhood under the influence of socialization agents (Allport 1954; MacDonald 2006; Mezirow 1997; Shimp and Sharma 1987; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). Shankarmahesh (Shankarmahesh 2006) states that four factors influence the occurrence and level of ethnocentrism: socio-psychological (patriotism, conservatism, dogmatism, etc.), economic (capitalism, economic development, life standard, etc.), political (political propaganda, historical reasons, leader manipulation, etc.), and socio-demographic (gender, age, education, amount of income, etc.).

Lifestyles

It is often the case in everyday life that we speak of “consumer lifestyle”, that is, consumerism, as a permanent habit of consumers of today, where the quality of products retrieves before the quantity, styles and fashion change at an unprecedented speed, and the availability of payment cards and online shopping in just a few clicks make spending money easier than ever, especially in the era of digital marketing, where the illusion of an ideal life (*La Dolce Vita*) is emphasized through newly founded occupations, such as “influencer” and “trend-setter”. Slišković et al. believe that the consumer lifestyle is, in fact, a “syndrome”, that is, a collection of mutually linked and intertwined personality traits, values, and attitudes (Slišković et al. 2014). Consumerism emerged as a consequence of an instant culture and led towards the formation of a consumer mentality and consumer society, which, under the influence of constant exposure to marketing of various kinds, often leads to the disease of addiction since consumerism imposes itself as a paradigm for a successful life (Žakman-Ban and Špehar Fiškuš 2016). How far we have come as a civilization is shown in the data cited by McCrindle (McCrindle 2014, 230) that there is a trend of introducing the new term – “tweens” into the generational cohorts, referring to the age from eight to twelve. In our terminology, we can speak of preadolescence, which is the primary target group of digital marketing, since the value of their

annual allowance (at that moment) in Australia alone was estimated at one billion dollars, thus making them a pretty desirable group, whose ability of reason and defense from manipulations of different kinds are relatively reduced.

Consumer ethnocentrism and consumer lifestyle are of the most tremendous significance for researching consumer habits and consumer behavior (Acikdilli, Ziemnowicz, and Bahhouth 2018; Gašević, Vranješ i Tomašević 2019; Kucukemiroglu, Harcar, and Spillan 2006; Slišković et al. 2014; Slijepčević, Perčić, and Alimpić 2025). Even though this term is widely used for layman and scientific purposes, various sciences do not uniquely define lifestyle, nor is there a unified stance regarding how many types of lifestyles there are. Besides the fact that it is deeply rooted in the fields of psychology of personality and social psychology, sociology, philosophy, economy, political science (Bögenhold 2001), the term lifestyle is also examined in the field of medical sciences, and especially sports medicine and public health and sports sciences (Ilić 2007). It is usually defined as the way someone is living (Logar-Đurić, Bročić, and Bogosavljević 1999; Gašević and Tomašević 2019) and indicates the social status of an individual, their consumer habit, and the way they spend their free time (Anderson and Golden 1984; Logar-Đurić, Bročić, and Bogosavljević 1999). On the other hand, the issue of defining and operationalization lifestyles is closely linked with the term value, as well as value orientations. In locally published research (Joksimović 1992; Kuzmanović 1986; Popadić 1995), lifestyle is, conditionally speaking, presented as the most applied value system, which is reflected in the everyday way of putting values into action while simultaneously building and organizing a life script around the values that lie in their background. In this context, the definition provided by Matić (Matić Tandarić 2021, 5), stating that “lifestyle represents a classical way of behavior which, besides the behavioral component, also includes values, identity and resources an individual possesses”, is also representative. Jensen (Jensen 2007) believes that lifestyle consists of four factors: global consumption, structural-national, and positional-subcultural, defined by socialization agents, as well as the reflection of individual identity, manifested through functioning in everyday life.

What is common to both previously defined and described constructs (consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles) is the fact that

they represent tendencies in the personality that form behavior, but, contrary to personality traits, are more prone to the influence of *Zeitgeist*. For example, in life crises on an individual or global level, consumer behavior is conditioned not only by economic parameters but social and historical circumstances. Consumer ethnocentrism is especially pronounced in times of crisis, when the threat to national identity is registered (Grant 1993; Lee, Lee, and Li 2017), bearing in mind that numerous studies point to the fact that patriotism is the most significant correlate to consumer ethnocentrism (de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998; Marinković 2017; Pavlović and Savić 2017; Sharma and Wu 2015; Vida and Reardon 2008; Zdravković, Šapić, and Filipović 2020). Patriotism can also be defined as a feeling of love towards homeland, loyalty to one's country and the pride of individuals because they hold their citizenship and are connected to it (Sharma and Wu 2015) or as love and care of individuals for their own country, at the same time including the connection with their state and its symbols (Pentz, Terblanche, and Boshoff 2017). At the same time, it holds the instrumental component (the individuals perceive themselves as citizens of this state) and the emotional component (the individuals feel that their personal values embody what is right and in accordance with their country's values).

