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MEASURING ETHNOCENTRIC TENDENCIES OF CONSUMERS IN TUZLA CANTON

ABSTRACT

Consumer ethnocentrism is a tendency of consumers to buy and consume domestic products and services. The aim of the paper was to identify the key attitudes and barriers related to consumer ethnocentrism, and to examine the impact of socio–demographic characteristics of households on the tendencies in consumer ethnocentrism in the Tuzla Canton area. The study was conducted on a random sample of 110 households, and the questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part, questions were answered from the standard CET scale with 17 claims, while the second part of the questionnaire consisted of a set of questions that concerned habits and preferences of consumers, barriers to consumer ethnocentrism, and socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. It was found that Bosnia and Herzegovina consumers are ethnocentric, most prominently in the purchase of domestic food products. The extent of Pearson's coefficient of correlation shows that their tendency towards purchasing domestic products significantly correlates positively with promotional activities. The results of the study showed that for most of the socio–demographic characteristics of the respondents there was no statistically significant difference in relation to the tendency of consumer ethnocentrism. The only exception is the ethnicity of the respondents. In addition, consumers do not reject foreign products, but agree that they should be limited in the Tuzla Canton area. The results of the conducted empirical research can provide valuable guidelines for improving the business activities of production companies in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Tuzla Canton.

Keywords: Consumer ethnocentrism, ethnocentric tendencies, Tuzla Canton

1. Introduction

Given the increase in the volume of international exchange and the fact that different products of different origin have become available to everyone, there is an increased interest in researching the phenomenon of consumer ethnocentrism. So far, studies have been carried out in the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany and Japan, which means that little attention was dedicated to the study of this phenomenon in less developed countries. This is the main reason why consumer ethnocentrism is the central topic of this paper, with the focus on the area of Tuzla Canton.

The area of research in this paper is consumer behaviour and the effects of consumer ethnocentrism on the national economy. The general aim of the research is to identify and explain the key determinants of consumer ethnocentrism phenomenon in order to observe and explain consumer habits in purchasing and consumption of domestic products. Considering the above mentioned, the following hypotheses have been defined:

H₁: Consumer habits in purchasing and consumption affect consumers' ethnocentrism in the Tuzla Canton area.

H₂: Socio-demographic characteristics of consumers in the area of Tuzla Canton determine the attitudes and behaviour of consumers in Bosnia and Herzegovina towards the products of domestic origin.

The planned research was realized on the basis of the application of secondary and primary research. During the elaboration of certain theoretical and methodological starting points of the observed problem, the Cronbach's Alpha for measuring the reliability of the claims on the CET scale was used, as well as the Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test with the Bartlett's Sphericity Test. The main component analysis was used within the CET scale. The variance analysis was used for the elaboration of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Furthermore, synthesis methods, as well as induction and deduction, the method of systematization and classification were used.

2. Theoretical framework

In the theory of ethnocentric behaviour, there is no unified attitude on the nature, content and role of ethnocentrism within the national economies. The

key issues that relate to the phenomenon of consumer ethnocentrism are reflected in the recognition of consumer habits, factors that determine ethnocentric behaviour and barriers restricting the purchase of products of domestic origin. The study of the phenomenon which is the subject of this paper has begun with studies conducted in the West during the 1970s and 1980s, but also during the past several decades, country-of-origin research has attracted significant attention from researchers and practitioners alike around the globe (Kaynak, Kara, 2000; Watson, Wright, 2000). Candan et al. (2008) define ethnocentrism as an emphasis on one's own race or ethnic group as superior where the term "ethnic" refers to cultural heritage and focuses on a central point of view. The term "consumer ethnocentrism" is adapted to the form of the original concept of ethnocentrism, first mentioned in the literature by sociologist William Sumner in 1906 (Wanninayake, Chovancova, 2012). Furthermore, it has been pointed out that consumer ethnocentrism implies a desire to evaluate foreign products in a specific way. This means that consumers indicate them as desirable or undesirable, depending on their country of origin. Khan¹ (2012) emphasizes that, due to increased globalization, consumers are not limited to products of domestic origin, but they are exposed to those from overseas as well. Therefore, managers need to have a better insight into consumer perception in order to predict their behaviour. The concept of consumer ethnocentrism could explain why some consumers have negative attitudes towards foreign products and may justify the consumer's bias towards domestic purchasing of imported products. A number of studies have documented that a bias against foreign products and in favour of domestic ones does, in fact, exist (Balabanis, Diamantopoulos, 2004). In the last twenty years, the notion of ethnocentrism has expanded to consumer behaviour (Al Ganideh, Al Tae, 2012). According to Shankarmahesh (2006) consumer ethnocentrism indicates consumer tendencies to differentiate domestic products against imported products and to avoid buying the latter for national reasons. The same author emphasizes that non-centric users should also evaluate products with regard to their price, quality and other characteristics.

