

Ethnic Exclusionism and General Siege Mentality as Predictors of Anti-Semitism

Relationships Within the Adult Croatian Sample

Zlatko Šram*, Marina Perić Kaselj**, Mario Bara***

Summary

This research aims to determine 1) whether ethnic exclusivity and general siege mentality, as aspects of threat perception, can significantly predict anti-Semitism; 2) whether national exclusivity, siege mentality, and anti-Semitism are correlated in a way that forms a higher-order latent structure of general ethnic-national threat perception, and 3) whether respondents of different sexes, ages, and educational backgrounds vary in their internalization of this general ethnic-national threat. The study involved a convenience sample of 558 adult Croatian citizens from Eastern Slavonia and Baranja and was conducted as part of the research activities of the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (now known as the Institute for Migration Research). The results from the multiple regression analysis indicated that national exclusivity and siege mentality are significant predictors of anti-Semitism, accounting for about 25 percent of the variance in anti-Semitic attitudes. Exploratory factor analysis revealed a one-factor solution which explained 64 percent of the variance and was labeled as general ethnic-national threat perception. Such perception of ethnic and national threats significantly contributes to the development of anti-Semitism. While general ethnic-national threat perception is more prevalent among male respondents, older individuals, and those with lower levels of education, socio-demographic characteristics have a minimal impact on the internalization of this latent dimension, which comprises national exclusivity, siege mentality, and anti-Semitism.

Keywords: ethnic exclusionism; siege mentality; anti-Semitism; threat perception; Croats

* Zlatko Šram, Ph.D., Senior Scientific Associate, Croatian Center for Social Research. Address: Grgura Ninskog 5, 22000 Šibenik, Croatia. ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2689-5706>. E-mail: zlatko.sram@hcdi.hr

** Marina Perić Kaselj, Ph.D., Scientific Advisor, Institute for Migration Research. Address: Trg Stjepana Radića 3, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia. ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4513-841X>. E-mail: marina.peric@imin.hr

*** Mario Bara, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Catholic University of Croatia. Address: Ilica 242, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia. ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9964-7802>. E-mail: mario.bara@unicath.hr

Introduction

After the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, anti-Semitism increased significantly throughout Europe and the United States (Shani et al., 2025, 2). One can somehow understand the increase in anti-Semitism as a result of television footage showing razed cities and citing death tolls in the Gaza region as the doing of the Israeli Defense Forces. Still, it is difficult to comprehend anti-Semitism among people who have never had direct contact or social interaction with Jews, or are unaware of the Holocaust of the Second World War. Prejudices and stereotypes related to anti-Semitism are often contradictory and vary in time and place (Cohen et al., 2009, 290). In social psychology, there are different conceptual and theoretical approaches to the study and explanation of the anti-Semitism which is prevalent in people having neither social experience with members of the Jewish community nor knowledge of the history of Israel.

1. Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism has its own affective, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions as does the structure of any other social attitude. Prejudice represents the affective component of anti-Semitism, and stereotypes represent the cognitive and discrimination behavioural component of anti-Semitism (Abady, 2020, 272–273). The affective or emotional component of anti-Semitism, often manifested as a negative attitude towards Jews, is not rooted in rationality. Emotions, being automatic or unconscious, are rarely based on sound reasoning. Prejudice, as an affective dimension of anti-Semitism, is a hostile or negative attitude towards Jews, solely because of their Jewish identity. An example of such irrational prejudice is the statement, “I do not like and do not tolerate Jews.” This type of prejudice is indiscriminate, targeting all Jews, regardless of their individuality within a society. People tend to categorize groups of people and even nations. This categorization allows them to quickly and effectively simplify the world around them (Allport, 1954, 9). Since stereotype formation is a cognitive process used to simplify one’s perception of the world, stereotypes do not always lead to discrimination in social interactions (Crandall et al., 2011, 1489). An example of the negative stereotype of open anti-Semitism is when all Jews are viewed as being greedy for money, power-hungry, immoral in achieving their goals, and dishonest in business dealings. Therefore, the individual uses cognitive schemes to process information about Jews (Dovidio et al., 2011, 7). Stereotypes usually accompany prejudice which arises because the essential precursor of prejudice is a social categorization which indicates a certain stereotype (Amodio & Cikara, 2021, 441). Therefore, in our research, we defined a form of anti-Semitism as a cognitive attitudinal construct operationalized as prejudice against and stereotypes of Jews concerning their perceived dishonesty in business and in beliefs

that the Jews have »an over–abundance of power in the business world« (Abady, 2020, 281). In social psychology, different theoretical approaches attempt to explain the antecedents of anti–Semitism. Since the psychological factors underlying ethnic exclusiveness and general siege mentality stem from a specific intergroup threat, we will provide a more detailed explanation of the “intergroup threat theory.” This theory helps to clarify the emergence of anti–Semitism, particularly in terms of prejudice and stereotypes as defined in this research.