Generation gap

One of the significant influences of *Zeitgeist* is also the development of techniques and technology, whose advances are nowadays measured by years, instead of decades and centuries. Therefore, entire cohorts, within just five years, differ greatly from each other in terms of consumer habits, technological literacy, and the values they adopt, but also in the way they spend their free time (McCrindle 2014). It has already been discussed that the digital literacy gap exists between generations and within generations, with a tendency of further intergenerational misunderstanding. McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that the lifespan was never longer than today, which leads to the fact that society was never this much dispersed according to age, and the working life was never longer and more prone to career transitions and market shocks in the nomenclature of occupations. Therefore, in sociopsychological

research, generation takes primacy over cohort as the most effective measurement of age differences. According to Salt (Salt, in foreword McCrindle 2014), a generation represents “a complex amalgam of personal demographic characteristics, shaped by wider social and political influences” (the authors of this paper would add cultural and historical influences as well). The biological definition of a generation as an “average interval or passage of time between the birth of parents and their children” is deemed as surpassed, since the period of 20 to 25 years between generations is no longer valid, primarily due to the decades-long trend of shifting the age limit for giving birth to first-borns (McCrindle 2014, 1). On the other hand, the sociopsychological definition of a generation, according to Strauss and Howe (Strauss and Howe according to McCrindle 2014, 2), would be that “generation, as a developmental category, is conditioned with specific passage of time and represents a group of people sharing a common moment and place in history, thus creating in this way their collective Persona. Therefore, McCrindle (McCrindle 2014, 1) gives advantage to sociological definitions of a generation (shortening the time span of cohorts to 15 years), “due to accelerated technological advancement of humanity and globalization processes, where specific events, trends and discoveries represent a milestone of development of not only a specific social group but the entire humanity.” He defines a generation as a “group of people born in the same time span, whose consciousness is formed by influences characteristic of this period of time and under influence of same social factors” or, simply put, as a “cohort that shares age and life, social and living circumstances, development of technology, important events and experiences” (2). Moreover, he states that our social identity is determined “(besides gender, place of residence and the culture we live in) also by the choice of lifestyle and media consumption, and in turn, collective thinking of a generation shapes consumer habits and behavior of its members” (235). His standpoint is by Inglehart’s hypothesis on socialization (Inglehart 1971), which states that with the change of generations at the same time there is a change of value system, not only in individual societies but on a global level as well. This premise was adopted by Hofstede (Hofstede 2001) as well, who stated that the differences in values among inhabitants of the same country or representatives of the same culture are the consequence of

the maturation of the generation to which an individual belongs and the effect of the period, implying that the change in the value system occurred due to sudden and unexpected circumstances, such as wars, natural catastrophes, pandemics, economic crises, etc.

McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that in the current moment, there is an entire specter of up to seven generations in the world, which are currently as follows: Builders – 1946, Boomers 1946–1964, X 1965–1979, Y 1980–1994, Z 1995–2009, Alpha 2010–2024, Beta 2025–2039. These generations' education, philosophy of life, social norms, values, lifestyles, and consumer habits quite differ. Therefore, it is important to remember this social developmental component since the life standard of inhabitants of the countries perceived as members of the “Western culture” is on the rise, but they still essentially represent nations in decline. McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) mentions Europe as an example, in which there is a high decline in natality and an increase in mortality, which will undoubtedly have a consequence, given that it is divided into up to 50 internationally recognized countries at this moment, there are huge changes in the demographic structure of the population, first regarding age, education, job market but also religion, nationality, language.

Zeitgeist

In the last few years, regarding social circumstances, there has been a global comeback of nationalism worldwide, contrary to the decades-old imperative of globalism. The nationalism at the present moment can also be manifested in the form of consumer ethnocentrism, was not an issue of survival of small countries and their economic autonomy, self-sufficiency and independence anymore (especially in African countries, where the issue of the nation is not entirely resolved, since the formal-legal independence the majority of them gained after World War Two and thanks to the Non-aligned movement did not bring along the expected economic freedom and management of one's resources). Consumer ethnocentrism has also become the central issue of the US internal and foreign policies and the program promoted by the current President Donald Trump for a few years again (*Make America Great Again – MAGA*), based on the motto of the campaign

