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**Slobodan Adžić, Milijanka C. Ratković**  
DETERMINING THE NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS OF RAKIJA MARKET SEGMENTS  
BASED ON CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOR  
Utvrđivanje broja i karakteristika segmenata na tržištu rakije na osnovu kupovnog ponašanja potrošača

**Veljko Marinković, Jovana Lazarević, Srđan Šapić**  
THE ROLE OF NATIONAL CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE IN SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR  
Uloga nacionalne kulture i stila života u oblikovanju ponašanja potrošača

**Goran Pavlović, Nevena Bevanda, Vuk Bevanda**  
THE INFLUENCE OF INTERNAL MARKETING DIMENSIONS ON  
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT  
Uticaj dimenzija internog marketinga na organizacionu posvećenost

**Aleksandar Dejanović, Jelena Lukić Nikolić**  
THE ROLE OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND  
PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF AZANJA, SERBIA  
Uloga zemljoradničkih zadruga u razvoju i promociji ruralnog turizma: studija slučaja Azanja, Srbija

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## Uvodnik/Editorial

Veljko Marinković. . . . .	.227
----------------------------	------

## Naučni članci/Scientific papers

<b>Determining the number and characteristics of rakija market segments based on consumer purchasing behavior . . . . .</b>	<b>.229</b>
---	-------------

*Utvrđivanje broja i karakteristika segmenata na tržištu rakije na osnovu kupovnog ponašanja potrošača*  
Slobodan Adžić, Milijanka C. Ratković

<b>The role of national culture and lifestyle in shaping consumer behavior . . . . .</b>	<b>.245</b>
--	-------------

*Uloga nacionalne kulture i stila života u oblikovanju ponašanja potrošača*  
Veljko Marinković, Jovana Lazarević, Srđan Šapić

<b>The influence of internal marketing dimensions on organizational commitment. . . . .</b>	<b>.259</b>
---	-------------

*Uticaj dimenzija internog marketinga na organizacionu posvećenost*  
Goran Pavlović, Nevena Bevanda, Vuk Bevanda

<b>The role of agricultural cooperatives in the development and promotion of rural tourism: A case study of Azanja, Serbia. . . . .</b>	<b>.269</b>
---	-------------

*Uloga zemljoradničkih zadruga u razvoju i promociji ruralnog turizma: studija slučaja Azanje, Srbija*  
Aleksandar Dejanović, Jelena Lukić Nikolić

## Zahvalnica recenzentima/Acknowledgment to the reviewers

Veljko Marinković. . . . .	.283
----------------------------	------

## Uputstvo za autore

<b>Tehničko uputstvo za korišćenje sistema e-Ur: Elektronsko uređivanje časopisa . . . . .</b>	<b>.287</b>
--	-------------

<b>Instructions to Authors. . . . .</b>	<b>.297</b>
---	-------------

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Veljko Marinković

Sveska 4 Volumen 55 Godište 2024 naučnog časopisa Marketing sadrži, pored Uvodnika, tri originalna rada i jedno prethodno saopštenje. U ovom broju, autori objavljenih radova su primarno bili usmereni ka formulisanju novih istraživačkih modela, testiranju njihove pouzdanosti i validnosti i utvrđivanju značajnosti i jačine odnosa varijabli koncipiranih modela primenom kvantitativnih metoda poput modeliranja strukturalnih jednačina i višestruke regresione analize. I dok je u prve tri studije u ovom broju korišćen kvantitativni pristup prikupljanju i analizi primarnih podataka, četvrti rad je baziran na kombinaciji anketnog istraživanja i studije slučaja u funkciji kreiranja novog poslovnog modela usmerenog ka razvoju i promovisanju ruralnog turizma u Republici Srbiji. Osim promocije ruralnog turizma, teme publikovanih radova tangiraju oblasti segmentacije tržišta, interkulturalnog i internog marketinga.

Autori **Slobodan Adžić** i **Milijanka Ratković** u svom radu istražuju tržište rakije sa ciljem identifikacije ključnih potrošačkih segmenata. Istraživanje je sprovedeno na slučajnom uzorku od 395 potrošača rakije, a segmenti su identifikovani na osnovu analize njihovog ponašanja i kupovne moći. Autori su za prikupljanje podataka koristili dve skale: BF skalu (buying factors scale) i CPR skalu (context for purchasing the rakija scale). Kada je reč o analizi podataka, u radu su primenjene faktorska, klaster analiza, analiza pouzdanosti i modeliranje strukturalnih jednačina. U studiji su identifikovana tri segmenta potrošača rakije, koji su u skladu sa svojim karakteristikama definisani kao „modernisti”, „tradicionalisti” i „potrošači limitirani cenom”. Najveći broj ispitanika pripada prvom segmentu, odnosno spada u grupu modernista. Ovo je segment koji karakteriše najviša kupovna moć i najviši nivo konzumacije rakije. Ovi potrošači preferiraju inovativne proizvode i na ovom tržištu oni predstavljaju dominantan i najznačajniji segment.

Vrednost rada ogleda se u činjenici da je ovo jedna od prvih studija sprovedenih u Republici Srbiji koja se bavi komparativnom analizom segmenata na tržištu rakije, utvrđivanjem njihovih karakteristika, kao i određivanjem važnosti definisanih segmenata za donosioce odluka.

Kultura se može smatrati bazičnom eksternom varijablom koja u osnovi oblikuje ponašanje potrošača. Kulturološka istraživanja, kao i studije koje u fokusu imaju stil života potrošača, dobijaju sve više na značaju u savremenom marketingu. Na temelju Hofstedeovih dimenzija kulture, autori **Veljko Marinković**, **Jovana Lazarević** i **Srdan Šapić** istražuju uticaje kolektivism, izbegavanja neizvesnosti, distance moći i ženskih vrednosti na stil života potrošača. Pri tome, komponente stila života koje su korišćene u ovom radu teorijsko uporište imaju u tradicionalnom AIO konceptu (aktivnosti, interesovanja i mišljenja). Dodatno, autori testiraju i uticaj stila života na ponašanje potrošača. Procena validnosti istraživačkog modela sprovedena je primenom konfirmativne faktorske analize, dok je za potrebe utvrđivanja direktnih efekata korišćeno modeliranje strukturalnih jednačina. Rezultati studije su izdvojili izbegavanje neizvesnosti kao ključnu determinantu stila života. Ovo je interesantan istraživački nalaz koji svedoči o kulturološkom profilu srpskih potrošača. Rezultati studije ukazuju i da stil života u značajnoj meri oblikuje ponašanje potrošača, što dodatno naglašava značaj istraživanja ove varijable prilikom formulisanja marketing strategija.

Relativno manji broj radova iz oblasti marketing istraživanja tangira problematiku internog marketinga. Ovo područje je veoma značajno budući da motivacija i zadovoljstvo zaposlenih impliciraju vrednost za potrošače, njihovu satisfakciju i privrženost. U tom kontekstu, potrebno je da se naponi marketinga fokusiraju i ka zaposlenima kao važnoj internoj interesnoj grupaciji. Upravo o odnosu internog mar-

ketinga i organizacione posvećenosti svedoče autori **Goran Pavlović, Nevena Bevanda i Vuk Bevanda**. Pri tome, autori su u prvom koraku studije primenom faktorske analize koncipirali istraživački model koji je obuhvatio tri dimenzije internog marketinga: sistem nagrađivanja, treninge zaposlenih i viziju. U drugom koraku, autori su testirali efekte ove tri nezavisne varijable na organizacionu posvećenost. Glavni nalaz sprovedenog istraživanja je isticanje sistema nagrađivanja kao dominantne dimenzije internog marketinga u procesu kreiranja organizacione posvećenosti zaposlenih. Značajan teorijski doprinos studije se ogleda u višedimenzionalnom posmatranju koncepta internog marketinga. Pri tome, autori ističu i pravce budućih istraživanja, od kojih se kao posebno interesantan izdvaja predlog analiziranja organizacione posvećenosti kao višedimenzionalne varijable koja bi, pri tome, obuhvatila tri važne komponente: afektivnu, kontinuiranu i normativnu.

Ruralni turizam je jedan od suštinskih faktora poboljšanja životnog standarda i ostanka mladih ljudi u manjim mestima. On može doprineti i promociji određenog mesta kao atraktivne turističke destinacije, a glavni aduti privlačenja domaćih i stranih turista su zdravi poljoprivredni proizvodi koji se mogu kupiti u datim mestima, priroda i kulturološko nasleđe. O značaju ruralnog turizma za razvoj manjih mesta svedoče autori **Aleksandar Dejanović i Jelena Lukić**

**Nikolić**. U svojoj studiji, baziranoj na kombinaciji anketnog istraživanja i studije slučaja, autori potenciraju faktore promocije Azanje, malog mesta koje je locirano u Podunavskom okrugu Republike Srbije. Autori posebno analiziraju ulogu zemljoradničkih zadruga u razvoju i promociji ruralnog turizma. Pri tome, autori su definisali i predlog poslovnog modela za razvoj i promociju ruralnog turizma. U radu su istaknute i uloge koje zemljoradnička zadruga Azanja može preuzeti u funkciji stimulisanja razvoja ruralnog turizma. Ključne uloge koje se naglašavaju u studiji su uloge inicijatora, edukatora, koordinatora, organizatora logistike, turističkog animatora, promotera, konsultanta i supervizora.

Na kraju, broj 4 časopisa Marketing sadrži i zahvalnicu recenzentima radova koji su u 2024. godini bili u postupku objavljivanja. I ovim putem, kao glavni i odgovorni urednik, želim da se zahvalim recenzentima na svim korisnim sugestijama, kao i autorima na kvalitetu radova koje su dostavili našem časopisu. Zahvalnost dugujem i urednicima časopisa, kao i sekretaru redakcije. Glavni naponi uredničkog tima u narednom periodu biće usmereni ka obezbeđivanju redovnosti izlaženja brojeva, objavljivanju kvalitetnih radova i poboljšanju internacionalizacije časopisa.

Glavni i odgovorni urednik  
Veljko Marinković

## Determining the number and characteristics of rakija market segments based on consumer purchasing behavior

Slobodan Adžić, Milijanka C. Ratković

**Abstract:** The goal of this study is to identify the number of segments in the Serbian rakija market based on consumer buying behavior and purchasing power analysis across segments. A sample of 395 individuals who consumed rakija ( $n=395$ ) was selected randomly. Two research scales were employed to examine consumer attitudes regarding the purchase of rakija. The validity of the scales was evaluated through reliability analysis and factor analysis. Furthermore, a two-step hierarchical cluster analysis utilizing Ward's method was carried out to identify the segments. Finally, the purchasing power of each segment was assessed through a standard multiple regression analysis using SPSS, followed by a path analysis conducted in AMOS. The authors identified three segments. The "traditionalist" segment consists of consumers who prefer older, familiar Serbian fruit rakija. The "modernist" segment prefers innovative options with contemporary packaging. The "price-limited" segment prioritizes affordable rakija. This study reveals that Serbs buy rakija, their strong national alcoholic drink, primarily for special reasons and as gifts, not for everyday consumption. This is the first study on rakija market segmentation based on consumer behavior analysis, which is also the biggest contribution of this research.

**Keywords:** *buying factors, market segments, path analysis, rakija*

**JEL Classification:** D12, M31, L66

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Rakija holds a significant place in Serbian culture as a traditional national strong alcoholic beverage. Recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO (UNESCO, 2022), rakija symbolizes a deep-rooted tradition that dates back to ancient times. This beverage is not only a spirited elixir but also a proud emblem of Serbian customs and social practices. The tradition of distilling rakija has also been a source of conflict, characterized by a rivalry between two groups of producers: those who embrace modern enological techniques and those who resist technological advancements (Društvo rakijske veštine i znanja, 2014). Consequently, the concept of a „traditional“ rakija is misleading; instead, there exists only high-quality and low-quality variants. A research conducted among rakija distillers in Serbia indicates that only a quarter of them utilize contemporary and scientifically validated methods in their production processes (Adžić, Bubulj & Jovičić, 2023). Furthermore, these producers achieve market prices that are 40% higher than those who adhere to the traditional maxim of „I will work the way my grandfather did“.