2. *Intergroup Threat Theory*

Intergroup threat theory assumes that individuals experience a threat when members of another group intend to cause them harm, evil, or pain, which leads to certain prejudices or stereotypes and interferes with the accomplishing of one’s own goals (Stephan et al., 2009, 44). Threat perception can not only generate prejudice against or stereotypes of members of another group, but it can also generate hostile attitudes and efforts to reduce the power and influence of members of an outgroup, and furthermore, to take such actions as will contribute to their weakening, social isolation, and discrimination (Šram, 2010, 116). In political life, this can sometimes lead to a policy which will propagate the need for the collective exclusion of certain social groups or members of certain ethnic groups (Canetti–Nisim et al., 2009, 365). One commonly distinguishes between realistic and symbolic threat concepts (Jaspal, 2023, 34; Stephan et al., 2009, 44). Realistic threats are perceived as existential threats to members of one’s own group which come from members of an outgroup and contribute to the loss of resources, power, and welfare of one’s group. Symbolic threats refer to threats to group identity, a value system, and worldview. However, members of an outgroup may indicate the presence of so–called hybridized threats, which simultaneously represent a combination of realistic and symbolic elements of the threat (Jaspal, 2023, 34). Several types of threat perception may show high correlations, creating a higher factorial model of uncertainty termed “national threat–perception” (Šram & Dulić, 2015, 46).

According to threat theory, the feeling of endangerment causes prejudice, negative stereotypes, intolerance, and various types of exclusionism. The focus is on the subjective perception of conflict between groups. Namely, the perception of conflict, which often presents perceptual distortion, leads to prejudice regardless of whether or not the threat is “real”. Some studies have indicated an association between threat perception and anti–Semitism (Golec de Zavala, 2024, 1032; Jaspal, 2023, 38–39). The concepts of ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality illustrate two types of threat perception that we will discuss briefly.

3. *Ethnic Exclusionism*

Ethnic exclusionism, often accompanied by inter-ethnic mistrust, stems from perceived threats between ethnic groups, indicating actual competition among them (Scheepers et al., 2002, 19). In the latent structure of ethnocentrism, ethnic exclusionism is cited as a behavioural component indicating mistrust, intolerance, closure, and bias in social-ethnic interactions (Šram, 2010, 115). Although ethnic exclusionism is correlated positively with other dimensions of ethnocentrism, it is still a different attitudinal construct in the social-psychological sense. A relatively weak positive correlation was found between ethnic exclusionism and ethnic affective attachment ($r = 0.30$). This weak correlation has significant implications for future research, suggesting that affective attachments to one's ethnic group do not necessarily imply the expression of ethnic exclusiveness in social interactions. Besides, they identify various dimensions of ethnocentrism related to social interactions. Ethnic affective attachment reflects a type of intra-group ethnocentrism, while ethnic exclusivity represents an aspect of inter-group ethnocentrism, which denotes overt ethnic intolerance in social interactions (Bizumic et al., 2021, 38). Different social-psychological mechanisms underlie ethnic exclusiveness and affective attachment, revealing intriguing research directions (Zagefka, 2009, 233–234).

In this research, we define the construct of ethnic exclusionism through three key components: ethnic closure in social interactions, mistrust of the intentions of individuals from different ethnic groups, and the willingness to self-sacrifice in defense of one's ethnic interests. We categorize ethnic exclusiveness into three components: the behavioural component (closure), the cognitive component (distrust), and the affective component (self-sacrifice). It is important to note that ethnic exclusiveness is not a simple concept that merely reflects ethnic intolerance, but rather represents a much more complex social-psychological syndrome.