of another Republican US President, Ronald Reagan, from 1980. The *MAGA* movement program is focused on raising economic standards and prosperity of the US, firstly the working class, reducing economic and political influences of other countries regarding the internal situation in the US and on the world political scene, with simultaneous refinement of internal traditional understanding of the American multiculturalism and the approach towards immigration policy (especially regarding the Central and Latin American countries) and reduction of the impact of globalization (especially its economic aspect) and agendas (*Diversity, equity, and inclusion – DEI*) based on the values of accepting differences, introduction of diversity into the society, enabling the society of “equal chances” and justice for all individuals and social groups that differ from the mainstream in some sort, whatever that difference might be. Moreover, economic issues and consumer behavior also represent one of the central questions of the internal and foreign policy of the People’s Republic of China, exhibited through, nowadays decades-old, platform *One Belt – One Road Initiative*, in which the Republic of Serbia actively participates (Petrović 2018; Popović i Stević 2018; Trailović 2020). So, it is not wrong to think that the *MAGA* movement is, in fact, a reaction to the *One Belt – One Road Initiative* where besides political and economic interests, sociological and psychological factors, such as attitudes which include both behavioral and emotional component of functioning of every individual, emerge as increasingly significant factors. In terms of consumer ethnocentrism, this means not only favoring domestic products upon purchase and strengthening the domestic economy in this way, but also implies holding an attitude towards products coming from other countries with which, i.e., the country has a long history of different forms of conflicts, and even wars in the past, where the archetypal, and even stereotypical perception of a nation (by an individual, form of government, etc.) directly impacts the perception and purchase potential of goods coming from that country (Marinković 2017; Pavlović and Savić 2017; Zdravković, Šapić, and Filipović 2020). On the other hand, products arriving from countries with little historical relation would be treated positively (if previous experiences between the two nations were positive) or neutral (Yagci 2001). A similar relation exists regarding certain brands (trademarks) or producers. That is why McCrindle (McCrindle 2014) states that the older

generations, contrary to generations Y and Z, are more inclined towards traditionalism, patriotism, and a conservative approach to purchasing, relying primarily on purchasing local products and remaining loyal to brands throughout decades.

Research problem

According to the all above mentioned, it should also bear in mind that the defense industry in the field of weapon production, despite constant wars throughout the world, is losing its primacy and that other forms of warfare, centered around the survival of capital and the possibility of active use of economic resources of a country targeted by wars and sanctions, gaining the trust of the local population and using it for the making of profit is becoming increasingly active (Petrović 2021). Economic security represents one of the subsystems of national security (Lazić 2022). On the other hand, knowledge of different aspects of values shared by the same nation might be of great importance in process decision making of different strategic documents in defence system (Stojković 2013), and defence of crucial national interests in process of privatization of strategic sectors as energetics, public health and education also, and identity matters as school textbooks and media with national coverage (Đurković 2017). So, it is not irrelevant what is the attitude of the nation towards consumer ethnocentrism, especially younger generations, as well as the active members of the security sector of different professions, whose primary mission is defence of the country from outer threats and maintenance of inner stability and defence of the Constitution and state order. Therefore, the subject of this paper is to examine consumer ethnocentrism and lifestyles of members of the defense system to distinguish possible differences in comparison to the civilian population, by the stance of Havelka (Havelka 1995) that the choice of occupation is linked to the value system of the respondents. In the current research, the emphasis is more on career than the choice of the profession itself, but also on determining possible differences in socio-demographic characteristics that previous research in the world has detected and which have not been examined in this way in our population until now. Given the results of previous research, it is expected that there are differences in terms of gender, age, and level

of education regarding consumer ethnocentrism and the evaluation of lifestyles of respondents and their affiliation to the defense system. Moreover, the hypothesis, which was additionally examined, refers to the assumption that evaluating specific lifestyles, besides socio-demographic variables, can significantly predict consumer ethnocentrism as a form of consumer behavior.

METHODS

Sample: Snowball sampling – a virtual exponential non-discriminatory sample was used (Parker, Scott and Geddes 2019), which is especially suitable for examination of various groups that are highly unreachable for researchers for various reasons, such as the defense system in this case. The detailed review of the sample is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Sociodemographic characteristics of the sample¹

<i>Defence System Affiliation</i>		<i>Gender</i>		<i>Generation</i>		<i>Education Level</i>	
Yes	No	Male	Female	Y (1981–1996)	Z (1996–2005)	III and IV	VI and VII
79	101	80	100	52	128	43	137
56.1%	43.9%	44.4%	55.6%	28.9%	71.1%	23.9%	76.1%

Source: The Author's analysis

Research variables:

1. Independent variables: defense system affiliation (member of the system or civilian), gender (male or female), age (Generation Y or Generation Z representative), education (III and IV level of education or VI and VII level).

2. Dependent variables: consumer ethnocentrism defined through scores and subscales of tendencies towards ethnocentrism and evaluation of ten offered lifestyles.

¹ Procedure: Participation in research was voluntary and anonymous. All respondents were informed of the purpose of the research and the fact that they could refuse to participate in the research and that they could give up filling out the questionnaire at any moment. The research was conducted online, during August and September 2024.