According to the latest available data from the relevant ministry (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia, 2024), the production of strong alcoholic beverages in Serbia for the year 2022 amounted to 35.3 million liters. The predominant product was rakija, with an output of 25 million liters, primarily consisting of šljivovica. In addition to the 1,028 registered producers (both entrepreneurs and legal entities), there exists a significant number of individual producers who produce rakija for personal consumption, adhering to a long-standing tradition. It is estimated that when accounting for the quantity of rakija produced for personal use within households, the total production of brandy reaches approximately 50 million liters. Nevertheless, according to Adžić (2023), only 40.7% of the produced rakija is sold in the market, indicating that rakija producers face challenges with unsold quantities of their products. Moreover, according to official statistics

(Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2023), the average consumption of alcoholic beverage products in households in Serbia amounts to 2.6 liters of strong alcoholic beverages, 39.5 liters of beer, and 5.9 liters of wine.

In 2022, Serbia exported 5.6 million liters of strong alcoholic beverages, generating an export value of 21.9 million euros. Rakija accounted for 60% of the total export, amounting to 13.5 million euros. Conversely, in the same year, 7.5 million liters of strong alcoholic beverages were imported, with an import value of around 38.4 million euros, of which whiskey constituted 21.7 million euros, representing 56.5% of the total import value (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia, 2024). In 2019, the global whiskey market was valued at approximately \$62 billion. With an anticipated market growth rate of 6.5%, it is projected that by 2027, the market will exceed a valuation of \$100 billion (Adžić, 2021).

The research motivation of the authors of this study centers on consumer attitudes towards rakija. It seeks to determine whether the majority of consumers favor traditional rakija, despite its shortcomings, or if consumer preferences are shifting towards a smoother rakija produced using modern enological techniques. To date, there have been no studies focusing on the segmentation of rakija consumers in relation to their purchasing motivations, contexts, and taste preferences. This research aims to address this identified gap in the existing literature. The objective of this research is to examine the behavior of rakija consumers during the purchase of this alcoholic beverage. The analysis of purchasing factors will form the foundation for segmenting the rakija market. The goal of this study is to identify the number of segments in the Serbian rakija market based on consumer purchasing behavior and purchasing power analysis across segments.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Market segmentation is a critical strategy in marketing that involves dividing a broad consumer or business market into sub-groups with shared characteristics, enabling firms to effectively target specific groups. This process typically includes identifying segmentation bases, developing segment profiles, evaluating the attractiveness of each segment, and selecting target segments (Kotler, Armstrong & Balasubramanian, 2023). By customizing products and marketing strategies to the unique needs of each segment, companies

can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty. This process enables companies to effectively target specific segments by tailoring their marketing efforts to meet the distinct demands of each group (Huang & Rust, 2021). The segmentation process usually consists of several steps: identifying potential segmentation variables, developing profiles of resulting segments, evaluating the attractiveness of each segment, and selecting target segments (Smith, 2017). Each step is crucial to ensure that the chosen segments align with the company's marketing objectives and resources. Marketing segmentation plays a pivotal role in tailoring marketing strategies to specific consumer needs, thereby enhancing effectiveness. Recent studies (Cortez, Clarke & Freytag, 2021) highlight the continuous evolution of segmentation processes and the importance of precise implementation. Various economic theories exist concerning consumer behavior; however, the fundamental process of making purchasing decisions revolves around needs, preferences, budget limitations, and the influence of advertising and promotional activities (Dudziak, Stoma & Os-mólska, 2023; Verma & Singh, 2017). Alongside these factors, additional elements like brand loyalty, word-of-mouth recommendations, and social influence can also play a variable role depending on the context (Muala & Qurneh, 2012; Wahab, Hassan, Shahid & Maon, 2016). Segmentation and target market selection are crucial decisions in the positioning process in the contemporary market. They are closely related to the marketing research process (Tasić, Ratković & Bešlin, 2011). Both decisions are made based on relevant criteria, within which the characteristics of target groups are considered, as well as factors essential for making purchasing decisions (Bruwer, Li & Reid, 2002; Cleveland, Papadopoulos & Laroche, 2011). According to Akkaya (2021), segmentation is essential for understanding consumer behavior and aligning marketing strategies with customer preferences. There are various bases for market segmentation, including demographic, psychographic, geographic, and behavioral factors (Dolnicar, Grün & Leisch, 2018). These approaches ensure that marketing efforts are directed towards specific groups, improving overall efficiency and effectiveness. Demographic segmentation, such as age and income, remains prevalent, but psychographic segmentation, which considers lifestyle and values, is gaining importance (Akkaya, 2021). Behavioral segmentation, which focuses on user engagement and purchasing behavior, provides insights into customer loyalty and potential retention strategies (Yang, 2022). These approaches not only enhance marketing effi-

ciency but also lead to better consumer satisfaction by addressing specific needs. Among all of them, behavioral criteria are crucial for successful market segmentation (Tasic & Ratkovic, 2012). As Sudirjo (2023) emphasizes, effective segmentation enables companies to direct their marketing efforts precisely, enhancing competitiveness in the global market.

As starting points in this study, some consumer segments provided by previous consumer behavior science were considered. With regard to the basic characteristics of rakija, which include it being a retail and local product (Chambers, Lobb, Butler, Harvey & Bruce Traill, 2007; Mirosa & Lawson, 2012), with a wider range of price-quality relationships, as well as the fact that it is a traditional drink in Serbia, and that it is a product that provides enjoyment and excitement. Therefore, the following consumer segments were taken into account: price-sensitive consumers, including economical consumers who consider the price-quality relationship and rational consumers who compare prices, then consumers who seek diversity by trying new things first, i.e. active consumers who seek fashionable products enjoying shopping, and traditionalists who shop in conventional stores and buy when it is time comparing price and quality (Sethna, 2023).

According to a study conducted by Carew, Florkowski and Meng (2017), the wine market can be divided into two to three distinct segments based on price. This study revealed that red California wines are categorized into two separate segments. Additionally, the study identifies three price segments for white California wines. A study conducted on Spanish alcoholic beverage shoppers (Hernandez, Vila, Kuster & Rodriguez, 2019) revealed the significant impact of individual and environmental factors. The authors have successfully categorized these shoppers into seven distinct groups, namely, prosperous, social, non-conformist, postmodern, communities, controllers, and planners.

In the Serbian rakija market there are three distinct segments based on price (Adžić, 2023). The first segment is price sensitive, with buyers looking for rakija priced up to 500 dinars. This segment holds the largest share of sales, accounting for 35% of the total. The next segment consists of buyers willing to pay between 501 and 1,000 dinars for standard quality rakija. This segment is the most common segment, with three-fifths of the distillers targeting it. It makes up 34% of the total market volume. The luxury segment represents the highest price range and has the smallest share of sales, accounting for 31%. There are

no significant differences in the quantities of rakija sold among these segments. Overall, the majority of distillers concentrate on marketing rakija of standard quality in the mid-price range, yet they sell the fewest items on average in the market.

For the purpose of this study, the authors utilized two scales. The first BF scale was constructed as a composite scale of variables from multiple studies, while the second CPR scale was adopted from the literature.

## 2.1. The buying factors affecting the purchase of rakija scale (BF scale)

In the development of the BF scale, the authors aimed to integrate findings from multiple studies to formulate a singular, comprehensive scale encompassing all potential factors that may affect rakija purchasing behavior. The research conducted by Kruger and Viljoen (2022) sought to explore the preferences of wine consumers across different age groups in South Africa, aiming to uncover variations in consumption patterns. A total of 33,303 individuals participated in the survey, with 20,997 respondents completing the online questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 63%. The study identified five distinct cohorts of wine consumers: the basic, budget-conscious, and image-focused Gen Z; the experimental and enjoyment-driven Young Gen Y; the aspirational and purpose-oriented Mature Gen Y; the ritualistic, avid, and conspicuous Gen X; and the conservative, value-oriented, and experienced Baby Boomers. From the study on wine consumer preferences (Kruger & Viljoen, 2022), their scale of motives for purchasing wine was adapted by the authors of this study and utilized for the purpose of examining motives for purchasing rakija. The factors that influence the purchase of rakija were identified as price, region, awards, packaging and labeling, fruit variety, producer, and bottle appearance.

Liu, Chu, Guo and Liu (2021) conducted an investigation into the segmentation of the Chinese wine market. The study involved an online survey completed by 407 respondents. The data analysis comprised both descriptive statistics, specifically frequency distributions, and cluster analysis. The findings revealed three distinct clusters of wine consumers: “extrinsic attribute-seeking customers”, “intrinsic attribute-seeking customers”, and “alcohol level attribute-seeking customers”. These consumer groups were classified based on a behavioral segmentation approach focused on benefits. From the study on the segmentation of the Chinese wine market (Liu et al., 2021), the authors of this study adapted and utilized more purchase driv-

ers, such as products in Serbia, value for money, tastes good, high alcohol levels, and older and mature rakija.

King, Johnson, Bastian, Osidacz and Leigh Francis (2012) explored the extent to which consumers in South Australia exhibit varying preferences for different styles of white wine, aiming to correlate these preferences with levels of wine knowledge and demographic factors. A sample of 150 regular consumers of white wine completed a questionnaire regarding their wine habits and attitudes. The outcomes of this research offer preliminary insights into the behaviors of white wine consumers and underscore the role of wine knowledge in shaping consumer preferences. McCutcheon, Bruwer and Li (2009) investigated the significance of the wine's region of origin in the decision-making process of consumers purchasing wine within the Australian domestic market. A total of 352 valid surveys were collected from wine consumers. The findings revealed that female consumers, those with a high level of involvement in wine, and individuals who have engaged in wine tourism tend to assign higher ratings to the region of origin. Two more interesting buying factors for this research, namely, trying something new and exciting and prior experience, were adopted from the studies of King et al. (2012) and McCutcheon et al. (2009), respectively.

## 2.2. The context for purchasing the rakija scale (CPR scale)

The proliferation of Hungarian wineries that provide high-quality wine is on the rise, owing to the heightened interest of consumers in quality consumption (Hlédik & Harsányi, 2019). According to Hlédik and Harsányi (2019), in the Hungarian wine market four distinct consumer segments have emerged, namely, ordinary wine consumers, unsophisticated wine consumers, wealthy wine experts, and open-minded consumers. Among these segments, the latter two are deemed to be the most valuable groups for producers of high-quality wine. Hlédik and Harsányi (2019) studied the influence of purchase context on spending. They recognized three significant contexts for alcohol buying, namely, everyday consumption, special occasions, and gifts. The authors of this study are also interested in the purchase context of rakija; therefore, they have utilized the scale developed by Hlédik and Harsányi (2019).

## 3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the purposes of this study, two scales were developed (Table 1). The first BF scale was constructed as a composite scale of variables from multiple studies (King et al., 2012; Kruger & Viljoen, 2022; Liu et al., 2021; McCutcheon et al., 2009), while the second CPR scale was adopted from the Hlédik and Harsányi (2019) research. The BF scale measures purchasing factors, whereas the CPR scale assesses the purchase context of rakija. The BF scale factors constitute the independent variables, whereas the CPR scale factors constitute a dependent variable.

**Table 1:** Research scales adapted and used in this study

<b>BF</b>	<b>Buying factors for purchasing rakija</b>
BF1	Price
BF2	Region
BF3	Awards
BF4	Packaging and labeling
BF5	Fruit variety
BF6	Producer
BF7	Bottle appearance
BF8	Produced in Serbia
BF9	Value for money
BF10	Tastes good
BF11	High alcohol level
BF12	Older and mature rakija
BF13	Trying something new and exciting
BF14	Prior experience
<b>CPR</b>	<b>Context for purchasing rakija</b>
CPR1	Everyday consumption
CPR2	Special occasions
CPR3	Gift

**Source:** Authors

This exploratory study aimed to achieve several objectives. The primary objective was to investigate the purchasing habits of rakija consumers by analyzing the factors that influence their purchase decisions. To accomplish this, a research scale approach was employed. The metrics of the scales were derived from relevant literature on the marketing of alcoholic beverages. Additionally, reliability and factor analysis were conducted to ensure the validity of the findings. The second objective of this research was to identify the different segments within the rakija market and determine the number of customers in each segment. This was achieved through the utilization of cluster analysis and subsequent tools. By doing so, a comprehensive understanding of the market structure and customer distribution was obtained. Finally, the

final objective of this study was to assess the strength of the identified segments in terms of their purchasing power. To accomplish this, a regression analysis was conducted utilizing the context of the purchasing rakija scale as the dependent factor. This analysis will provide valuable insights into the relative influence and significance of various factors on the purchasing behavior within each segment.