4. *General Siege Mentality*

Another type of threat perception which is implicit and which we use in this research is the concept of general siege mentality introduced by Daniel Bar-Tal and Dikla Antebi (1992a, 634). The concept of siege mentality refers to a psychological state in which members of a particular group believe that the rest of the world harbours negative intentions towards them, perceiving it as hostile (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992a, 634). The cognitive state fosters the belief that other ethnic groups intend to inflict harm or injustice upon their group. Accompanying this belief is a feeling of isolation, as if their group is alone in the world and is facing an existential threat. Consequently, they may feel the need to be unique and self-reliant to defend against this threat. At the same time, they often believe they cannot depend on anyone else for assistance and justify using any means

necessary for their protection. The social–psychological implications of a state of siege mentality are more complex than merely suggesting a belief in negative intentions that the world holds towards a particular ethnic group. This concept encompasses not only a cognitive framework — such as the perception of an ethnic threat, the experience of hostility and distrust toward another ethnic group — but also a behavioural component. This includes the desire for ethnic homogeneity and a readiness to defend one’s interests, potentially even resorting to war if deemed necessary (Bar–Tal & Antebi, 1992b, 252). The cognitive–behavioural framework of the siege mentality can significantly enhance our understanding of hostile interethnic relationships, as well as the prejudices and stereotypes that often accompany them. It is crucial to recognize that the psychological implications of siege mentality reflect a perceived realistic threat rather than a symbolic one. Specifically, a realistic threat occurs when members of one group believe that another group intends to harm or damage them (Stephan et al., 2009, 43). Consequently, the mentality associated with a state of siege emerges from the perception of external threats and is sometimes called “national siege mentality” (Šram, 2015a, 205).

5. *Research Objectives*

In this study, we aimed to investigate the following:

- 1) Whether ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality — as aspects of threat perception — are significant predictors of prejudice against and stereotypes of Jews, particularly regarding beliefs about their dishonesty in business and the perception that Jews hold great power and influence in the business world.
- 2) Whether ethnic exclusionism, general siege mentality, and a form of such anti-Semitism are interrelated in such a way that they reveal an internally coherent latent structure reflecting general ethnic–national threat perception.
- 3) Whether individuals of different sexes, ages, and educational achievements differ in their degree of internalization of general ethnic–national threat perception.

6. *Research Hypotheses*

- 1) Ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality are likely to be significant predictors of anti-Semitism.
- 2) There are strong correlations among ethnic exclusionism, siege mentality, and a type of anti-Semitism, indicating an underlying latent dimension of general ethnic–national threat perception.
- 3) Males, older individuals, and those with lower levels of educational achievement are more likely to express a substantial sense of general ethnic–national threat perception.

7. Method

7.1. Participants and Procedure

This research was conducted on a convenience sample of 558 adults of Croatian nationality from Eastern Slavonia and Baranja, from Vukovar and its surrounding areas, to be exact, as well as Beli Manastir and its environs. The sample included 46% male participants, with a mean age of 43.30 years and a standard deviation of 16.20 years. The participants' educational backgrounds were as follows: 6.6% completed primary school; 15.2% attended a three-year secondary school program for vocational studies; 40.5% graduated from a four-year secondary school program; 12% completed post-secondary education; and 25.6% held a university degree. This distribution indicates a trend toward higher levels of education, which is understandable given that completing the questionnaire required a certain level of literacy and social motivation. All respondents identified as Croatian, with 89% reporting affiliation with the Catholic Church. Interviewers visited participants' homes to explain the purpose of the research and the organization conducting it. They asked each household to have one adult member (aged 18 or older) independently complete a questionnaire covering various topics in sociology, political science, and psychology. No informed consent was necessary. Interviewers returned on the second or third day to collect the completed questionnaires. Participants were assured of their anonymity, and it was made clear to them that the research results would be used solely for scientific purposes. This paper is part of a larger research project titled "Ethnic Attitudes, Political Orientations, Values, and Personality Traits: Relationships Within and Between Croats and Members of the Serbian Ethnic Minority." The research examined various variables from the fields of sociology, political science, social psychology, and clinical psychology. The project was carried out by the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (now known as the Institute for Migration Research) and received financial support from the Ministry of Science and Education through dedicated multi-year funding for scientific activities at public universities and institutes in Croatia.