Instruments:

a) The lifestyle scale (Popadić 1995) describes ten lifestyles. The respondents were asked to provide an answer to the five-level Likert scale of evaluation to which extent it is important to them to live in the described lifestyle, which represents a modification about the original instrument in which the lifestyle preference – which lifestyle the respondents would like to live (1 – I do not agree at all to 5 – I agree entirely) is emphasized. The scale included ten lifestyles: Familial-sentimental style, Altruistic orientation, Cognitive style, Utilitarian style, Popularity-oriented, Egoistic orientation, Promethean activism, Hedonistic orientation, Religious-traditional style, and Power-oriented lifestyle. A higher arithmetic mean indicates a greater importance of the measured lifestyle. Also, the part of the instrument that refers to the lifestyles that respondents like the most and least, as well as the current lifestyle, was omitted due to the confidentiality of data related to members of the defense system.

b) Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale (*CEESCALE*) (Siamagka and Balabanis 2015) is multidimensional and consists of five subscales: Prosociality, Cognition, Insecurity, Reflexiveness, Habituation.

Data processing: Data were obtained by SPSS 22 (descriptives, t tests for independent samples, and linear regression).

RESULTS

In Table 2, an overview of the descriptive statistics for the *CEESCALE* is provided. All subscales showed an adequate level of internal consistency (0.76–0.86). Respondents who were not members of the defense system had the highest score on the Prosociality scale, while the members of the defense system exhibited the highest scores on the Habituation subscale. It should be mentioned that scores on all subscales of the *CEESCALE* were higher among respondents who were not affiliated with the defense system. However, no statistically significant differences emerged. Moreover, there were no statistically significant differences according to gender: males reached the highest scores on the Prosociality scale, while women reached the highest scores on the Habituation scale. Both genders had the highest scores on the Cognition scale.

On the other hand, the results showed that there are significant differences in the Prosociality ($t = -2.753$, $df = 177$, $p < .007$) and Habituation ($t = -2.452$, $df = 174$, $p < .015$) scales when speaking of the age of respondents. Representatives of Generation Y ($M = 3.99$) reached higher scores than Generation Z ($M = 3.63$) on the Prosociality scale. Moreover, representatives of Generation Y ($M = 3.91$) reached higher scores than Generation Z ($M = 3.58$) on the Habituation subscale.

The results showed statistically significant differences in the Insecurity ($t = -2.050$, $df = 177$, $p < .042$) and Reflexiveness ($t = -3.245$, $df = 178$, $p < .001$) subscales. The respondents with a lower education level ($M = 3.10$) reached lower scores than those with a higher level of education ($M = 3.40$) on the Insecurity subscale. Moreover, the respondents with a lower education level ($M = 3.13$) reached lower scores than those with a higher education level ($M = 3.58$) on the Reflexiveness subscale.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of subscales of the Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale

Subscales	Military		Civilian		Men		Women		Generation Y		Generation Z		Levels III and IV		Levels VI and VII	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Prosociality	3.60	.85	3.83	.77	3.76	.76	3.71	.85	3.99	.75	3.63	.82	3.67	.81	3.75	.82
Cognition	3.11	.96	3.19	1.00	3.15	.96	3.16	1.00	3.31	1.09	3.09	.93	3.05	1.04	3.19	.96
Insecurity	3.26	.72	3.38	.94	3.29	.95	3.36	.77	3.49	.91	3.26	.82	3.10	.78	3.40	.87
Reflexiveness	3.42	.88	3.56	.88	3.45	.94	3.54	.83	3.69	1.03	3.42	.80	3.13	.99	3.62	.81
Habituation	3.64	.89	3.70	.81	3.59	.87	3.74	.81	3.91	.80	3.58	.84	3.51	.97	3.72	.80

Source: The author's analysis

It turned out that the defense system affiliation is the most important factor of individual differences regarding lifestyle importance. Namely, statistically significant differences were acquired regarding Cognitive ($t = 2.554$, $df = 177$, $p < .011$), Utilitarian style ($t = 2.612$, $df = 178$, $p < .010$) and Popularity-oriented ($t = 2.580$, $df = 178$, $p < .000$) importance. Members of the defense system reached statistically significantly lower scores on the Cognitive ($M = 3.70$), Utilitarian style ($M = 3.58$) and popularity-oriented style ($M = 2.47$) in comparison to the civilians: Cognitive ($M = 4.06$), Utilitarian style ($M = 3.98$) and Popularity-oriented style ($M = 3.15$). It should be mentioned that for both groups of respondents, the familial-sentimental lifestyle was

the most important, but the least important lifestyle for members of the system was a Popularity-oriented and a Power-oriented style for the civilians.