The study took place in Serbia, spanning from December 2023 to March 2024. A random sampling method was employed to select participants for the research, and the scores within the sample were obtained randomly. The survey was conducted anonymously and rakija consumers participated voluntarily in the survey. The data collection process was carried out electronically through a questionnaire. Prior to participating in the research, all participants provided their consent to use the obtained results for academic purposes in the development of a scientific paper.

The data, which were analyzed using IBM SPSS for Windows v. 25 and IBM SPSS AMOS v. 23, consisted of 395 rakija consumers ( $N=395$ ), while non-consumers were automatically excluded from the database. Based on the sample size and population size and following the formulas for sample size calculation (Israel, 2013; Krejcie & Morgan, 1970), the level of precision or sampling error is 4.93%, with a standard 95% confidence level (within two standard deviations of the mean). The results are deemed reliable because the sample is representative at a 95% confidence level with a sampling error of less than 5%.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section aimed to gather essential demographic information and information on preferences related to rakija. The second section incorporated two research scales, namely, buying factors for purchasing rakija (BF) and context for purchasing rakija (CPR). The CPR scale was adapted for this study, while the BF scale was specifically developed for the purpose of this research. Those two Likert-type scales were used to record consumer responses. Participant attitudes were evaluated on a scale ranging from one to seven, with one representing complete disagreement and seven representing complete agreement.

Descriptive measures and parametric statistical techniques were employed, including one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), linear regression, path analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM). To assess the validity of the scales, reliability analysis and factor analysis (specifically principal component analysis, principal axis factoring, and maximum likelihood estimation) were conducted. Additionally,

a two-step hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method was performed to determine the number of segments. Finally, to assess the purchasing power of each segment, a standard multiple regression analysis was performed using SPSS, followed by a path analysis and CB-SEM conducted in AMOS.

#### 4. RESEARCH RESULTS

In the initial sample of 620 respondents, twelve individuals who were under the legal drinking age were excluded, leading to a revised sample size of 608 participants. Among these 608 individuals, a significant number, specifically 93 (15.30%), reported abstaining from alcohol consumption. Given that the primary objective of this study was to examine the attitudes of rakija consumers, appreciation was conveyed to this specific group, and further inquiries were discontinued. Of the remaining 515 participants, a noteworthy subset of 120 individuals, accounting for 23.30%, did not engage in rakija consumption, making it unnecessary to explore their attitudes towards this particular beverage. As a result, the count of rakija consumers was reduced from the original 620 respondents to 395 actual users. Within this cohort of rakija drinkers, 56 individuals, representing 14.18%, indicated a dislike for rakija despite their consumption of it.

Within this sample of 395 rakija consumers, the male participants outnumbered their female counterparts, with 231 males representing 58.5% and 163 females constituting 41.3%. Additionally, one participant opted not to disclose their gender. A substantial portion of the participants, totaling 333 individuals or 84.3%, were employed at the time of the study. Moreover, a noteworthy majority, comprising 328 individuals or 83%, possessed a college degree. The overwhelming majority of participants, amounting to 354 individuals or 89.6%, lived in urban settings. As a result, it is not surprising that only 17.5%, equating to 69 individuals, were involved in agricultural activities.

In terms of the income distribution of the sample, 45.6% (180 participants) reported a relatively high personal income for Serbian circumstances, exceeding 120,000 RSD (approximately 1,000 EUR). On the other hand, 43.5% (172 participants) reported a medium personal income ranging from 60,000 to 120,000 RSD. Additionally, 10.9% (43 participants) reported a low personal income, less than 60,000 RSD. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents, 289 or 73.2%, do not have a favorite brand of rakija, while a smaller portion, 26.8% or 106 participants, do. Just under half

**Table 2:** The average consumption of rakija and other brandies in glasses (0.05 l)

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Glasses of Rakija	395	.00	200.00	11.8167	19.25083
Glasses of Other Brandies	395	.00	50.00	4.2261	7.08684
Valid N (listwise)	395				

Source: Authors

**Table 3:** The context for purchasing rakija (CPR) scale

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
CPR3 Gift	395	5.22	1.684
CPR2 Special occasions	395	5.18	1.750
CPR1 Everyday consumption	395	2.64	1.814
Valid N (listwise)	395		

Source: Authors

of the respondents, 170 or 43%, distill and consume their own rakija.

On average, the participants consumed more than 11 glasses of rakija per month, ranging from 0 to 200 glasses. This amount amounts to an average of one glass every three days, with each glass having a volume of 0.05 liters (Table 2). Furthermore, the respondents consumed more than 4 glasses of other brandies on average, ranging from 0 to 50 glasses, with an average of one glass per week (Table 2). The age distribution of the participants ranged from 18 to 77 years. The average age of the respondents was 44.5 years, with a median age of 45 years.

Common method bias can occur when the same measurement method is used for both independent and dependent variables (Kock, Berbekova & Assaf,

2021). This issue is more pronounced in studies using self-reported data, such as this one. To check for common method bias, researchers conducted Harman's single-factor test. Through principal axis factor analysis with a fixed factor set to one, it was found that a single factor accounted for 34.78% of the total variance in the data. The results showed that a single factor accounted for less than 50% of the variance, indicating no common method bias (Aguirre-Urreta & Hu, 2019).

Furthermore, we performed a reliability analysis on our scales using SPSS software. The CPR scale (Table 3), which comprises three items, yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70. This indicates that the internal consistency of the CPR scale was satisfactory, as values above 0.7 are generally deemed acceptable

**Table 4:** The buying factors for purchasing rakija (BF) scale

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
BF10 Tastes Good	395	6.40	1.093
BF8 Produced in Serbia	395	5.79	1.665
BF5 Fruit Variety	395	5.63	1.543
BF14 Prior Experience	395	5.39	1.550
BF12 Older and Mature Rakija	395	5.37	1.624
BF9 Value for Money	395	5.13	1.743
BF6 Producer	395	5.10	1.830
BF2 Region	395	4.36	1.910
BF13 Trying Something New and Exciting	395	4.27	1.758
BF1 Price	395	4.12	1.741
BF11 High Alcohol Level	395	4.04	1.623
BF3 Awards	395	3.87	1.881
BF4 Packaging and Labeling	395	3.82	1.927
BF7 Bottle Appearance	395	3.68	1.873
Valid N (listwise)	395		

Source: Authors

(Pallant, 2016). On the other hand, the BF scale (Table 4) consisting of 14 items, had a calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.88. This outcome is considered excellent, as values above 0.8 are preferred in terms of reliability (Pallant, 2016).

Composite average results were computed for both scales, BF\_AVG and CPR\_AVG, to evaluate normality. The normal distribution of both scales was validated by examining the normal probability Q-Q plot. A fairly straight line indicates a normal distribution for BF\_AVG and CPR\_AVG.

The BF scale, which initially consisted of 14 items, was further reduced through factor analysis. This statistical technique is employed to decrease the dimensionality of a dataset that contains numerous interrelated variables while still retaining a significant amount of variance. Consequently, we conducted a factor analysis and determined that our scale is suitable for the analysis. This conclusion was supported by the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy, which yielded a value of 0.866, and Bartlett's test of sphericity, which indicated a significant result with a  $p < 0.001$  (Field, 2017). Subsequently, a principal component analysis (PCA) was performed, revealing three factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, collectively explaining 57.71% of the variance. These eigenvalues served as the basis for rotating the three factors using an Oblimin rotation procedure.

Upon rotation, the solution produced three interpretable factors or components, as presented in Table 5. However, items BF2 and BF11 were excluded from the analysis due to their low loadings and their

presence in more than one factor. The cumulative variance explained by the three-factor solution increased to 61.10%. Notably, all the remaining 12 items exhibited loadings exceeding 0.4. Furthermore, a moderate correlation was observed among the factors.

Through the process of factor analysis, we identified three distinct components. The first component, which we can refer to as "traditionalist", comprises individuals who are traditional buyers and prefer the older, mature, and familiar Serbian fruit rakija, which has a good taste. The factors that contribute to this component, in descending order, are BF10 (Tastes Good), BF12 (Older and Mature Rakija), BF5 (Fruit Variety), BF8 (Produced in Serbia), BF6 (Producer), and BF14 (Prior Experience). The second component, known as "modernist", consists of buyers who have a preference for something new and trendy, such as a rakija with a new bottle and packaging. The factors associated with this component, in descending order, are BF7 (bottle appearance), BF4 (packaging and labeling), BF3 (wards), and BF13 (trying sinking new and exciting). Finally, the third component, referred to as "price-limited", is composed of budget buyers who prioritize inexpensive rakija. The sole factors contributing to this component, in descending order, are BF1 (price) and BF9 (value for money).

A cluster analysis was subsequently carried out. The data obtained from factor analysis were utilized for this purpose. Composite results were generated for three components, namely, BF1C, BF2C, and BF3C, by aggregating separate elements and computing the individual average values. Through a two-step hier-

**Table 5:** PCA Output: Pattern Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
BF10 Tastes Good	.777		
BF12 Older and Mature Rakija	.722		
BF5 Fruit Variety	.696		
BF8 Produced in Serbia	.671		
BF6 Producer	.506		
BF14 Prior Experience	.478		
BF7 Bottle Appearance		-.889	
BF4 Packaging and Labeling		-.889	
BF3 Awards		-.802	
BF13 Trying Something New and Exciting		-.519	
BF1 Price			.836
BF9 Value for Money			.653

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.

Source: Authors

**Table 6:** The significant differences between clusters: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
BF1C	Between Groups	152.121	2	76.061	96.368	.000
	Within Groups	309.393	392	.789		
	Total	461.514	394			
BF2C	Between Groups	609.582	2	304.791	387.316	.000
	Within Groups	308.477	392	.787		
	Total	918.059	394			
BF3C	Between Groups	371.876	2	185.938	145.290	.000
	Within Groups	501.671	392	1.280		
	Total	873.547	394			

Source: Authors

archical cluster analysis using Ward’s method, three clusters with significant differences in the analyzed variables were identified. Subsequently, clustering was conducted, and an additional column, CLU3\_1, was calculated to categorize each participant into one of the three clusters.

In the next step, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The ANOVA table indicates that there are significant differences in the average values between clusters for all three variables (Table 6). While the F test statistic indicates that the three clusters differ significantly, it does not provide information on the differences between individual pairs of clusters. To test the differences between individual clusters, the Tukey post hoc test was used. The post hoc test showed that statistically significant differences emerged between all clusters.

The largest number of respondents was recorded in cluster 1, with 183 respondents or 46.33% of the sample. Cluster 2 contains the smallest number of respondents, with 82 respondents or 20.76% of the sample. Ultimately, 130 respondents, 32.91% of the sample, were included in cluster 3. However, to determine the characteristics of each cluster individually and identify segments, additional analysis needs to be conducted. Table 7 shows that segment 3 consumes

the most rakija on average, specifically 13 glasses of 0.05 liters, which is a characteristic of traditionalists who prefer this drink. Segment 1 has the highest average consumption of other strong alcoholic beverages, just under 5 glasses per month. This behavior resembles that of modernists who are excited to consume new drinks rather than traditional rakija. Accordingly, it would be expected that brand is more important to modernists, and this is a data point that we can see in Table 8. Specifically, 31.1% of respondents identified as modernists have a favorite brand, which is the highest average value in the entire sample. Finally, in Table 9, we can observe that segment 2 reported the lowest average income level in the sample, which is almost certainly a characteristic of price-constrained buyers. The majority of traditionalists in the third segment had an average income level, while modernists in the first segment reported the highest average income level.