The study was conducted on a convenience sample of adult Croatians ($N = 558$) (Eastern Slavonia and Baranja) as part of a broader socio-psychological and political-psychological research project conducted under scientific research assignments at the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies in Zagreb. The sample included 46% male and 54% female respondents. The average age was 43.30 years, with a standard deviation of 16.20. The educational structure of the participants was as follows: primary school: 6.6%; three-year vocational high school: 15.2%; four-year high school: 40.5%; college: 12.0%; university degree: 25.6%. The distribution of educational attainment was skewed towards higher levels, which was expected, given that such research requires a certain level of literacy. All participants were of Croatian nationality, and 89% identified as belonging to the Catholic Church. The self-report questionnaires covered different sociological and psychological topics and were administered to respondents

in their homes. The respondents were asked to fill out the questionnaires by themselves.

7.2. Measurement Instruments

Anti-Semitism. An anti-Semitic prejudice scale (ASP-1) describes prejudice and stereotypes about Jews regarding their dishonesty in business. Specifically, the ASP-1 consisted of five statements worded as follows: Jews are shrewd and tricky when it comes to business; Jews have too much power in the business world; Jews use shady practices to get ahead; Jews are not as honest about business as other business people; Jews have too much control over international banking. On a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, respondents were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Using the component model with Varimax rotation, exploratory factor analysis resulted in a one-factor solution explaining 74.45% of the variance.

Ethnic exclusionism. The ethnic exclusionism scale (EES-1), comprised of six items, was constructed based on a dimension of ethnocentrism, which indicates inter-ethnic closeness and distrust in social interactions, as well as the willingness to self-sacrifice in defense of ethnic interests (Šram, 2010). The EES-1 scale contained the following statements: Openness towards other nations brings more disadvantages than advantages; The members of my nationality should not contract nationally mixed marriages; It is difficult for me to be frank with a person who is not of my nationality; We must always be cautious and restrained in regard to other nationalities, even when they appear to be our friends; We must always be ready to defend our national interest, even by war if necessary; The sacred duty of every member of my nation is to sacrifice his/her interests for the benefit of his/her nation. On a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, respondents were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with each statement. Using the component model with Varimax rotation, exploratory factor analysis resulted in a one-factor solution explaining 51.73% of the variance.

General siege mentality. The 12-item general siege mentality scale (GSMS) was initially developed by Bar-Tal and Antebi (1992). The items included feelings of loneliness in the world, negative attitudes toward the world, sensitivity to cues indicating the harmful intentions of the world, increased pressure to conformity within the in-group, and use of all means for self-defense. Each item was assessed on a 4-point Likert scale: (1) disagree strongly, (2) disagree somewhat, (3) agree somewhat, (4) agree strongly. The GSMS indicates a central belief that the rest of the world has highly harmful behavioural intentions toward his/her nation and a strong need for national homogenization and mobilization.

8. Results

All measures displayed adequate internal consistency since the criterion $\alpha \geq 0.70$ indicates adequate internal reliability for relatively short scales (Cortina, 1993). All the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were high for anti-Semitism ($\alpha = 0.91$), ethnic exclusionism ($\alpha = 0.83$), and general siege mentality ($\alpha = 0.80$). The scales were used as composite variables in further statistical data analysis. As shown in *Table 1*, the scores obtained on all the scales were generally distributed because the skewness and kurtosis indices were between -1.00 and 1.00 . The correlations between all variables are presented in *Table 1*. As shown, anti-Semitism had a substantial positive correlation with ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality. Ethnic exclusionism also has a substantial positive correlation with general siege mentality.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations between anti-Semitism, ethnic exclusionism, and general siege mentality

Tablica 1. Deskriptivni statistici i korelacije između antisemitizma, etničke isključivosti i mentaliteta opasnoga stanja

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Antisemitism</i>	<i>Ethnic exclusionism</i>	<i>General siege mentality</i>
Anti-Semitism	1.00		
Ethnic exclusionism	0.42***	1.00	
General siege mentality	0.45***	0.52***	1.00
M	14.77	15.35	30.67
SD	5.41	5.99	7.87
α	0.91	0.83	0.80
Skewness	-0.11	0.26	0.30
Kurtosis	0.47	-0.61	0.32

$p < 0.001$

We observed a significant correlation between the predictor variables, specifically ethnic exclusivity and general siege mentality ($r = 0.52$). To assess the reliability of our regression model, we analyzed the presence of multicollinearity using variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance values. *Table 2* displays the VIF and tolerance values for the regression model. We found that the VIF values are all below 5, and the tolerance values are above 0.2. This indicates that multicollinearity among the variables does not undermine the reliability of the regression model, suggesting that the level of multicollinearity is acceptable.