Regarding gender, it turned out that there are statistically significant differences regarding the importance of a Power-oriented lifestyle ($t = 2.557, df = 178, p < .011$). Men ($M = 3.32$) value this lifestyle more than women ($M = 2.90$). Moreover, for both groups of respondents, the most significant lifestyle was familial-sentimental, while the Popularity-oriented lifestyle was the least significant among men, while among women, it was the Power-oriented lifestyle. Regarding age, it turned out that there is statistically significant importance of the Utilitarian style ($t = -2.277, df = 178, p < .024$). Members of Generation Y ($M = 4.08$) value this lifestyle more than Generation Z ($M = 3.69$). Moreover, for both groups of respondents, the most significant lifestyle is Familial-sentimental, and the least important lifestyle of Popularity-oriented. When speaking of education, it turned out that there are statistically significant differences in the importance of Familial-sentimental lifestyle ($t = -3.020, df = 178, p < .003$). The respondents with a lower level of education ($M = 4.09$) value this lifestyle less than the respondents with a higher level of education ($M = 4.50$), even though for both groups of respondents, this lifestyle was considered the most significant. Moreover, both groups of respondents considered the Popularity-oriented lifestyle the least important.

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of lifestyles importance

Lifestyle	Military		Civilian		Men		Women		Generation Y		Generation Z		Levels III & IV		Levels VI & VII	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Familial-sentimental style	4.51	.73	4.32	.81	4.31	.89	4.47	.67	4.35	.97	4.42	.69	4.09	1.06	4.50	.64
Altruistic orientation	3.90	.94	4.13	.87	4.05	.79	4.01	.99	3.94	1.07	4.06	.83	4.05	1.02	4.02	.87
Cognitive style	3.70	.98	4.06	.87	3.89	.93	3.92	.94	3.90	1.03	3.90	.89	3.76	.98	3.95	.92
Utilitarian style	3.58	1.07	3.98	.97	3.91	1.06	3.72	1.00	4.08	1.06	3.69	1.00	3.86	1.19	3.79	.98
Popularity-oriented	2.47	1.16	3.15	1.19	2.77	1.30	2.91	1.15	2.81	1.31	2.87	1.19	3.09	1.29	2.77	1.19
Egoistic orientation	4.01	.99	3.99	.94	4.14	.88	3.89	1.01	4.11	.81	3.95	1.02	3.79	1.12	4.06	.90
Promethean activism	3.90	.84	4.05	1.04	4.09	.89	3.90	1.01	4.04	.99	3.96	.95	3.95	1.00	3.99	.95
Hedonistic orientation	3.61	1.17	3.89	.87	3.82	.95	3.72	1.07	3.69	.98	3.80	1.04	3.74	1.07	3.77	1.00
Religious-traditional style	4.21	.78	4.11	.90	4.15	.90	4.16	.81	4.10	.99	4.18	.79	4.00	1.09	4.20	.76
Power-oriented	3.15	1.06	3.04	1.17	3.32	1.13	2.90	1.09	3.29	1.05	3.01	1.15	3.23	1.15	3.04	1.12

Source: The author's analysis.

In the prediction of individual aspects of consumer ethnocentrism, it turned out that, to different extents, sociodemographic variables and lifestyle importance are important predictors (Table 4). Prosociality was a subscale whose score could have been predicted to the greatest extent based on the knowledge of the importance of Promethean activism and the age of the respondents. Members of Generation Z who valued Promethean activism more, most significantly, tended to the prosocial aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the subscale of cognition could have been predicted exclusively based on the knowledge of the Promethean activism importance: the higher importance of this style automatically implied a higher level of the cognitive aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the Insecurity subscale could have been predicted with the help of knowledge of the importance of lifestyles among respondents (Popularity-oriented and Promethean activism), as well as based on the knowledge of their socio-demographic traits (age and education). The level of insecurity among the respondents was, to the highest extent, conditioned by the significance of the Promethean activism. Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued a more Popularity-oriented lifestyle and Promethean activism reached higher results on the subscale of the Insecurity aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the Reflexiveness subscale could have been predicted with the help of the significance of the respondents' lifestyle (Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism) and based on the knowledge of their sociodemographic traits (age and education). To the greatest extent, the level of Reflexiveness among the respondents was conditioned by the significance of Promethean activism. The members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued a more Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism scored higher on the subscale of the Reflexiveness aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. The score on the subscale of Habitation could have been predicted to a greater extent with the help of the significance of respondents' lifestyles (Familial lifestyle and Promethean activism, Population-oriented and Power-oriented lifestyles) than based on the knowledge of their age. The level of aspect of Habitation of consumer ethnocentrism was conditioned to the greatest extent by the significance of the Familial lifestyle. Members of Generation Y who valued the Familial lifestyle,

Promethean activism, and Popularity-oriented lifestyle scored higher on the subscale of the aspect of Habituation of consumer ethnocentrism.