Ethnocentric consumers believe that by purchasing imported products they slow down the develop-

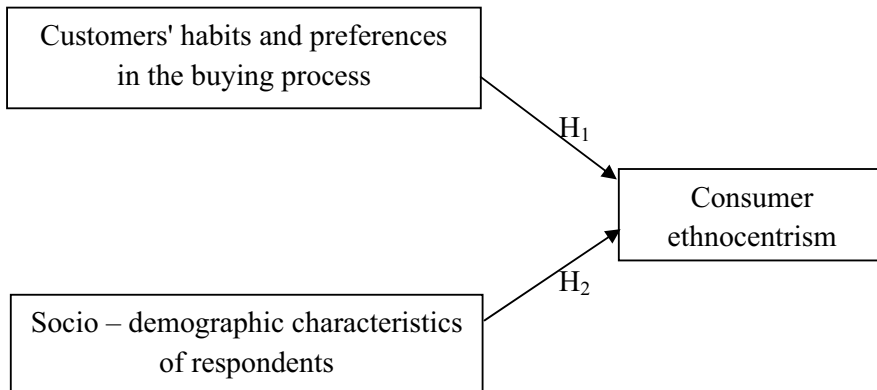
ment of the domestic economy. Shimp and Sharma (1987) emphasized the importance of consumer ethnocentrism in terms of increasing employment, reducing imports and strengthening the gross domestic product of the country. In a functional sense, consumer ethnocentrism gives the individual an identity and a sense of belonging. Renko et al. (2012) define consumer ethnocentrism as an understanding of consumer behaviour in the purchasing process in order to determine their purchasing intentions. Buying an imported product can result in high emotional involvement, especially in terms of national security or job losses. At the same time, it is also the beginning of the introduction of ethnocentrism phenomenon beyond psychological and sociological frameworks, as one of the newer dynamic factors in consumer buying choices. That is why consumer ethnocentrism can be seen as a consequence of affection and attention to one's country and care about the consequences of imports that can cause serious problems in the development of the national economy (Matić, 2012).

Consumer ethnocentrism is a very complex phenomenon and as such significantly affects consumer attitudes, perceptions and habits. It also causes different motives and reactions to products of both domestic and foreign origin. Poljak² (2011) emphasizes that the economy crisis has changed consumer trends and habits in the consumption process. Namely, he notes that consumers, living on the edge of existence, are forced to change their consumer habits. For instance, research results conducted by the Gfk agency in Croatia show that households have replaced large, monthly purchases with smaller, more frequent ones. It is unlikely that total personal consumption is falling and that consumers have really changed their habits. Here it is necessary to point out that the crisis, the mistrust in the revitalization of the national economy, the general pessimism, the high rate of unemployment, job insecurity and in particular the lack of confidence in the labour market, have made already cautious and informed consumers to think twice when and where to spend their money.