To determine how well scores on anti-Semitism could be predicted by ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality, multiple regression analysis was performed (Table 2). There was a significant regression model with anti-Semitism as the outcome variable, $F(2,519) = 89.44$, $p < 0.001$. As shown, both ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality were proven to be significant predictors of anti-Semitism (Table 2). About 25% of the variance in anti-Semitism was explained by ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality.

Table 2. Multiple regression analysis of ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality on the anti-Semitism variable and collinearity statistics (N = 521)
Tablica 2. Multipla regresijska analiza etničke isključivosti i mentaliteta opsadnog stanja na varijabli antisemitizma i kolinea (N = 521)

	<i>Anti-Semitism</i>	<i>Collinearity statistics</i>	
<i>Predictors</i>	(β)	Tolerance	VIF
Ethnic exclusionism	0.26***	0.72	1.38
General siege mentality	0.31***	0.72	1.38
		R=0.50	
		R ² =0.25	

*** $p < 0.001$

Correlation and regression analysis indicated that there might be an underlying latent dimension based on the correlational strength between the variables and the magnitude which the predictor contributes to generating an anti-Semitic syndrome. An exploratory factor analysis was performed to see if there is a latent dimension. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO) was 0.67, and the Bartlett test of sphericity yielded a value of 309.269, with degrees of freedom (df) equal to 3, and $p < 0.001$. All these measures of factorability are acceptable, although the KMO is considered mediocre for factor analysis. We applied the Kaiser–Guttman criterion to determine the number of factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. Higher communality values (see Table 3) suggest that the factor effectively explains a variable’s variance, making it a strong indicator of the underlying constructs. Higher communality values suggest that the factor effectively explains a variable’s variance, making it a strong indicator of the underlying constructs. Using a component model with Varimax rotation, the factor analysis results yielded a one-factor solution explaining 64% of the variance (Table 3). This latent dimension of ethnic attitudes was labeled “general ethnic–national threat perception,” indicating the existence of nationalistic inclinations.

Table 3. EFA based on the intercorrelation matrix of the investigated variable
Tablica 3. Eksploratorna faktorska analiza temeljena na interkorelacijskoj matrici ispitivanih varijabli

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Loadings</i>	<i>Communalities</i>
General siege mentality	0.82	0.67
Ethnic exclusionism	0.80	0.64
Anti-Semitism	0.76	0.59
% Variance	64.13	

We wished to examine sex, age, and educational differences regarding the degree of internalization of general ethnic–national threat perception. To discover these differences, we used the independent t–test for sex groups and analysis of variance for different age and educational groups. As shown in *Table 4*, there is a tendency for males and the oldest subjects, and also those with a lesser degree of school attainment to be more likely to express a stronger general ethnic–national threat perception. Though we found statistically significant differences between socio–demographics, there is a small effect size of sex, age, and education on the internalization of general ethnic–national threat perception.

Table 4. Statistical significance of differences between different socio–demographic groups in the results obtained on the latent dimension of general ethnic–national threat perception

Tablica 4. Statistička značajnost razlika između različitih socio–demografskih grupa na rezultatima postignutim na latentnoj dimenziji generalne etničko–nacionalne percepcije prijetnje

Socio–demographics	General ethnic–national threat perception
Sex	
Male	0.17
Female	–0.14
	$t(556) = 3.77^{**}$
Age Groups	M
18–30	–0.14
31–45	–0.05
46–60	0.05
61+	0.20
	$F(3,555) = 2.78^{*}$
School Achievement	M
Completed Elementary School	0.31

Vocational School (3 years)	0.21
Secondary School (4 years)	0.02
College	0.05
University Degree	−0.27
	$F(4,553) = 4.87^{* *}$

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.001$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: M does not indicate arithmetic means but the means of the factorial scores, as we have manipulated latent variables instead of composite variables.

9. Discussion

First of all, we have seen that there is a latent internally coherent attitudinal construct that points to the form of anti-Semitism characteristic of prejudice against and stereotypes of Jews as far as their dishonesty and excessive influence in the business world and banking sector are concerned (Abady, 2020, 281). In other words, people who have never had contact or experience with Jews in the business world express a specific form of anti-Semitism within the social worldview, which is the consequence of a broader ethnic and national threat perception. This form of anti-Semitism primarily involves a cognitive component, which can later be accompanied by an affective component in certain social contexts. This may manifest as a sense of hostility towards Jews, potentially evolving into a broader prejudice against them (Amodio & Cikara, 2021, 441). It is clear that anti-Semitism does not necessarily hinge on rational reasoning, as cognitive schemas are employed to process information about Jews (Dovidio et al., 2011, 7).