Table 4. Predictors of results on the subscales of the Consumer Ethnocentrism Extended Scale

	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	p	Partial	p
Prosociality							
Generational affiliation	.605	.366	.311	6.715	.000	.245	.002
Promethean activism						.380	.000
Cognitivity							
Promethean activism	.427	.182	.113	2.615	.002	.199	.010
Insecurity							
Generational affiliation	.519	.270	.207	4.300	.000	.179	.022
Education						.182	.019
Popularity-oriented						.219	.005
Promethean activism						.294	.000
Reflexiveness							
Generational affiliation	.537	.288	.227	4.724	.000	.198	.011
Education						.231	.003
Familial-sentimental lifestyle						.253	.001
Promethean activism						.264	.001
Habituation							
Generational affiliation	.534	.285	.222	4.553	.000	.252	.001
Familial-sentimental lifestyle						.274	.000
Popularity-oriented						.222	.000
Promethean activism						.170	.031
Power-oriented						-.180	.022

Source: The Author’s analysis.

DISCUSSION

The highest values on the Prosociality subscale on the total sample point to the fact that (bearing in mind that the scale is being used for the first time in Serbian sample) there is a high level of patriotism and ethnocentrism, which did not emerge based on previously cognitively formed schemes, and that the purchase choice is not determined exclusively by the country of origin, since the lowest scores were present on the Cognitivity subscale. Bearing in mind the fact that statistically significant differences among respondents regarding defense system

affiliation were not acquired, these findings can be treated in the context of the broader patriotism of respondents and not in the context of their profession: employment in defence system can be caused by other reasons, not only by patriotism (Nikolić 2024). The lack of statistically significant differences in terms of gender, speaking of consumer ethnocentrism, it is in accordance with the results acquired by some researchers (Bečić 2016; de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998), but it is not in accordance with researchers who register a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism among women (Erdogan and Uz Kurt 2010; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Othman, Ong, and Wong 2008; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013), while others register a higher level of consumer ethnocentrism among men (Habibur Rahman, Morshed, and Takdir Hossan 2011; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013).

Members of Generation Y scored higher about Generation Z on the subscales of Proportionality and Habituation, which is entirely in accordance with the development of their personalities, bearing in mind that at older age, altruism, community orientation and cooperation rise, as well as the fact that these generations were less mundialist and globalist oriented due to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the rise of national consciousness, but also the unavailability of digital technologies based on the use of the Internet in the earliest age. Moreover, foreign research also stresses that ethnocentrism grows with old age (Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013; Hsu and Nien 2008; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa, and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013; Tragos 1998).

This resulted in the respondents with a lower level of education scoring lower in comparison to the respondents with a higher level of education on the subscales of Insecurity and Reflexiveness, which is in accordance with the results acquired by other researchers (Bečić 2016; Habibur Rahman, Morshed, and Takdir Hossan 2011; Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013), even though there is research that proves the opposite: that the higher level of education is linked with a lower level of consumer ethnocentrism (de Ruyter, van Birgelen, and Wetzels 1998; Hsu and Nien 2008; Jiménez-Guerrero, Pérez-Mesa, and Galdeano-Gómez 2020; Shankarmahesh 2006; Siamagka and Balabanis 2015). The result acquired in this research can be explained by the fact that the respondents with lower education, just because of the lack of education and training, are less conscious of the significance the purchase of local products can have on the increase of their own, but

also state revenue through the capital which remains within the borders of Serbia in the form of acquisition of raw materials, workforce, tolls, living expenses, fees and taxes, instead of importing the end product, thus generating revenue for other countries. Therefore, it seems that campaigns directed towards purchasing local products in the previous period were not created well enough to make this message clear to the less educated segments of the population.² Other authors also emphasize the significance of educating consumers regarding socioeconomic situations in the world and the country regarding purchasing decisions (Szromnik and Wolanin-Jarosz 2013).

Speaking of lifestyle importance, both generations rated the Familial-sentimental lifestyle as the most significant and the Popularity-oriented lifestyle as the least significant, which is surprising in the era of social networks, where it is more difficult to remain anonymous than to become famous. On the other hand, Generations Y and Z are in the stadium when the majority of them have formed their nuclear families.