However, apart from all the benefits brought by the ethnocentrism of consumers, there are also barriers that restrict the purchase of products of domestic origin. The most common barriers mentioned in

the literature which address the subject matter of the paper, are the fact that some products are not produced within the national borders of a country and that those that are imported are better quality. The reasons why a country does not produce certain products can be due to the extremely high manufacturing costs or lack of resources for their manufacturing. Every country is known for the production of certain products. What creates barriers to the strengthening of ethnocentrism among consumers is the added value that is supplied by purchasing products of foreign origin, and the reliability that ensures the durability of goods, regardless of the fact that the same product of domestic origin is possibly cheaper. With regard to the influence of demographic factors on the ethnocentrism of consumers, Minić et al. (2011) researched ethnocentrism in the area of Kosovo and Metohija and found that there is a significant influence of national identity on this phenomenon. A similar study was conducted in the area of Mexico and Hungary. The aim was to point out the differences between ethnocentric tendencies and socio-demographic characteristics of consumers using the scale of consumer ethnocentrism (Witkovski, 1998). Nguyen (2017) suggests that age, sex, level of education and average monthly income are considered relevant for researching socio-demographic characteristics of consumer ethnocentrism. It can be stated that ethnocentrism is viewed as behaviour aimed at improving and supporting members of the group to which the individual belongs, but not to those outside the group. This behaviour of buying everything that is domestic is developed within the family, as the primary reference group. This reflects the approach to ethnocentrism based on consumer behaviour in the purchasing process. First of all, it is necessary to develop awareness of the importance of buying domestic products and to emphasize the positive effects of consumer ethnocentrism, reflected in the economic growth through increased exports and employment, while reducing imports and increasing the social status of citizens. Thus, consumer ethnocentrism manifests itself as a consumer's belief that buying foreign products will harm the domestic economy and vice versa. The research concept is partly based on the model used for consumer ethnocentrism research in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bešliagić, 2015).

Figure 1 Research concept



Source: Authors' research

3. Research methodology

In the empirical part of the research, primary data was collected using a random sample of 176 households from the Tuzla Canton. The response rate was 62.5%, i.e. 110 households were examined. As a measurement instrument, a questionnaire consisting of two parts was used. In the first part it offered questions from the standard CET scale with 17 statements using a five-element Likert scale. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of a series of questions related to consumer habits, barriers to consumer ethnocentrism, and socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Based on the results of the responses to the claims from the CET scales, a primary component analysis (PCA) was performed. Adequacy of application of factor analysis was tested using the Bartlett's Sphericity Test and the Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test. The Cronbach's Alpha calculation was used to measure the reliability of the CET scale. The influence of socio-demographic characteristics on consumer ethnocentrism was tested by using a one-way ANOVA test that tested statistical significance among the mean values of respondents' views on consumer ethnocentrism. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and customers' habits and preferences in the buying process. SPSS software was used for statistical data processing.

4. Research results

For the purpose of measuring the reliability of the measuring instrument, the value of the Cronbach's

Alpha (Table 1) was calculated, which is 0.941 and is greater than the limit value (0.70), indicating high reliability of the CET scale and the representativeness of the research results.

Table 1 Reliability of the CET scale

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.941	17

Source: Authors' research (n= 110)

The first step in applying the main component analysis method is to determine the value of the Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test and the Bartlett's Sphericity Test. The obtained results (Table 2) show that the value of the Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test of 0.924 is greater than 0.90, while at the Bartlett's Sphericity Test $p < 0.05$, and thus the adequacy of the method of main component analysis can be ascertained.

Table 2 Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin Test and Bartlett's Sphericity Test

Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin measure of sample adequacy		.924
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi - square	1202.813
df		136
Sig.		.000

Source: Authors' research (n= 110)

The analysis of the main components (Table 3) shows that the first three components of the CET scale have eigenvalue greater than 1. The results

show that the first component explains 52.48%, the second component explains 7.81%, and the third component accounts for 6.15% of the total variability of all 17 components of the CET scale. Ac-

ording to a similar research carried out by Matic (2013), in which the first component explains about 52% of the total variance, this component is called Consumer Ethnocentrism.

Table 3 Analysis of major components of the CET scale

Components	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.92	52.48	52.48	8.92	52.48	52.48
2	1.32	7.81	60.29	1.32	7.81	60.29
3	1.04	6.15	66.44	1.04	6.15	66.44

Source: Authors' research (n = 110)

Table 4 shows the mean value and standard deviation of the household responses to the CET scales. A five-point Likert-type scale (1 – strongly disagree to 5 – strongly agree).