Finally, after determining the number of participants per segment and their internal characteristics, we were interested in measuring the purchasing power of each segment individually. For this purpose, we conducted a standard multiple regression analysis in SPSS and a path analysis in AMOS, which represents

**Table 7:** Average rakija consumption by segment

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Glasses of Rakija	1	183	11.0089	17.28221
	2	82	11.7112	23.24067
	3	130	<b>13.0203</b>	19.20841
	Total	395	<b>11.8167</b>	19.25083
Glasses of Other Brandy	1	183	<b>4.7454</b>	8.61040
	2	82	3.5388	4.87493
	3	130	3.9287	5.75342
	Total	395	<b>4.2261</b>	7.08684

Source: Authors

**Table 8:** Rakija Brand \* CLU3\_1 Crosstabulation

			Segments			Total
			1	2	3	
Rakija Brand	1 Yes	Count	57	18	31	106
		% withinRakijaBrand	53.8%	17.0%	29.2%	100.0%
		% within CLU3_1	<b>31.1%</b>	22.0%	23.8%	26.8%
		% of Total	14.4%	4.6%	7.8%	26.8%
	2 No	Count	126	64	99	289
		% withinRakijaBrand	43.6%	22.1%	34.3%	100.0%
		% within CLU3_1	68.9%	<b>78.0%</b>	<b>76.2%</b>	73.2%
	% of Total	31.9%	16.2%	25.1%	73.2%	
Total	Count	<b>183</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>130</b>	395	
	% withinRakijaBrand	46.3%	20.8%	32.9%	100.0%	
	% within CLU3_1	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	46.3%	20.8%	32.9%	100.0%	

Source: Authors

a graphical representation of regression. In the first step, we conducted a regression analysis.

A collinearity test was conducted to assess multicollinearity among the independent variables, as high correlations could affect the estimation results of the path model. Multicollinearity is typically identified if the variance inflation factor (VIF) values are above 5 and tolerance values are below 0.1 (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt & Ringle, 2019). In this study, the highest VIF recorded was 1.533, which is within acceptable limits. Additionally, the tolerance values ranged from 0.652 to 0.734, indicating no significant multicollinearity in the dataset.

Cook's distance is used in regression analysis to detect influential outliers among predictor variables. Values greater than 1 may indicate a case of concern (Field, 2017). Upon investigation, it was found that none of the variables had a Cook's distance exceeding 1. The highest Cook's distance observed was 0.143, suggesting that no cases had an excessive influence on the model.

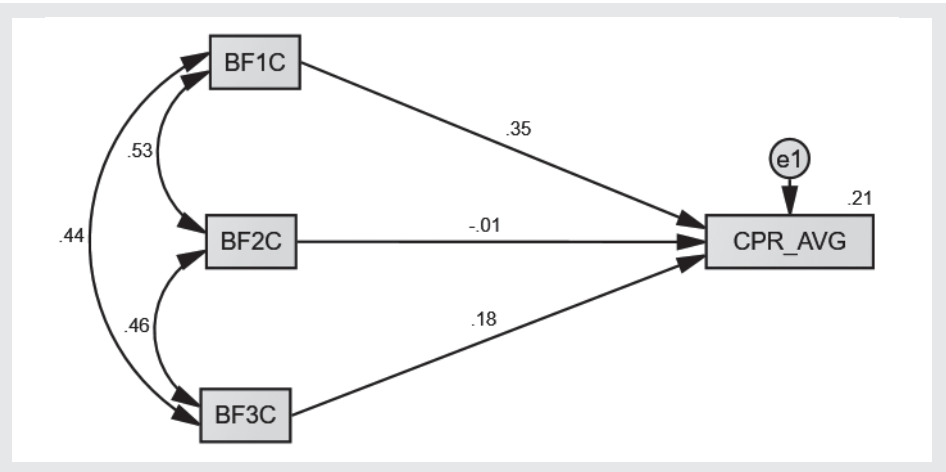
After reviewing the normal probability plot (P-P) diagram of the regression standardized residual and scatterplot of the standardized residuals, analyses were conducted to ensure compliance with the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity,

**Table 9:** Income \* CLU3\_1 Crosstabulation

			Segments			Total
			1	2	3	
Income	1 High	Count	92	33	55	180
		% within Income	51.1%	18.3%	30.6%	100.0%
		% within Segments	<b>50.3%</b>	40.2%	42.3%	45.6%
		% of Total	23.3%	8.4%	13.9%	45.6%
	2 Medium	Count	70	39	63	172
		% within Income	40.7%	22.7%	36.6%	100.0%
		% within Segments	38.3%	47.6%	<b>48.5%</b>	43.5%
		% of Total	17.7%	9.9%	15.9%	43.5%
	3 Low	Count	21	10	12	43
		% within Income	48.8%	23.3%	27.9%	100.0%
		% within Segments	11.5%	<b>12.2%</b>	9.2%	10.9%
		% of Total	5.3%	2.5%	3.0%	10.9%
Total	Count	<b>183</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>130</b>	395	
	% within Income	46.3%	20.8%	32.9%	100.0%	
	% within Segments	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
	% of Total	46.3%	20.8%	32.9%	100.0%	

Source: Authors

Figure 1: Path model



Source: Authors

and homoscedasticity. The dots in the P-P plot align almost perfectly along the diagonal. The scatterplot of the standardized residuals shows that most scores are concentrated in the center, indicating a fit line at the total, which lies on the 0 point of the y-axis (Pallant, 2016). Furthermore, casewise diagnostic revealed only two outliers, which are cases with a standardized residual exceeding 3.3 or less than -3.3. The small number of outliers does not significantly impact a large sample such as ours, so they were retained in the dataset. These results affirm that the initial assumptions of multiple regression are not violated, allowing for the continuation of the path analysis in AMOS. The market segments BF1C, BF2C, and BF3C were correlated and served as exogenous variables in the model, while CPR\_AVG served as the endogenous variable.

Through path analysis, an R squared value of 0.21 was determined, as shown in Figure 1. This indicates that 21% of the variance in the dependent variable is completely explained by the other independent variables, signifying a significant influence of 21% on actual rakija purchasing due to rakija buying factors. This is particularly noteworthy when considering the numerous factors influencing consumer behavior during

purchases. The variable BF1C exhibited the strongest direct impact, with a standardized beta effect of 0.35, making the modernist segment the most significant and dominant segment in the rakija market. A beta value of 0.35 implies that a one standard deviation increase in the independent variable BF1C results in a 0.35 standard deviation increase in the dependent variable CPR\_AVG. The variable BF3C had the next strongest direct impact, with a beta value of 0.18, emphasizing the significance of this market segment for rakija. Finally, the variable BF2C, which represents the price-limited user segment, even demonstrated a negative and statistically insignificant beta,  $p = 0.87$ . Cohen's criteria classify effect sizes associated with a beta coefficient as small for values between 0.10 and 0.29, medium for values between 0.30 and 0.49, and large for any effect size equal to or exceeding 0.50 (Cohen, 1988).

Because not all relationships in the path model were statistically significant, we proceeded to conduct another step of regression analysis to determine the statistical significance of the entire model. The overall model with three predictors is statistically significant,  $R^2 = 0.21$ ,  $F(3,391) = 33.912$ ,  $p < 0.001$ . The standard-

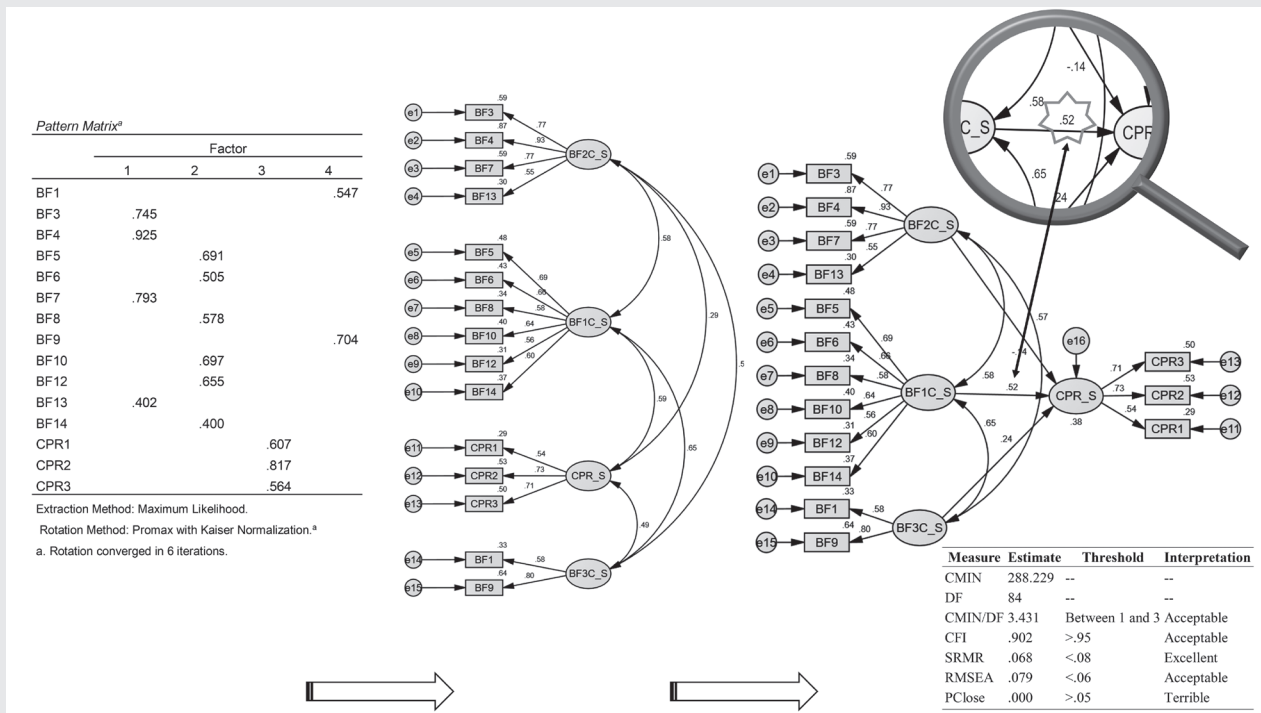
Table 10: Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	$\beta$			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	1.086	.335		3.238	.001			
	BF1C	.451	.070	.353	6.410	.000	.426	.308	.289
	BF2C	-.008	.050	-.009	-.160	.873	.261	-.008	-.007
	BF3C	.164	.049	.177	3.368	.001	.328	.168	.152

a. Dependent Variable: CPR\_AVG

Source: Authors

Figure 2: SEM analysis



Source: Authors

ized coefficients calculated through regression analysis are identical to the standardized coefficients from the path model after accounting for mathematical rounding of the decimals, as illustrated in Table 10.

We were aware that not all relationships in the model were statistically significant, despite the entire model achieving statistical significance, indicating that a full latent variable SEM would not achieve an excellent fit. Nevertheless, for illustrative purposes, we constructed this model to analyze the ultimate results of a multielement model. The initial procedure involved conducting exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using a maximum likelihood approach with Promax rotation to transform both the independent and dependent variables into factors. The subsequent phase included confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), where no modifications were made to improve the measurement model based on modification indices; however, the model's fit was considered acceptable. Finally, the last step involved constructing a structural equation model (SEM), resulting in the development of a comprehensive latent model with a moderately satisfactory fit (see Figure 2). Based on the model, it can be concluded that the direct impact of the first segment BF1C\_S on the context for purchasing rakija CPR\_S is significantly expressed, with a beta value now reach-

ing 0.52, indicating a large effect size. This result can serve as a guideline for distilleries on which segment to target in the rakija market and what kind of marketing programs to implement.

## 5. DISCUSSION

It appears that Serbians purchase rakija, a strong national alcoholic beverage, primarily for special reasons and as a gift, rather than for everyday consumption. Among the purchasing factors, good taste and being produced in Serbia were identified as the most important in the sample. The least significant factors in the overall sample were bottle appearance, packaging, and labels. Factors such as fruit, previous experience, aged and barrel-aged drinks, value for money, and producers were above the average scale value of 4.74. On the other hand, factors such as rewards, a high percentage of alcohol consumed, price, trying something new and exciting, and region were below the average.

More significant results were obtained through factor, cluster, and regression analysis. Three distinct components, or segments, were identified through PCA. This number of segments corresponds to the number of price segments derived from the analysis

of brandy distillers and their sales volumes (Adžić, 2023). Additionally, Carew et al. (2017) identified three price segments for white wines from California. Out of the initial 14 factors, two factors were removed from the final matrix due to low and duplicate loadings. These were variables the region and high alcohol content. Serbia does not have fruit or rakija regions at all, and a high alcohol content is associated with poor rakija that masks flaws with alcohol, so we do not consider these factors important. The three distinctive components were then processed through cluster analysis. This process resulted in three clusters or three segments of rakija users. This approach also led us to determine the number of rakija users in each segment individually. Finally, through regression analysis and model analysis in AMOS, the market strength of each segment was determined individually.