² There was a long-term campaign in Serbia, “Buy domestic products - rebuild Serbia”, 2004–2010 (Vlada Republike Srbije [VRS] 2004; Kankaraš Trklja 2017). Its real effects failed, although the main idea was good, since it was primarily informative and promotion-oriented. However, bearing in mind that the Law on trade does not permit law solutions which could enable direct impact of the state in mercantile freedom, all merchants and trade must have equal treatment: the state cannot directly interfere in trade freedom. (Marinković 2015). On the other hand, through different campaigns, numerous associations have been trying to emphasize the importance of this problem, pointing out to the citizens the positive effects of buying domestic products and services. However, these campaigns rest without significant effects (a similar situation is in the Republic of North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro), in contrast to Croatia, whose governments decide on a long-term strategy, based on the activities of the Croatian Chamber of Economy since 1997. Their campaign “Let’s Buy Croatian”, supported by trademarks “Croatian creation” and “Croatian quality” (Hrvatska gospodarska komora n.d.). The effects of conducted campaign are visible longterm, in generation terms: 95.7% of Z generation, whenever the price was equal purchase domestic products and services (71.96% of them make the purchase decision based on these two criteria) since it means that even 95% of the income, through different channels, stayed in country of origin (Kankaraš Trklja 2023). Data showed that 94.8% Croatian consumers which belong to the Z generation is lead by ideas of patriotism and consumer ethnocentrism in recommending of buying domestic products to their family members and friends, what is by McCrindle point that generation Z is characterised by high level of social activism (Hrvatski radio–Radio Zadar 2024). Also, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia in 2020 initiated the project “Created in Serbia” and the “Housekeeper” trademark (Večernje novosti 2025), but there is no exact data from the institutions about changing the trends in consumer behavior in Serbia that could be compared.

Members of Generation Y value the Utilitarian lifestyle more than Generation Z, which means they are oriented towards ensuring material security for themselves and their families. The situation is the same regarding comparison with the level of education. Still, respondents with a lower level of education value the Familial-sentimental lifestyle less, which means that family values are linked with the level of education and a wider level of importance of social responsibility. Even though the Familial-sentimental lifestyle is the most important one for both genders, men more than women value a Power-oriented lifestyle, which is in accordance with still quite conservative attitudes present in Serbian culture regarding gender roles and jobs that are generally acceptable for women and their roles in raising their families.

Affiliation to the defense system turned out to be the most significant factor of individual differences regarding lifestyle valuation, which confirms Havelka's hypotheses of correlation of values and occupations and that their relation is two-tailed and mutual: values of an individual affects the choice of occupation, but affiliation to a specific profession (through working experience and with the passage of time) also affects the modification of the individual's value system, thus making them contextually dependent despite their relative temporal stability in terms of priority, intensity, behavioral manifestation, and even the occurrence of new values in an individual (Havelka 1995). In his research, Havelka (Havelka 1995) came across results that personal specialization, religiousness, and media popularity were the least important values in all contexts researched, which is in accordance with the results acquired from the sample of members of the defence system. Namely, members of the defense system valued less the Cognitive, Utilitarian and Popularity-oriented lifestyles, which can be directly treated as the consequence of their occupation, since in the defence system, far more importance is attached to rules and norms, as well as conservatism, which makes the transformation of the value system less susceptible to changes within this system, while less importance is attached to the acquisition of knowledge, especially general knowledge. Moreover, the job of a member of the defense system can hardly be seen as a highly profitable profession that can provide an individual with luxury and wealth, which are the fundamental strivings of individuals who prefer the Utilitarian lifestyle. All the same, in the defense system, popularity

in the sense of public appearances and highlighting one's personality is not something that is perceived as highly desirable. Moreover, there is a tendency to emphasize mediocrity as a measure of group cohesiveness and the compactness of the defense system (Kostić 2000).

Members of Generation Z who valued the Promethean activism more had, to the greatest extent, a tendency towards the prosocial aspect of consumer ethnocentrism since they were more prepared to put their social activism into the function of economically expressed patriotism, which makes them more ready to engage in a concrete plan. The Cognitive dimension of ethnocentrism could also be predicted based on Promethean activism: the respondents who are prone to different forms of social activism were also more ready to buy local products and services, i.e., to value the product and purchase them about the country of origin, which is listed as significant factors by other research as well (Balabanis and Diamantopoulos 2004; Good and Huddleston 1995; Shankarmahesh 2006; Vida and Damjan 2000).

Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued Popularity-oriented lifestyle and Promethean activism more scored higher on the subscale of the insecurity aspect of consumer ethnocentrism, which means that they were more ready to actively directly engage, personally and socially, in purchasing local products and use the service sector at the moment when they perceive that the economic stability of the country is endangered in any way, thus acquiring secondary benefit through ensuring reputation and influence in the society through active participation, and therefore, become more socially accepted.

Members of Generation Y with a higher level of education who valued Familial-sentimental lifestyle and Promethean activism more scored higher on the subscale of Reflexiveness aspect of the consumer ethnocentrism, which means that creating of their own nuclear family and readiness for social engagement reactivated their consumer habits which were previously formed in their childhood and based on consumer ethnocentrism. Members of Generation Y seem to want to revitalize some of the values present in their upbringing, most likely in the form of loyalty to certain brands, whose validity and personal value they want to show to their descendants.