Table 4 CETSCALE results

	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina should always buy Bosnian–Herzegovinian products instead of imports.	110	4.1727	1.03036
Only those products that are unavailable in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be imported.	110	3.9545	1.18389
Buy products made in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Give people in Bosnia and Herzegovina jobs.	110	4.5818	0.73425
Bosnian–Herzegovinian products are above all other products.	110	4.0000	1.10046
Purchasing foreign–made products is un–Bosnian.	110	3.3364	1.35645
Buying foreign products is wrong because it affects people and possibility of losing their jobs.	110	3.7455	1.25205
A real Bosnian and Herzegovinian always buys products made in Bosnia and Herzegovina.	110	3.7455	1.30936
We should purchase products manufactured in Bosnia and Herzegovina instead of buying imported ones and giving possibility to other countries to become wealthy.	110	4.2273	1.04626
It is always best to purchase Bosnian–Herzegovinian products.	110	3.8909	1.19897
There should be very little trading or purchasing of goods from other countries unless it is necessary to do it.	110	3.5727	1.27401
Bosnian–Herzegovinians should not buy foreign products, because it has a bad impact on Bosnian businesses and causes unemployment.	110	3.7727	1.20137
The importation of goods should be limited.	110	4.0000	1.01367
I prefer to buy Bosnian products although it may be a long-term cost.	110	3.5091	1.29037
Foreign products should be prohibited on the Bosnian market.	110	2.6091	1.38203
Foreign products should be taxed heavily to reduce their entry into Bosnia and Herzegovina.	110	3.5909	1.37003
We should buy from foreign countries only the products that we cannot obtain within our own country.	110	3.9545	1.23694
Bosnian–Herzegovinian consumers who purchase products made in other countries are responsible for putting their fellow Bosnian–Herzegovinians out of work.	110	3.0000	1.46519

Source: Authors' research (n = 110)

The highest degree of agreement is with the statement: “Buy products made in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Give people in Bosnia and Herzegovina jobs”, with the smallest standard deviation associated with this claim. On the other hand, the smallest degree of agreement is shown in the statement: “Foreign products should be prohibited on the Bosnian market”. The research carried out by Bešlić (2015) in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina shows similarities with regard to ethnocentric tendencies of consumers in the area of Tuzla Canton. The same study showed that consumers mostly agree with the statement “Buy products made in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Give people in Bosnia and Herzegovina jobs”, while the lowest degree of consistency has been shown in the statement: “Foreign products should be prohibited in the Bosnian market”. In the methodological sense, there are similarities with the study conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding the use of the variance analysis in this paper. Comparing the results of this paper with the results of Čičić et al. (2003) in the territory of Bosnia and

Herzegovina there has been similarity with regard to imported products that consumers do not discard and develop an awareness of the importance of employment, production and export, by purchasing products of Bosnian–Herzegovinian origin.

In order to determine the influence of socio-demographic characteristics of households on the tendency of ethnocentrism, One-way ANOVA test was performed (Table 5). The results show that at the level of significance of 0.05% for the most observed socio-demographic characteristics there is no statistically significant difference in relation to ethnocentrism. The exception is the ethnicity of households, where a statistically significant difference in the responses is shown. Moreover, a significant difference has been determined only between the households that declare themselves as Bosniaks and the Serb–denominated households, and where ethnocentrism is more expressed within Bosniak households.