We aimed to determine whether ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality are significant predictors of a specific form of anti-Semitism, as described above. We observed a substantial association between these attitudinal constructs at the Pearson's correlation level, indicating a common social-psychological background. Ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality have proven to be significant predictors of anti-Semitism that describe Jews as being dishonest and very powerful people in the business world. In other words, inter-ethnic exclusionism, distrust in inter-ethnic relationships, the willingness to self-sacrifice in defense of ethnic interests (Šram, 2010, 115) as well as feelings of loneliness in the world, beliefs that other ethnic groups intend to inflict harm upon one's group, facing an existential threat, and readiness to use all means for self-defense (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992a, 634) are found to be underpinning the stereotype of Jews as being dishonest and possessing excessive power in the business world (Abady, 2020, 281). Ethnic exclusionism arises from perceived threats between different ethnic groups (Scheepers et al., 2002, 19). This idea of general siege mentality is linked to an existential threat perceived by ethnic groups (Bar-Tal & Antebi, 1992a, 634). As a result, we can observe that threat perception plays a crucial role in the anti-Semitic syndrome, serving as a fundamental cognitive fra-

mework for the way in which information about Jews is processed (Dovidio et al., 2011, 7). It aligns with intergroup threat theory, which assumes that individuals experience a threat when members of another group intend to cause harm, evil, or pain to one's ethnic group (Stephan et al., 2009, 44). These stereotypes include beliefs about their dishonesty in business and the perception that Jews possess significant power and influence in the business world. The findings support our initial hypothesis that ethnic exclusionism and a general sense of siege mentality — both of which are aspects of threat perception — are significant predictors of stereotypes of Jews. These stereotypes include beliefs about their dishonesty in business and the perception that Jews possess significant power and influence in the business world.

Anti-Semitism represents more of a realistic threat than a symbolic one. Realistic threats are perceived as existential dangers posed by members of an outgroup, regardless of whether these threats are genuine or imagined (Stephan et al., 2009, 44). However, we should not overlook the implicit presence of a symbolic threat, which refers to dangers faced by a group's or ethnic identity. In this context, an anti-Semitic syndrome — characterized by beliefs in Jewish dishonesty and disproportionate influence in the business world — can be seen as a hybrid threat. This means it combines both realistic and symbolic elements of threat (Jaspal, 2023, 34) or reflects broader national threat perception (Šram & Dulić, 2015, 46). Exploratory factor analysis of the correlations among the investigated variables indicated the presence of a latent variable that signifies broader national threat perception. Ethnic exclusionism reflects the perception of an ethnic threat, while general siege mentality indicates the perception of a national threat. Therefore, we can conclude that the perception of ethnic and national threats plays a significant role as antecedents of anti-Semitism (Golec de Zavala, 2024, 1032; Jaspal, 2023). Anti-Semitism often reflects a broader understanding of perceived national threats, regardless of whether any actual threat exists. This perception can lead to distorted thinking, resulting in prejudice against and stereotypes of Jewish people. The psychological meaning of the cognitive-behavioural framework of siege mentality and psychological readiness to self-sacrifice for ethnic interests, underlying ethnic exclusionism, reveals the behavioural potential of ethnic-national threat perception that may become war-like in specific political circumstances and where the scapegoating of Jews may occur. As a result, it is not surprising that anti-Semitism aligns with the scapegoat theory, which explains the tendency to blame others for political issues and ethnic frustrations (Gibson & Howard, 2007). Our second hypothesis, which assumed the existence of a latent dimension of general ethnic-national threat perception underlying ethnic exclusionism, general siege mentality, and anti-Semitism, was confirmed.

We found that males, the oldest and less educated subjects, tended to express general ethnic-national threat perception more often. However, the impact of socio-demographic factors was not as significant as we had anticipated. This means that sex, age, and level of education were not substantially correlated with

general ethnic–national threat perception, as predicted in our third hypothesis. It implicitly indicates that cognitive–affective processes have a greater impact on internalizing general ethnic–national threat perception, of which anti–Semitism is a part, than the “hard” sociological variables.