The factors that contribute to the first component, cluster or segment, in descending order, are BF10 (Tastes Good), BF12 (Older and Mature Rakija), BF5 (Fruit Variety), BF8 (Produced in Serbia), BF6 (Producer), and BF14 (Prior Experience). These factors collectively represent the profile of a traditional rakija consumer. This individual seeks rakija, which is flavorful and prefers the taste of aged and barrel-aged rakija. Both previous experience and the type of fruit and fruit variety from which the rakija is distilled, as well as the distiller's identity, are important to them. The distiller must be from Serbia, and it does not necessarily have to be an industrial enterprise; it could also be a small rural household with its own fruit orchards. Such a rakija consumer and the segment they form are referred to as "traditionalists". This profile of alcoholic beverage consumers has been a central focus in the research conducted by McCutcheon et al. (2009). According to the findings of Hlédik and Harsányi (2019), this demographic aligns with their category of ordinary wine consumers.

Traditionalists make up the middle segment in terms of numbers, comprising slightly less than one-third of the sample and population, specifically 32.91%. The users of rakija in this segment also fall within the middle income bracket. Traditionalists are the largest consumers of rakija per capita compared to other segments. Although they rank second in terms of number and market influence, it seems that old and aged rakija, which must also bear a higher price tag, are not as popular in the market. According to the analysis, their direct impact on purchasing, measured by the standardized beta effect, is 18%, indicating a weak effect. This is also a signal to distillers not to focus exclusively on traditional drinks.

The factors that contribute to the second component, cluster or segment, in descending order, are BF7 (bottle appearance), BF4 (packaging and labeling), BF3 (wards), and BF13 (trying sinking new and exciting). These factors form the image of a user who is not influenced by traditional rakija folklore. This is the image of a contemporary consumer of alcoholic beverages who drinks rakija but has no reservations toward imported alcoholic beverages such as whiskey or Cognac. To him, the content of the bottle is not important; what matters is the appearance of the bottle. The packaging and label of the brand also influence the consumer's choice of drink. He experiments with new beverages, whether they are rakija or not, especially if the drink has received an award from a competition or festival. We refer to this type of consumer of strong alcoholic beverages and the segment he forms as "modernists". King et al. (2012) also examined this alcoholic beverage consumer profile, and Hlédik and Harsányi (2019) identified it as corresponding to their segments of wealthy wine experts and open-minded consumers.

Modernists constitute the largest segment. A total of 46.33% of the respondents in the sample are in this segment, and since the sample is representative, we can also say this in the entire population. This segment has the highest average consumption of other popular strong alcoholic beverages in the sample. They also reported the highest income level, which is certainly necessary for purchasing more expensive imported beverages. Additionally, compared with other rakija users, modernists are on average the most influenced by the brand when making purchases. Modernists are the leading segment in the market. According to the analysis, their direct influence on purchasing, measured by the standardized beta effect, is 35%, indicating a strong effect. Based on this result, two out of three bottles of rakija on the market are purchased by modernists, and a modernist may not even be a rakija enthusiast. This is a clear signal to distillers that they need to modernize.

Only two variables, BF1 (price) and BF9 (value for money), contribute to the third component, cluster or segment. It is evident that this user is primarily interested in the price of rakija. They need it to be low and seek value for their money due to their limited budget. We refer to this type of user and the segment they form as "price-limited". Liu et al. (2021) referred to this type of consumer as an alcohol level attribute-seeking customer, which, according to Hlédik and Harsányi (2019), fits within their classification of unsophisticated wine consumers. The price-sensitive segment

consists of the smallest number of respondents, 82 respondents, or 20.76% of the sample or population. This segment has reported the lowest average income level in the sample, which is likely a characteristic of the price-limited buyer segment. The impact of these rakija users is statistically insignificant in the rakija market, as the regression coefficient is even negative.

This outcome for any other product would raise suspicion, but not for rakija. Specifically, the number of unregistered distilleries in Serbia far exceeds the number of registered distilleries. These so-called hobby distilleries do not violate the law by being unregistered. Alcohol distillation in households is a cultural tradition allowed by law. Indeed, owning a distillery is a popular hobby among Serbians, as we can see that over 40% of distilleries are present in our sample. Registering a distillery enables distillers to sell their products on the open market; however, the law does not prohibit selling or gifting within the household. Hobby distillers often take pride in their product and enjoy giving it as a gift, so the segment of price-sensitive consumers most likely consists of those rakija users who are accustomed to receiving rakija as a gift and therefore do not have the habit or need to buy it on the market. This is why the beta coefficient recorded such a value. These rakija users are merely consumers, not buyers.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that Serbians primarily purchase rakija, their strong national alcoholic beverage, for special occasions and as gifts rather than for regular use. Key factors influencing their purchasing decisions include the beverage's appealing flavor, its production in Serbia, the type of fruit used, prior experiences, the aging process, value for money, and the reputation of the producers.

Three consumer segments were identified. The "traditionalist" segment, making up about 32.91% of the sample, prefers established Serbian fruit rakija, particularly aged varieties. Their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by previous experiences, fruit type, and the distiller's identity, which must be Serbian. This group, mainly middle-income consumers, has the largest consumption but a modest direct impact on purchasing behavior at 18%.

The "modernist" segment prefers innovative products with contemporary packaging, showing a detachment from traditional rakija customs. They enjoy rakija alongside imported options like whiskey

and Cognac, prioritizing visual presentation over the drink's contents. This group, comprising 46.33% of respondents, has the highest consumption of other strong alcoholic drinks and the greatest income, allowing for the purchase of pricier imports. They are also the most influenced by branding, with a 35% impact on purchasing behavior. Consequently, modernists account for two out of three rakija bottles sold, highlighting the need for distillers to modernize their offerings.

The "price-limited" segment prioritizes affordable rakija due to financial constraints, making up only 20.76% of the sample and representing the smallest group. This segment has the lowest average income, reflecting typical price-sensitive consumer traits. Their market influence is statistically negligible, as shown by a negative regression coefficient.

Additionally, it can be inferred that, in contrast to many small distillers who adhere to traditional and outdated distillation methods, rakija consumers are not bound by tradition. Instead, they anticipate a market offering rakija that can compete in flavor and quality with international strong alcoholic beverages.

This is the first study on the segmentation of the rakija market based on consumer behavior analysis, which is the greatest contribution of this research. With this study, we contribute to the limited literature that examines rakija marketing. Additionally, this study has practical value because it can serve as a guide for small distilleries on which target groups to target. This target group is the contemporary consumer who is not looking for aged, overly complex, and expensive drinks but rather a product that visually and in taste resembles imported foreign drinks.

There are some obvious limitations of this study. The most apparent is that, while it addressed the differences in income levels among participants across various segments, it did not provide insights into the average willingness to pay for a bottle of brandy among respondents within these segments, nor did it specify the price range. This gap in the research should be addressed in future studies. Nevertheless, the use of more complex segmentation bases, such as psychographics, may yield a richer understanding of the Serbian rakija consumer in future studies. Moreover, this research is based on only one alcoholic beverage and lacks a comparison with other alcoholic beverages. There is also a question of the universality of the study, as it was conducted in only one market. These are also recognized avenues for future research that would include a wider range of drinks and markets.

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## Apstrakt

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### Utvrđivanje broja i karakteristika segmenata na tržištu rakije na osnovu kupovnog ponašanja potrošača

Slobodan Adžić, Milijanka C. Ratković

Cilj ovog istraživanja je identifikovanje broja segmenata na tržištu rakije u Srbiji na osnovu kupovnog ponašanja potrošača i analize kupovne moći unutar tih segmenata. Nasumično je odabran uzorak od 395 osoba koje su konzumirale rakiju (n=395). Korišćene su dve istraživačke skale za ispitivanje stavova potrošača u vezi sa kupovinom rakije. Validnost skala je ocenjena analizom pouzdanosti i faktorskom analizom. Nadalje, izvršena je dvostepena hijerarhijska klaster analiza koristeći Vordov metod kako bi se identifikovali segmenti. Konačno, kupovna moć svakog segmenta ocenjena je putem standardne višestruke analize regresije korišćenjem SPSS-a, nakon čega je izvršena analiza puta u programu AMOS. Autori su identifikovali tri segmen-

ta. Segment "tradicionalisti" sastoji se od potrošača koji preferiraju starije, poznate srpske voćne rakije. Segment "modernisti" preferiraju inovativne opcije sa savremenim pakovanjem. Segment "limitiranih cenom" prioritizuje jeftinu rakiju. Ova studija otkriva da Srbi kupuju rakiju, svoje jako nacionalno alkoholno piće, prvenstveno za specijalne prilike i kao poklon, a ne za svakodnevnu potrošnju. Ovo je prva studija o segmentaciji tržišta rakije na osnovu analize ponašanja potrošača, što je ujedno i najveći doprinos ovog istraživanja.

**Ključne reči:** *kupovni faktori, tržišni segmenti, analiza puta, rakija*

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## The role of national culture and lifestyle in shaping consumer behavior

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Srđan Šapić

**Abstract:** Contemporary marketing-oriented enterprises analyze the behavior of their target consumers by tracking the combined influence of various external and internal factors. The fundamental external determinant shaping consumer behavior is culture, while lifestyle stands out as one of the most significant internal determinants of consumption. Accordingly, the goal of the paper is to generate knowledge about national culture dimensions and consumer lifestyle influence on consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process. For this purpose, 372 consumers were surveyed. The reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and Harman's one-factor test were conducted to assess model fit. The structural equation modeling was applied for hypothesis testing. The results of the conducted structural equation modeling confirm the national culture dimensions and lifestyle to be significant determinants of consumer behavior as they go through the purchase decision-making process. The paper's originality and contribution are related to the forming and empirical testing of an innovative, integrated research framework in the consumer behavior domain, as well as generating useful empirical knowledge that can serve managers and governments for formulating and implementing future business strategies.

**Keywords:** *national culture dimensions, lifestyle, consumer behavior, purchase decision-making process*

**JEL classification:** M31

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Consumer behavior is influenced by numerous external and internal factors. The literature suggests that culture is the primary external determinant of consumer behavior. Culture is a broad social phenomenon and many authors tried to define it, which provided many different definitions. Culture is defined as collective mental programming (Hofstede, 1980), or as the sum of learned beliefs, values, and customs that serve to direct consumer behavior (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). A significant number of cultural studies in the previous years focused on the description and study of culture from the angle of its dimensions, which represents the first attempt to measure and compare cultural values through statistical studies. Cultural dimension is an aspect of culture that groups together many phenomena in a society that occur in combination (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). Culture, viewed through elements or dimensions, is strongly related to consumer behavior. Accordingly, Cleveland and Laroche (2007) state that culture is the key determinant of consumers' attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyles, and consequently the needs that consumers satisfy by using products and services.

Except for the external determinants, Kotler and Keller (2017) point out the importance of internal determinants that affect consumers during making purchasing decisions. Among internal determinants, lifestyle stands out as one of the most important. According to Dahana, Miwa and Morisada (2019, p. 320), lifestyle represents "a set of activities, values, needs, and beliefs that may activate customers' attention and drive behavioral intentions". Lifestyle research has become an interesting area because many products reflect the lifestyle of consumers who use them. In other words, consumers buy and use products and services that allow them to maintain a unique lifestyle. Before mentioned indicates the importance of examining the relationship between products and consumer lifestyle before defining marketing strategies to better access to targeted segments.

Starting from the above-mentioned, the paper aims to investigate the effects of Serbian national culture dimensions and lifestyle on consumer purchasing behavior. Precisely, the paper analyses the effects of uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, power distance, femininity, and lifestyle on consumers during the five-stage purchase decision-making process. Even though there is a certain number of studies examining the impact of cultural framework and lifestyle on consumer behavior, a research gap was observed in terms of joint analysis of these two determinants' effects on consumer behavior during the decision-making process. Also, there are a small number of studies that analyze the joint effects of the national culture dimension on consumer behavior. When it comes to national culture dimensions, the Hofstede's model (1980) was applied. Lifestyle was measured using the AIO technique (Wells & Tigert, 1971), while consumer purchasing behavior was analyzed using the EKB model of consumer behavior (Engel, Kollat & Blackwell, 1968). The paper starts from the methodology of the SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974) considering national culture dimensions as external stimulus (S), lifestyle as an organism (O), and consumer purchase behavior as a response (R). The paper starts with the literature review section related to national culture dimensions and lifestyle, followed by relations between observed variables and consumer behavior. The next part of the paper represents the methodology of the research. After the methodology section, research results and discussion are given. The last part of the paper represents conclusions, implications, and limitations of the research, and recommendations for future research.