Table 5 Results of ANOVA test

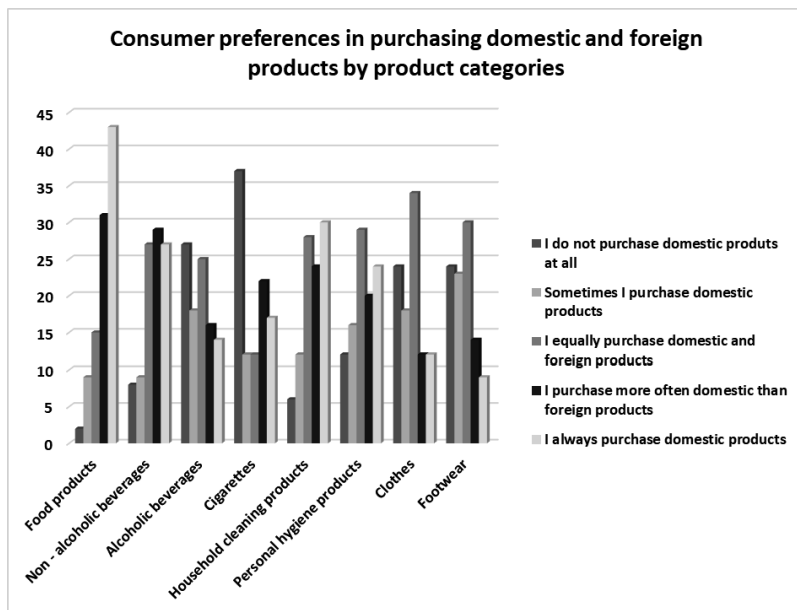
ANOVA					
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Status in the household	7.207	4	1.802	1.743	0.146
Number of household members	4.097	4	2.049	1.964	0.145
Level of education of the primary income earner	3.161	4	0.790	0.737	0.569
Working status of the primary income earner	0.535	4	0.268	0.249	0.780
Marital status of the primary income earner	1.815	4	0.605	0.563	0.641
Average monthly household income	3.345	4	1.115	1.052	0.373
Ethnicity of the household	16.334	4	3.267	3.419	0.007
Place of residence	14.470	4	1.809	1.804	0.085

Source: Authors' research (n= 110)

Figure 2 shows consumer preferences in relation to domestic and foreign products by product categories. The preference of domestic products is mostly expressed for food products, while in the category of cigarettes, clothing and footwear households mostly prefer foreign products. Research on consumer preference conducted at the level of Bos-

nia and Herzegovina has shown that consumers prefer mostly domestic products in the following categories: food and non–alcoholic beverages. On the other hand, the lowest level of preference for domestic products was shown in clothing and footwear (Bešlić, 2015).

Figure 2 Consumer preferences in purchasing domestic and foreign products by product categories



Source: Authors' research (n= 110)

Based on the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient Calculation (Table 6), there is a statistically significant correlation between consumer ethnocentrism and promotional activities and paying attention to the origin of products during the purchasing process at a significance level of 0.01. The correlation coefficient

is positive, which may lead to the conclusion that increased promotional activities are accompanied by an increase in the tendency of consumer ethnocentrism. "Paying attention to the origin of products" is statistically significant at the level of 0.05.

Table 6 Correlation between consumer ethnocentrism and habits in the purchasing and consumption process

Habits in the purchasing and consumption process:	N	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Sig.
Promotional activities like "Buy local, buy with heart"	110	0.421	0.000
Paying attention to the origin of products during the purchasing process	110	-0.243	0.011

Source: Authors' research (n= 110)

The results of the study conducted by Ranjbarian et al. (2011) in Iran have shown that consumption habits such as the need for uniqueness and the status of consumption have a negative impact on the level of consumer ethnocentrism. However, the authors, in addition, have shown that consumer sen-

sitivity to interpersonal relationships is positively correlated with consumer ethnocentrism. Analysing the share of domestic products in monthly purchases of households, 62% of households in Tuzla Canton buy more than 71% of domestic products in their monthly purchases (Table 7).

Table 7 Percentage of participation of domestic products in household purchases

The share of domestic products in monthly purchases of households	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 – 10%	0	0
11 - 20%	2	2
21 - 30%	4	4
31 - 40%	4	4
41 - 50%	18	16
51 - 60%	5	5
61 - 70%	8	7
71 - 80%	21	19
81 - 90%	17	15
91 -100%	31	28
Total:	110	100

Source: Authors' research ($n = 110$)

The results of measuring the share of domestic products in monthly purchases of households in Bosnia and Herzegovina show that only 35% of households buy domestic products with 71% and above share of total monthly purchase (Bešliagić, 2014). Table 8 shows the most significant barriers to consumer ethnocentrism in Tuzla Canton. The most dominant barriers are the poor quality and high price of domestic products (84%). Moreover, another important reasons why households choose foreign products is the fact that domestic products are not available (15%). Out of 110 respondents, 79 of them have barriers to consumer ethnocentrism.