Members of Generation Y who valued a Familial-sentimental lifestyle, Promethean activism, and Popularity-oriented lifestyle, and did not value a highly Power-oriented lifestyle, scored higher on the subscale of Habituation aspect of consumer ethnocentrism. Given that on the habituation dimension, patriotism and consumer ethnocentrism are perceived as moral norms of a society, older respondents who are oriented towards their own nuclear families and more oriented towards gaining popularity in the society, and less oriented towards their own status and position were more prepared to actively promote and use local products and services, in their nuclear families and among their peers who, among these two generations, according to McCrindle (McCrindle 2014), possess even higher influence on behavior and beliefs of their members than the family. This result is in accordance with his attitude that members of Generation Y are prone to purchasing local products in local stores, which, in turn, contributes to strengthening their personal identity and sense of belonging to the local community. Moreover, he believes that the Millennials (Generation Y) go through life led by their personal interests and previously adopted values (hedonism, globalism and tolerance, social consciousness, and social activism).

CONCLUSION

In a moment when the political and economic situations in the world have never been more prone to sudden, mutually conditioned changes, besides standard criteria (gender and education), generational affiliation can contribute to a better understanding of consumer behavior and its prediction, not only in the context of valorization and adoption of lifestyles but also active promotion of values they based on. On the other hand, profession choice greatly shapes the lifestyle chosen by an individual. There is an assumption that the profession choice in the defense system is, at least to a certain extent, determined by the level of patriotism of an individual and that this patriotism would manifest in other fields of life as well, i.e., consumer habits defined through consumer ethnocentrism. In this research, the results show that Prosociality, as a form of consumer ethnocentrism referring to the readiness to help and sacrifice oneself for their nation, is not linked to patriotism manifested as affiliation to the defense system. On the other

hand, belonging to the defense system is an important factor for the valorization of lifestyles such as Cognitive, Utilitarian and Popularity-oriented lifestyles, which are perceived among this population as less important ways of spending one's life, while at the same time, the values on which these lifestyles are based on are perceived as less important. Generation and education turned out to be more significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism than gender. The research results show that the most significant predictors of consumer ethnocentrism among respondents were generation and Promethean activism, i.e., the readiness to direct participation in social life and the willingness to express one's attitude and shape the society by the incorporated values of an individual, it seems, generally distinguishes the Millennials in Serbia. On the other side, members of Generation Z who valued more Promethean activism were more ready to put their personal social activism in the service of promoting consumer ethnocentrism as a form of economic patriotism. In further research, it is necessary to examine in depth the correlation of generational affiliation and different forms of patriotism and conduct research about various aspects of values among the youth in Serbia to investigate the current social moment and use the opportunity to strengthen the economic potential of Serbia as best as possible.

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ПОТРОШАЧКИ ЕТНОЦЕНТРИЗАМ И ЖИВОТНИ СТИЛОВИ ПРИПАДНИКА СЕКТОРА ОДБРАНЕ***

Резиме

Потрошачки етноцентризам представља вид економског патриотизма и свести о значају куповине домаћих производа за развој домаће привреде и економије. С обзиром на то да су потрошачке навике блиско повезане са начином живота потрошача, те да су животни стилови, поред социјалнодемографских аспеката, битна одредница тржишног понашања потрошача, циљ овог рада је био да се утврди да ли постоје разлике по питању потрошачког етноцентризма и животних стилова припадника система одбране у односу на цивилну популацију. Истраживањем је обухваћено укупно 180 испитаника, припадника Министарства одбране и Војске Србије и цивилних лица која су запослена у другим гранама привреде. Независне варијабле у истраживању су биле пол, образовање, генерацијска припадност и припадност систему одбране, а зависне варијабле су биле скорови на субскалама потрошачког етноцентризма и преференција животних стилова. Подаци су обрађени помоћу дескриптивне статистике, т теста за независне узорке и линеарне регресије. Резултати су показали да су постоје разлике у преференцијама појединих животних стилова између припадника сектора одбране и цивила, али не и потрошачког етноцентризма, као и да постоје статистички значајне разлике по питању потрошачког етноцентризма и преференција животних

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*** Рад је настао у оквиру пројекта „Вредносне оријентације и однос према традицији кадета Војне академије”, Војна академија, Универзитет одбране, ВА/ДХ/1/24–26.

стилова и када су у питању социјалнодемографске варијабле. Штавише и преференције појединих животних стилова, као вид понашања потрошача, показале су се као статистички значајни предиктори потрошачког етноцентризма. Стога је оправдано више пажње у будућим истраживањима посветити изучавању животних стилова и потрошачких навика одређених групација становништва, како би се код њих подигла свест значају куповине домаћих производа у сврху оснаживања домаће привреде.

Кључне речи: понашање потрошача, војска, Србија, вредности, животни стилови, Миленијалци, генерација Z.

* This paper was received on April 16, 2025, and accepted for publication at the Editorial Board meeting on May 14, 2025.