## 2. NATIONAL CULTURE AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Culture defines the patterns of an individual's behavior related to every aspect of life, including consumption among others. Cultural values explain differences in consumer motives and behavior, product usage, success of a product or brand in the market, and appeals in advertising (de Mooij, 2017). Besides, product categories, attributes, and benefits are also related to cultural values. Individuals who live in different cultures show differences in defining consumer goals and acceptable ways to achieve the same since they have different values, symbols, or rituals that determine consumer behavior (Luna & Gupta, 2001). In other words, culture defines acceptable ways to meet

the needs and desires of consumers that must follow generally accepted cultural standards and norms. A significant role of the culture is that the same helps people meet their basic life needs through an appropriate system of consumption. Culture and consumer behavior during making purchase decisions are related in different ways. In this regard, Blackwell, Miniard and Engel (2006) point to the effects that culture manifests in each stage of the purchase process, first on defining acceptable needs (for example, Muslims are forbidden to consume pork), then on the way of information gathering (recommendations of family, friends or information gathering through the media) and the importance of attributes in product evaluation. It also affects the way of purchasing and consuming products and handling the product in the post-purchase stage (for example, how to dispose of products).

As mentioned in the introduction part of the paper, cultural studies in the previous years were focused on the description of culture based on its dimensions. As a result, various cultural models were developed. Among these models, the one given by Hofstede is most frequently used in cultural and consumer behavior studies. Geert Hofstede is one of the most famous authors of multicultural studies. During the 1970s, Hofstede conducted research in multinational company IBM including around 117.000 employees from more than 70 countries. Based on the research results, the author concluded that differences in value systems between employees originate from the cultures they belong. As a result, Hofstede developed a model of national culture containing four dimensions labeled individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity/femininity (Hofstede, 1980). Through further analysis of cultural differences, the author noticed two more dimensions named long-term/short-term orientation and indulgence/restraint (Hofstede, 2011). Starting from the importance of the mentioned model, the same was applied in the paper for national culture analysis, with focusing on the first four dimensions.

*Individualism/collectivism* shows the extent to which people see themselves as autonomous personalities or as members of tightly-knit communities (Beugelsdijk & Welzel, 2018). This dimension explains differences in communication behavior (direct or indirect, high/low context, media or word of mouth), Internet buying and usage, the importance of pleasure for spending leisure time, demonstrating uniqueness versus obtaining conform, etc. (de Mooij, 2019). When it comes to empirical evidence, previous

studies confirmed the influence of the observed dimension of culture on consumer behavior generally, as well as during the purchase decision-making process (Lim, Leung, Sia & Lee, 2004; Khare, 2013; Han, 2017; Yu, Liu & Lee, 2019; Kim, 2019; Kanakarathne, Bray & Robson, 2020). *Uncertainty avoidance* reflects “how comfortable people feel towards uncertain or unknown situations” (Jensen & Wagner, 2018, p. 322). Previous studies showed that the level of uncertainty avoidance determines different aspects of consumer behavior such as product evaluation (Lee, Garbarino & Lerman, 2007), information search (Quintal, Lee & Soutar, 2010; Jordan, Norman & Vogt, 2013), Internet shopping (Lim et al., 2004), loyalty (Khare, 2013), etc. *Power distance* is explained as the extent to which the less powerful members of a society expect and accept that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede et al., 2010). Several authors point to the importance of power distance in consumer decision-making (Kim & Zhang, 2014; Wang & Lalwani, 2019; Lee, Lalwani & Wang, 2020; Aw, Chuah, Sabri & Basha, 2021). *The masculinity/femininity* dimension shows how emotional roles between men and women are distributed in society (Hofstede, 2011). This dimension of culture was usually related by authors to reliance on online reviews (Kim, 2019), purchasing environmentally friendly or ethical products (Pinna, 2019; Felix, González, Castaño, Carrete & Gretz, 2021), etc.

### 3. LIFESTYLE AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Lifestyle refers to the pattern of an individual's life composed of all important life aspects. According to Solomon, Marshall and Stuart (2018), lifestyle is a pattern of life that determines how an individual spends his time, money, and energy, and reflects his values, preferences, and tastes. In other words, lifestyle is one of the most commonly used concepts in marketing for analyzing consumer behavior, especially for market segmentation purposes. Plummer (1974, p. 33) states that “the basic premise of lifestyle research is that the more you know and understand about your customers the more effectively you can communicate and market to them”. Also, Plummer (1977) implies that lifestyle provides to determine the way how products and services fit in consumer everyday life pattern. Consumers buy and use products and services that allow them to maintain certain lifestyles they lead. Lifestyle that an individual leads may activate consumers' attention and behavioral intentions. This can help marketers un-

derstand why consumer engages in certain behaviors and develop better-targeted marketing programs (Dahana et al., 2019). Nowadays, lifestyle is fast-changing and influenced by online sources of information. Still, consumers highly value the information they get from their friends and family, compared to online sources, such as influencers (Vranješ & Tomašević, 2024).

Lifestyle can be measured by using psychographic techniques. One of the widely used techniques in literature is the AIO (Wells & Tigert, 1971) technique which is often equalized with psychographics. Accordingly, this technique was applied in the paper for measuring lifestyle. AIO technique refers to the analysis of lifestyle based on activities, interests, and opinions of individuals, with respecting their demographic characteristics. This approach enables more precise market segmentation. The AIO technique is based on three dimensions labeled as activities, interests, and opinions. Activities relate to the way an individual spends his time and money, interests include all aspects of the environment that the individual considers more or less important, while opinions relate to the way how an individual thinks about himself and the world around him (Wells & Tigert, 1971; Plummer, 1974, 1977). Besides, the AIO technique consists of personal characteristics or demographic parameters of consumers related to age, education, income, family size, stage in life cycle, etc.

Starting from the fact that lifestyle refers to activities, interests, and opinions of individuals, the analysis of the same can identify what, how, where, and when consumers buy. Also, consumer preferences or interests in products and brands can determine purchasing needs or the way they evaluate alternatives. Starting from the mentioned, many authors empirically proved that lifestyle is closely related to consumer decision-making. For example, He, Zou and Jin (2010) proved that lifestyle influences consumption patterns viewed through brand preferences, luxury consumption, impulse purchases, etc. Orth, McDaniel, Shellhammer and Lopetcharat (2004) concluded that consumers who lead different lifestyles have different brand preferences. Lifestyle is usually related to organic food purchasing (Lobo & Chen, 2012; Soroka & Wojciechowska-Solis, 2019), Internet shopping (Swinyard & Smith, 2003; Park, Lee & Chung, 2013; Huseynov & Yildirim, 2019), pro-environmental buying behavior (Pícha & Navratil, 2019), word-of-mouth behavior (He et al., 2010), etc. Also, many authors focused on analyzing lifestyle in the domain of food choice (Kavak & Gumusluoglu, 2007), alcohol consumption (Bruwer, Li & Reid, 2002; Yabin &

Li, 2020), purchase of clothing (Hsu & Chang, 2008; Sung & Woo, 2019; Chi & Chen, 2020), etc.

#### 4. THE LINK BETWEEN NATIONAL CULTURE, LIFESTYLE AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

The ability of marketers to understand consumer behavior is the basis for the successful implementation of marketing strategies. The best way to predict and understand consumer behavior is to follow and analyze external and internal determinants, i.e. the joint effect of the same on consumers. Accordingly, the first author who pointed to the relationship between culture, lifestyle, and consumer behavior was William Lazer in 1963. Lazer proposed the lifestyle hierarchy according to which culture influences developing group and individual values that further translate into lifestyle patterns, which consequently influence consumer reactions (Lawson & Todd, 2002). Following the work of Lazer, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) proposed a model called the SOR model by the components it contains such as Stimulus (external determinants from the environment) that affects the Organism (consumer or its characteristics), resulting in a Reaction such as accepting or rejecting a stimulus. A model shows that how consumers will react to external stimulus depends on internal characteristics of the same. Besides the mentioned models, authors Hawkins, Best and Coney (2004) proposed a model of consumer behavior according to which consumer personality and lifestyle are derived from the joint influence of external and internal factors. Further, personality and lifestyle transform into consumers' desires and needs that they satisfy through the purchase decision-making process. Similarly, Hawkins, Mothersbaugh and Best (2007) indicate that lifestyle is a function of individual consumer characteristics that are shaped through social interaction under the effect of different stimuli (culture, subculture, social class, experience, family life cycle, demography, emotions, values) and manifest in process of purchase and consumption. One more model that points to the relationship between culture, lifestyle, and consumer behavior is a model developed by Kotler and Keller (2017) according to which culture as an external stimulus in combination with marketing stimuli determines psychological processes and consumer characteristics, which finally results in certain consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process and appropriate purchasing decisions regarding the choice of brand, store,

time of purchase, method of payment, etc. Relying on the previous models, mainly the SOR model, the research is based on the integrative model where culture represents external and lifestyle internal determinants of consumer behavior during purchase decision-making, i.e. the consumer response.

#### 5. METHODOLOGY

Research was conducted based on primary data collected from 372 consumers with different demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The sample represents a combination of quota and snowball samples. The data was initially collected by surveying 453 consumers using the snowball sampling technique. Precisely, the questionnaire was given to consumers who were in retail stores and shopping malls at the surveying moment, as well as students on faculties, who further forwarded questionnaires to their friends and families. The final sample was formed by excluding 81 consumers to adjust it to defined quotas. The quotas were determined based on the characteristics of the population in Serbia. The demographic and socio-economic criteria used for sample structuring are primary age, gender, and place of living, according to Lindridge, Vijaygopal and Dibb (2014) who emphasize the importance of mentioned criteria in cultural studies. Besides the observed criteria, the sample is also structured based on educational level, working status, and monthly income. All consumers voluntarily participated in the survey and the answers they gave were exclusively used for research purposes.

According to the results, the majority of the sample is women, i.e. 222 or 59.7%, while 40.3% of the sample is men (150). The largest segment of the sample are consumers aged from 26 to 35 (27.7% or 103). The youngest consumers aged from 18 to 25 represent 26.6% of the sample (99). The next segment is consumers aged from 36 to 45 (21.8% or 81). The respondents aged from 46 to 55 represent 16.9% of the sample (63), while the oldest consumers aged 56 and older take the least percent of the sample (7% or 26). The majority of the sample is consumers with higher education (162 or 43.5%). High school education has 32% of the sample (119), a master's degree 21.5% (80), while only 11 consumers are PhD (3%). Based on the working status, the majority of the sample are employed consumers (69.9% or 260), followed by students (21.5% or 80), then unemployed (7.3% or 27), and pensioners (1.3% or 5). When it comes to monthly income, most of the consumers have between 41

000 and 80 000 RSD (48.1% or 179), 134 consumers have up to 40 000 RSD (36%), 39 consumers have between 81 000 and 120 000 RSD (10.5%), while only 20 consumers have 121 000 RSD or more (5.4%). Most of the consumers live in the city (264 or 71%), in the village live 69 consumers (78.5%), while in the sub-city area live 39 consumers (10.5%).

The questionnaire used for data collection includes statements measured on a five-point Likert scale where respondents expressed their agreement with the statements (1 – completely disagree; 5 – completely agree). The first four statements are related to collectivism (adjusted from: Chen & West, 2008; Hofstede et al., 2010; Yoo, Donthu & Lenartowicz, 2011), next three statements measure uncertainty avoidance (adjusted from: Hofstede et al., 2010; Yoo et al., 2011), two statements measure power distance (adjusted from: Hofstede et al., 2010; Yoo et al., 2011) and five femininity (adjusted from: Hofstede et al., 2010; Yoo et al., 2011; Guseva, 2013). It is important to mention that national culture dimensions were measured at the individual level, i.e. at one national culture level, according to the work of authors such as Sharma (2010), Yoo et al. (2011), Bathaee (2014), etc. Also, it is important to point out that statements used for measuring cultural dimensions are observed in the context of consumer purchasing behavior. Lifestyle was measured using AIO technique and as a variable in the research model represents an unweighted arithmetic mean of 7 statements that are related to activities, interests, and opinions as lifestyle dimensions (adjusted from: Wells & Tigert, 1971; Roberts & Wortzel, 1979; Tai & Tam, 1997; Kwan, Yeung & Au, 2008; Horng, Su & So, 2013). Finally, the consumer purchasing behavior was analyzed based on EKB's five-stage decision-making process. This variable also represents an unweighted arithmetic mean of 5 statements that represent stages of the decision-making process (adjusted from: Bruner, 1987; Cleveland, Babin, Laroche, Ward & Bergeron, 2006; Nagaraja & Girish, 2016).