Table 8 Barriers to Consumer Ethnocentrism

Dominant barriers to consumer ethnocentrism:	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Poor product quality	51	65
High price	15	19
Products are not available	12	15
Other reasons	1	1
Total:	79	100

Source: Authors' research ($n = 110$)

It is important to emphasize that the same barriers to consumer ethnocentrism were identified

in the overall territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bešliagić, 2014).

5. Conclusion

Based on the conducted research it can be concluded that the phenomenon of consumer ethnocentrism is a very interesting area for conducting scientific research. By analysing habits and socio-demographic characteristics of consumers, the factors determining the ethnocentric tendencies of consumers in the territory of Tuzla Canton have been identified. The results of the measurement of consumer ethnocentrism obtained with the aid of the CET scale have shown a high presence of ethnocentric tendencies among the respondents. Consumers approve of the import of foreign products, but they have also developed awareness of the importance of domestic production, increasing employment and strengthening the national economy, in general. In respect to the fact that the correlation between habits and preferences in purchasing and consumption with consumer ethnocentrism is established, the results support hypothesis H_1 .

Within the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents it was determined that ethnicity of households determines attitudes of respondents towards products of domestic origin, which means that hypothesis H_2 can be accepted.

The limitations in the paper relate to the geographical area, and future research should focus on ethnocentric tendencies of consumers at the level of the whole Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The results of the conducted empirical research can provide valuable guidance for improving business activities of manufacturing companies both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the area of Tuzla Canton. By identifying the ethnocentric tendencies of consumers, companies will be able to improve existing marketing strategies in terms of promoting the goods produced in Bosnia and Herzegovina for particular consumer needs.

Moreover, the results provide a better insight into the characteristics of consumers, their wishes and needs, and the current barriers to consumer ethnocentrism. This kind of research can serve marketers when creating a marketing strategy to attract consumers with different degrees of ethnocentric tendencies.

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MJERENJE ETNOCENTRIČNIH TENDENCIJA POTROŠAČA NA PODRUČJU TUZLANSKOG KANTONA

SAŽETAK

Potrošački etnocentrizam predstavlja tendenciju potrošača prema kupovini i potrošnji domaćih proizvoda i usluga. Cilj je rada bio identificirati ključne stavove i prepreke povezane s potrošačkim etnocentrizmom te ispitati utjecaj sociodemografskih karakteristika domaćinstava na tendencije u potrošačkom etnocentrizmu na području Tuzlanskog kantona. Ispitivanje je provedeno na slučajnom uzorku od 110 domaćinstava, a upitnik se sastojao od dva dijela, u prvom dijelu odgovarano je na pitanja iz standardne CET skale sa 17 tvrdnji, dok se drugi dio upitnika sastojao od seta pitanja koja su se odnosila na navike i preferencije potrošača, prepreke potrošačkog etnocentrizma, te sociodemografska obilježja ispitanika. Utvrđeno je da su bosanskohercegovački potrošači etnocentrični, najizraženije preferiraju kupovinu domaćih prehrambenih proizvoda, a izračun Pearsonovog koeficijenta korelacije pokazuje da njihova sklonost ka kupovini domaćih proizvoda signifikantno pozitivno korelira s promotivnim aktivnostima. Rezultati istraživanja su pokazali da za većinu sociodemografskih obilježja ispitanika nije pronađena statistički značajna razlika u odnosu na tendenciju potrošačkog etnocentrizma. Jedini izuzetak predstavlja etničko obilježje ispitanika. Pored toga, potrošači ne odbacuju strane proizvode, ali se slažu da bi ih trebalo ograničiti na području Tuzlanskog kantona. Rezultati provedenog empirijskog istraživanja mogu pružiti vrijedne smjernice za unapređenje poslovnih aktivnosti proizvodnih preduzeća kako u Bosni i Hercegovini, tako i na području Tuzlanskog kantona.

Ključne riječi: potrošački etnocentrizam, etnocentrične tendencije, Tuzlanski kanton