Conclusion

Inter–ethnic exclusionism, distrust in inter–ethnic relationships, the willingness to self–sacrifice in defense of ethnic interests as well as feelings of loneliness in the world, beliefs that other ethnic groups intend to inflict harm upon one’s group, facing an existential threat, and readiness to use all means for self–defense are found to underpin the stereotype of Jews as being dishonest and possessing excessive power in the business world. This aligns with the intergroup threat theory, which assumes that individuals experience a threat when members of another group intend to cause harm, evil, or pain to one’s ethnic group. Exploratory factor analysis of the correlations among ethnic exclusionism, general siege mentality, and anti–Semitism indicated the presence of a latent variable that signifies a broader ethnic–national threat perception. We argue that anti–Semitism reflects a broader understanding of perceived ethnic and national threats, regardless of whether a real threat exists. However, the finding that about 25 percent of the variance of anti–Semitism was explained by ethnic exclusionism and general siege mentality shows that there are some other internal or external factors impacting the appearance and internalization of anti–Semitism. The “hard” sociological variables were not proven to have a very significant impact on the internalization of ethnic–national threat perception, of which anti–Semitism is an integral component. There is an implicit indication that an anti–Semitic syndrome may be a form of scapegoating due to one’s political and ethnic conflicts and frustration and might represent war–like behavioural potential towards Jews in specific historical contexts and political circumstances.

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Nacionalna isključivost i generalni mentalitet opsadnoga stanja kao prediktori antisemitizma

Rrelacije na hrvatskom uzorku punoljetnih građana

Zlatko Šram, Marina Perić Kaselj**, Mario Bara****

Sažetak

U ovom smo istraživanju nastojali utvrditi 1) jesu li etnička isključivost i generalni mentalitet opsadnoga stanja, kao aspekti percepcije prijetnje, značajni prediktori antisemitizma; 2) nalaze li se nacionalna isključivost, mentalitet opsadnoga stanja i antisemitizam u međusobno takvim korelacijama da na razini višega reda formiraju latentnu strukturu generalne etničko–nacionalne percepcije prijetnje; 3) razlikuju li se međusobno ispitanici različitoga spola, dobi i školske naobrazbe u pogledu stupnja internalizacije generalne etničko–nacionalne prijetnje. Istraživanje je provedeno na prigodnom uzorku punoljetnih hrvatskih građana (N = 558) na prostoru istočne Slavonije i Baranje a u okviru istraživačke djelatnosti Instituta za migracije i narodnosti (današnjega Instituta za istraživanje migracija). Rezultati multiple regresijske analize pokazali su da su nacionalna isključivost i mentalitet opsadnoga stanja značajni prediktori antisemitizma. Oko 25% varijance antisemitizma objašnjeno je prediktorskim varijablama. Eksplorativnom faktorskom analizom ekstrahiran je faktor kojim je objašnjeno 64% varijance. Latentni konstrukt ispitivanih varijabli nazvan je generalna etničko–nacionalna percepcija prijetnje. Percepcija etničke i nacionalne prijetnje imaju značajnu ulogu antecedensa antisemitizma. Premda je kod muških, starijih i niže školovanih ispitanika u nešto većoj mjeri prisutna generalna etničko–nacionalna percepcija prijetnje, sociodemografska obilježja ispitanika imaju mali efekt na internalizaciju latentne dimenzije percepcije prijetnje koju definiraju nacionalna isključivost, mentalitet opsadnoga stanja i antisemitizam.

Ključne riječi: etnička isključivost; mentalitet opsadnoga stanja; antisemitizam; percepcija prijetnje; Hrvati

* Dr. sc. Zlatko Šram, viši znanstveni suradnik, Hrvatski centar za društvena istraživanja. Adresa: Grgura Ninskog 5, 22000 Šibenik, Hrvatska. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2689-5706>. E–adresa: zlatko.sram@hcdi.hr

** Izv. prof. dr. sc. Marina Perić Kaselj, znanstveni savjetnik, Institut za istraživanje migracija. Adresa: Trg Stjepana Radića 3, 10000 Zagreb, Hrvatska. ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4513-841X>. E–adresa: marina.peric@imin.hr

*** Izv. prof. dr. sc. Mario Bara, Hrvatsko katoličko sveučilište. Adresa: Ilica 242, 10000 Zagreb, Hrvatska. ORCID iD <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9964-7802>. E–adresa: mario.bara@unicath.hr