Data analysis was conducted in SPSS 20 and AMOS 20 statistical software. First, descriptive statistics was performed to determine sample structure (precisely frequency analysis), and values of arithmetic means and standard deviations for observed variables. In the next step, the reliability and validity of the research model were tested by calculating Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient value and performing confirmatory factor analysis. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient indicates the variable's reliability by evaluating the internal consistency of the statements used to measure the variables. On the other side, confirmatory factor analysis indicates the fit

of the measurement model by calculating  $\chi^2/df$  ratio, GFI (goodness of fit index), AGFI (adjusted goodness of fit index), NFI (normed fit index), CFI (comparative fit index), TLI (Tucker-Lewis index), IFI (incremental fit index) and RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) indexes. Also, the convergent and discriminant validity and the composite reliability were examined by measuring AVE and CR values. The validity of the model was also tested by examining the presence of the common method variance problem (CMV) in research. The analysis was conducted by using Harman's one-factor test as one of the most common statistical approaches used for testing CMV (Jordan & Troth, 2020). According to Mutebi, Muhwezi, Ntayi and Munene (2020), common method variance is not a problem in the research if one factor describes less than 50% of the total variance. Finally, to test research hypotheses, the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was applied, precisely covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM).

## 6. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the first step of the analysis, descriptive statistics were conducted. The obtained results are the basis for hypothesis testing. Precisely, it is important to determine whether the observed dimensions of Serbian national culture are confirmed based on arithmetic mean values for cultural dimensions. Related to previously mentioned, by observing the five-point Likert scale values from 3.1 to 5 indicate a tendency towards collectivism, high uncertainty avoidance, the dominance of power distance and femininity, while values from 1 to 3 indicate opposite cultural characteristics. The results are given in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation
Collectivism	3.92	0.84
Uncertainty avoidance	3.56	0.95
Power distance	3.21	0.99
Femininity	3.89	0.66
Lifestyle	3.85	0.58
Purchase decision-making process	3.71	0.69

Source: Authors

According to the descriptive statistics results, the presence of the observed cultural dimensions for Ser-

bian national culture is confirmed since the values of the arithmetic mean for each dimension are above 3.1. Also, it can be concluded that Serbian national culture is mainly collectivistic, with a strong tendency towards femininity followed by uncertainty avoidance, and with presence of high power distance. Values of arithmetic mean for lifestyle and purchase decision-making process indicate that consumers mostly have favorable attitudes towards the observed variables. In other words, consumers prefer to watch advertisements for announcements of sales, to monitor changes in prices, to save money whenever they can while shopping, buy branded products, to rely on personal judgment on selecting the products, etc. When it comes to decision-making, consumers mostly compare product prices, prefer to buy in stores with additional services, recommend the stores after purchase, etc. Related to attitudes homogeneity, consumers mostly agree when it comes to lifestyle, but their attitudes differ the most related to the presence of high power distance.

Before hypothesis testing, it is important to evaluate the research model's reliability and validity. The first analysis in this step is the reliability analysis presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Research model reliability

Variable	Cronbach's alpha
Collectivism	0.822
Uncertainty avoidance	0.746
Power distance	0.658
Femininity	0.603
Lifestyle	0.619
Purchase decision-making process	0.637

Source: Authors

The results of the reliability analysis indicate that Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient values for each variable are above the 0.6 thresholds (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014). In other words, all variables satisfy the necessary level of reliability, i.e. they have an adequate level of internal statement consistency. The most reliable is variable collectivism, while femininity has the lowest internal statement consistency.

**Table 4:** Harman's one-factor test

Component	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Research model (26 statements)	5.142	19.776	19.776

Source: Authors

Next analysis refers to testing the model validity through confirmatory factor analysis. Results are given in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Confirmatory factor analysis

Index	Obtained value	Proposed value
$\chi^2/df$	125,721/67=1,88	<3
GFI	0.955	>0,9
AGFI	0.930	>0,9
NFI	0.910	>0,9
CFI	0.955	>0,9
TLI	0.939	>0,9
IFI	0.956	>0,9
RMSEA	0.049	<0,1

Source: Authors

Confirmatory factor analysis results show that all values that indicate model validity are within the recommended thresholds. Precisely, the  $\chi^2/df$  ratio is less than 3 (Hair et al., 2014), the RMSEA index value is below the threshold value of 0.1 (Steiger, 1990), GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI, TLI, and IFI indices are above the threshold value of 0.9 (Hair et al., 2014). The convergent validity is supported because for each construct CR values are higher than AVE values. The proposed model has adequate convergent validity since AVE values for each variable are less than CR values. Also, AVE values for collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance are greater than threshold 0.5 (0.550, 0.529, and 0.766, respectively) (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Related to the composite reliability of the model, the same was confirmed since CR values for collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and femininity constructs are above 0.6 (0.829, 0.766, 0.843, and 0.600, respectively) (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Finally, the discriminant validity is confirmed since the AVE value of every latent variable is higher than the squared correlation between the given and other variables (Hair et al., 2014).

One more analysis conducted to test research model validity was Harman's one-factor test through principal component analysis as an extraction method (PCA) (Table 4).

The results of Harman's one-factor test indicate that common method variance is not a problem in

**Table 5:** Structural equation modeling: testing of the research hypotheses

Relations	$\beta$	p	R <sup>2</sup>
Collectivism → lifestyle	-0.008	0.906	0.279
Uncertainty avoidance → lifestyle	0.320	0.000***	
Power distance → lifestyle	0.108	0.067*	
Femininity → lifestyle	0.176	0.019**	
Lifestyle → purchase decision-making process	0.528	0.000***	

\*\*\* Statistically significant influence with a 99% probability

\*\* Statistically significant influence with a 95% probability

\* Statistically significant influence with a 90% probability

Without \* - the influence is insignificant

Source: Authors

the observed research model which contains 26 statements related to the national culture dimensions, lifestyle, and consumer behavior during purchase decision-making. Precisely, the results show that the research model as one principal factor explains 19.776% of the total variance.

The last analysis, i.e. structural equation modeling, was performed to test research hypotheses (Table 5).

According to the obtained results of the structural equation modeling, it can be concluded that all variables, except collectivism, have a statistically significant influence on consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process. Before mentioned is confirmed by p value above 0.1 for collectivism. The VIF value is below 5 in all pairs of variables, which indicates that multicollinearity is not present in the research model (Field, 2000). Related to the effects, consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process is mostly influenced by the lifestyle they lead ( $\beta=0,528$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), followed by uncertainty avoidance ( $\beta=0,320$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and then femininity ( $\beta=0,176$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). On the other side, power distance has the lowest influence on consumer purchase decision-making ( $\beta=0,108$ ,  $p<0.1$ ). Also, the results show that 27.9% of dependent variable variability is covered by the research model.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Decisions that consumers make through the decision-making process reflect the extent to which the marketing strategy of the companies is aligned with market demand (Gašević, Jovičić, Zdravković & Čakajac, 2024). Under the combining effects of the external and internal determinants consumer reactions will be reflected in the buying process as an acceptance and purchase or rejection of products and ser-

vices. Accordingly, empirical research was conducted to examine the effect of the national culture dimensions and consumer lifestyle on consumer behavior during the purchase decision-making process. First, results confirmed that Serbian national culture is mainly collectivistic, with a strong tendency towards femininity and uncertainty avoidance, and with the presence of high power distance, which corresponds to the results obtained by Hofstede (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede Insights, 2022). However, it is important to mention that results deviate from the ones obtained by Hofstede when it comes to the order of dimensions dominance since Hofstede concluded that the Serbian cultural framework is mostly characterized by uncertainty avoidance, weaker by power distance, than collectivism, and the weakest by femininity. Starting from the methodology of the SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), the paper analyzes the joint influence of national culture dimensions as external stimulus and lifestyle as an organism on consumer decision-making, i.e. response. Accordingly, results showed that only collectivism is not a statistically significant external determinant of consumer lifestyle, and consequently of consumer decision-making. On the other hand, the strongest direct effects on consumer lifestyle and indirect on decision-making were manifested by uncertainty avoidance and then femininity, while power distance is the weakest determinant. Finally, results proved that lifestyle is a strong determinant of consumer decision-making. The obtained results confirm the propositions of the theoretical models used as a starting point for the research, mainly the SOR model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974), but also models developed by Hawkins et al. (2004) or Kotler and Keller (2017). Furthermore, results for national culture dimensions are in line with previous empirical studies (Lee et al., 2007; Quintal et al., 2010; Jordan et al., 2013; Khare, 2013; Kim & Zhang, 2014;

Kim, 2019; Wang & Lalwani, 2019; Lee et al., 2020; Aw et al., 2021), except in case of collectivism where deviations from previous research exist (Lim et al., 2004; Han, 2017; Yu et al., 2019; Kanakaratne et al., 2020). The observed deviation can be explained as the consequence of different methodological approaches because previous research was mostly conducted in a multicultural context or observed specific aspects of the consumer decision-making process. Related to lifestyle effects, the obtained results correspond to the previous ones (He et al., 2010; Huseynov & Yildirim, 2019; Chi & Chen, 2020).

The theoretical contribution of the conducted empirical research refers to a more complex analysis and understanding of the national culture dimensions and lifestyle effects on consumer behavior during the decision-making process. Research expands theoretical knowledge in the field of intercultural marketing and consumer relationship management. Also, research transcends the observed gap related to the joint analysis of national culture dimensions and lifestyle effects on consumer decision-making, as well as to the analysis of joint national culture dimension effects on consumer behavior. The most significant contribution of the paper relates to the development of an innovative, integrative research framework starting from the methodology of the SOR model. The research framework observes national culture dimensions as external stimulus, lifestyle as an organism, and consumer decision-making as a response. The observed components of the research framework were singled out by observing relevant literature. Accordingly, components were analyzed by using some of the most relevant frameworks such as Hofstede's model of national culture (Hofstede, 1980), the AIO technique for measuring lifestyle (Wells & Tigert, 1971), and the EKB model of consumer behavior (Engel et al., 1968). The proposed research framework represents an innovative approach to analyzing the effects of national culture dimensions and lifestyle on consumer decision-making, and thus a significant step forward in the current research approach. Also, it is important to emphasize that the framework is empirically tested and confirmed in terms of its adequacy for application in future research. In other words, research provides an innovative theoretical model of consumer behavior that has been empirically tested. As such, the research framework can be adapted to the needs of different studies, i.e. it can be applied for studies in different cultural environments (in terms of cultural dimensions), depending on different activities, interests, and opinions of consumers, for different types of products or services, etc.

Related to the practical implications of the paper, research provides results applicable to real business. By analysis of the relationship between national culture and consumer lifestyle, but also their effects on consumer behavior, the research emphasizes the importance of formulating and implementing marketing strategies that respect cultural framework and characteristics of consumer lifestyle in the markets where companies operate. This approach can provide companies with better access to targeted market segments. When observing the effects of national culture dimensions on consumer decision-making, and how uncertainty avoidance is the strongest determinant of the same, the recommendation to the marketers is to enable the purchase process to be as transparent as possible. This can be achieved through propaganda messages in stores or media that indicate the characteristics of products and services, purchase and payment procedures, proper product handling, the possibility of product replacement in case of damage, etc. Additionally, it is necessary to improve the technical knowledge of sales staff (through adequate training and seminars), so they can give more precise answers to all consumer questions regarding the products and services. The previously given recommendations can significantly contribute to the reduction of the perceived consumer risk and gaining confidence in the purchasing process, especially when it comes to expensive and luxury products and durable consumer goods. Further, when observing the effect of femininity, it is possible to recommend that emphasis in promotional strategies should be placed on product values such as less environmental pollution, safe use of products, and positive effects of products on the health of loved ones, especially related to the products for children. Related to the lifestyle effects, marketers can provide consumers with regular notifications by email or phone about changes in the prices of the brands they most often buy, current discounts, and special benefits that can be achieved based on their loyalty, etc. This can be especially valued by consumers who prefer to watch the advertisements for announcements of sales, to monitor changes in prices, or to save money whenever they can while shopping. Further, manufacturers of the unbranded products can use aggressive propaganda in media or through consumers who use those products and are willing to pass their experience and satisfaction on to other consumers (in person or through online reviews) in exchange for a certain gift, additional point on loyalty card, discount for the next purchase, etc.

Recommendations can be singled out for the governments as well. First, future strategies for economic development should be based on the cultural framework of the country. For example, “Buy local!” campaigns in countries with high collectivism, power distance, and femininity can emphasize joint purchases of all family members, especially including older ones as parents or grandparents, pointing to the benefits of domestic products such as security of the product use, protection of the environment, etc. Another recommendation is related to the formulation of the consumer protection strategy in countries with high uncertainty avoidance. Accordingly, governments should respect all regulations defined both by strategy and the relevant legal framework related to the protection of consumer interests and rights. Also, consumers should be regularly informed through appropriate propaganda campaigns about their rights and government support. Finally, related to the lifestyle effects, governments should emphasize the significance of psychographic analysis for modern market development. Also, governments can provide support for companies interested in psychographic analysis by organizing certain seminars or trainings for marketers, led by famous and relevant marketing experts. This can help companies gain the necessary skills for

conducting psychographic analysis on their own and thus obtain significant savings.

The paper has several limitations. The first limitation relates to the research framework since the same does not cover the last two national culture dimensions. The research is conducted in only one culture. Also, the results relate to general shopping activities, regardless of different products and services. Accordingly, we provide several recommendations for future research. First, significant results can be obtained if the research is conducted in a cross-cultural context, especially in countries with opposite cultural characteristics. The recommendation can also be related to framework expansion with long term/short term orientation and indulgence/restraint. Also, the framework can be adjusted to different areas such as tourism, insurance, banking, or to certain product categories (cars, luxury products, apparel). In line with the SOR methodology, other variables can be analyzed. When it comes to external stimulus, besides cultural dimensions future research can focus on cultural elements such as values, habits, religion, etc. Also, other techniques, such as VALS 2, can be used for measuring lifestyle. Related to this, future papers can also provide psychographic segmentation results to gain better insight into consumer internal characteristics.

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## APPENDIX A

### Collectivism

1. When I make a purchase decision, I care about how it affects my family.
2. When I make a purchase decision, I take into account the needs of my family.
3. When shopping, I subordinate personal interests to the interests of the family.
4. When shopping, family well-being is more important to me than personal well-being.

### Uncertainty avoidance

1. Detailed instructions when buying products and services are important to me.
2. It is important for me to follow the instructions and procedures when using products and services.
3. When shopping, I avoid unknown situations.

### Power distance

1. Older family members (parents) should not give up significant purchases by younger members (children).
2. Parents should take the initiative when shopping.

### Femininity

1. Both men and women should make purchases of consumables (e.g. food) as well as durable products (e.g. cars).
2. Both men and women should be modest when shopping.
3. Conflicts in purchases (complaints, reclamations, etc.) should be resolved by compromise and negotiation.
4. I find less attractive products that stand out with their financial value (price).
5. I believe that stereotypical advertisements (e.g. kitchen appliances advertised by women, cars advertised by men) are no longer attractive.

*Lifestyle*

1. I usually watch the advertisements for announcements of sales.
2. I notice when products I buy regularly change in price.
3. In shopping I try to save money whenever I can.
4. I usually go to the same stores to buy stuff.
5. I prefer to buy branded products.
6. On any major purchase, the husband and wife should decide together what to buy.
7. I am confident in my judgment on selecting the products.

*Purchasing decision-making process*

1. I do not buy a new product when the old one is in good condition.
2. I compare product prices very carefully.
3. I compare products/stores by their characteristics/offers before I decide to buy.
4. I prefer to buy in stores where I can get an additional service (e.g. free home delivery).
5. I recommend the store to others, only when I evaluate it after buying in it.

## Apstrakt

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### Uloga nacionalne kulture i stila života u oblikovanju ponašanja potrošača

Veljko Marinković, Jovana Lazarević, Srđan Šapić

Savremena marketinški orijentisana preduzeća analiziraju ponašanje svojih ciljnih potrošača prateći kombinovani uticaj različitih eksternih i internih faktora. Osnovna eksterna determinanta koja oblikuje ponašanje potrošača je kultura, dok se stil života ističe kao jedna od najznačajnijih internih determinanti potrošnje. Shodno tome, cilj rada je generisanje znanja o uticaju dimenzija nacionalne kulture i stila života potrošača na ponašanje potrošača tokom procesa donošenja odluke o kupovini. U tu svrhu anketirano je 372 potrošača. Analiza pouzdanosti, konfirmativna faktor-ska analiza i Harmanov test jednog faktora su sprovedeni za procenu skladnosti modela. Za testiranje hipoteza primenjen je model strukturalnih jednačina. Rezultati spro-

vedenog modela strukturalnih jednačina potvrđuju da su dimenzije nacionalne kulture i stil života značajne determinante ponašanja potrošača u procesu donošenja odluke o kupovini. Originalnost i doprinos rada odnose se na formiranje i empirijsko testiranje inovativnog, integrisanog istraživačkog okvira u domenu ponašanja potrošača, kao i na generisanje korisnih empirijskih znanja koja mogu poslužiti menadžerima i vladama za formulisanje i implementaciju budućih poslovnih strategija.

**Ključne reči:** *dimenzije nacionalne kulture, stil života, ponašanje potrošača, proces odlučivanja o kupovini*

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## The influence of internal marketing dimensions on organizational commitment

Goran Pavlović, Nevena Bevanda, Vuk Bevanda

**Abstract:** Internal marketing encompasses a set of carefully designed activities and strategies to attract, motivate, and foster employee loyalty. By treating employees as the organization's first customers, management seeks to cultivate positive attitudes, which, in turn, contribute to greater organizational commitment. This refers to employees' intentions to remain loyal and dedicated to the organization, its objectives, tasks, and their colleagues. In this context, it is valuable to explore how specific dimensions of internal marketing influence employees' organizational commitment, which is the main goal of this paper. To achieve this objective, research was conducted on a sample of 306 respondents in the Republic of Serbia. Through factor and regression analysis, it was found that the dimensions of internal marketing have a partially statistically significant and positive effect on organizational commitment. The significance of this study lies in addressing the research gap concerning the impact of specific internal marketing dimensions on organizational commitment, providing a foundation for future studies in this area.

**Keywords:** *internal marketing, organizational commitment, employee loyalty*

**JEL classification:** M31, M51

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The initial concept of internal marketing was primarily associated with service companies and the perspective that employees maintain an internal market, as significant as the external customer market (Foreman & Money, 1995). While this viewpoint remains relevant, over time, alongside the evolution of marketing philosophy, internal marketing has also advanced. It is now recognized as relevant not only for service companies but for all types of organizations. It is widely accepted that employees, through their knowledge, skills, and abilities, which form human capital, represent a critical source of sustainable competitive advantage (Pavlović, 2024). To attract and retain this human capital, companies have increasingly adopted marketing approaches in their human resource management practices. Consequently, the maxim that employees are the first, or internal, customers of the company has become central to the concept of internal marketing (Lings, 2004). As marketing and human resource management strategies have evolved, internal marketing has also progressed, encompassing dimensions and factors that enhance interpersonal relationships, employee satisfaction, engagement, and competence (Rodrigues, Barreira, Madeira & Vieira, 2023). Internal marketing can thus be viewed as a tool aimed at improving employee satisfaction to create a motivated and loyal workforce, which in turn drives business performance (Mazzarolo, Mainardes & Montemor, 2021; Varey, 1995; Rodrigues et al., 2023). Among its numerous positive effects, its influence on organizational commitment stands out. As Ridwan, Mulyani and Ali (2020) note, organizational commitment is demonstrated by employees' dedication to their work, acceptance of organizational goals as their own, and desire to remain loyal to the organization. Employee loyalty, in this context, can be viewed from various perspectives. It may arise from the positive emotions an employee feels toward the organization, the benefits received, or a sense of duty to remain loyal (Allen & Meyer, 1990). In general, however, organizational commitment is tied to an employee's emo-

tional attachment to the organization, appreciation of its values, culture, mission, and active involvement in achieving its goals (Mazzarolo et al., 2021). Internal marketing encompasses a set of activities and strategies designed to provide employees with competencies, access to relevant information, a reward system, and other factors that positively influence employee attitudes, ultimately fostering organizational commitment (Asiamah, Opuni & Mensah, 2018).

Given the above, this paper aims to examine the impact of internal marketing on organizational commitment. Although numerous studies have explored the relationship between these variables (Mazzarolo et al., 2021; Mero, Fernandez, Alcivar & Cruz, 2020; Kim, 2021; Asiamah et al., 2018; Nointin, 2018; Ahmad, Iqbal & Sheeraz, 2012), there remains a notable gap in research specifically addressing how different dimensions of internal marketing influence organizational commitment. This study aims to explore the unique characteristics and influences of various dimensions to understand how specific aspects of internal marketing may affect organizational commitment. To achieve this goal, the paper is organized into two primary sections. The initial section discusses core theoretical concepts related to internal marketing, organizational commitment, and their interconnections. The second section details empirical findings, analyzing the effects of internal marketing on organizational commitment through factor and regression analyses. The conclusion addresses study limitations and proposes directions for future research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Internal marketing

Internal marketing first gained significant attention in the late 1970s, primarily concerning improving quality within service companies (Rodrigues et al., 2023). Over time, three key perspectives on internal marketing have developed. Initially, internal marketing was focused on enhancing employee job satisfaction and motivation, with the belief that these factors directly influenced the variability of service quality. In the second phase of its evolution, internal marketing shifted towards motivating employees to establish stronger interactions with customers, emphasizing customer orientation. In its current phase, internal marketing is seen as a strategic tool for change management and strengthening the company's competitive advantage (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000; Narteh, 2012). An early definition of internal marketing frames it as the approach

of considering employees as internal customers, with business processes crafted as products aimed at meeting employees' needs while supporting the organization's objectives (Martensen & Grønholdt, 2006). The expanded definition describes internal marketing as „a set of activities aimed at attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining competent employees by offering products that meet their needs“ (Rafiq & Ahmed, 2000, p. 451). Shrestha (2020) similarly views internal marketing as a series of marketing activities specifically designed to create satisfied and motivated employees who contribute to achieving organizational goals. In this context, the author highlights a range of human resource management activities that enhance coordination, foster acceptance of change, and engage employees in meeting customer needs. Foreman and Money (1995) note that these activities are not always implemented organization-wide but may be focused within specific departments, groups, or teams. However, to build a positive public image and ensure a motivated workforce, internal marketing should be approached as a holistic strategy applied across the entire organization. Varey (1995) asserts that internal marketing should be a managerial activity that involves all employees, ensuring their contributions to the organization's overall performance.

Internal marketing is grounded in the principle that only satisfied employees can foster a satisfied customer base. By adopting a marketing approach, management ensures that employees contribute to value creation through a relationship-oriented philosophy focused on customer interaction (Narteh, 2012; Rafiq & Ahmed, 1993). For employees to contribute effectively, the company must also regard them as its most vital resource (Rodrigues et al., 2023). Barney (1991) emphasizes that competitive advantage stems from rare, valuable, and non-substitutable resources, which certainly applies to human capital (Pavlović, 2024). Through internal marketing strategies, companies positively impact employee motivation and satisfaction, simultaneously increasing retention and engagement (Mazzarolo et al., 2021). Thus, internal marketing is viewed as a distinctive strategic approach to human resource management (Mero et al., 2020; Shrestha, 2020).

Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) highlight key elements of internal marketing, placing employee motivation and satisfaction at the forefront. Following this, they emphasize customer orientation, cross-functional coordination, a marketing philosophy within these elements, and the application of specific business strategies. Other scholars focus on particular com-

ponents, often referred to as dimensions of internal marketing. Summarizing previous research, Rodrigues et al. (2023) identify employee orientation, job content, communication quality, and career development opportunities as essential dimensions. The internal marketing model includes dimensions such as internal market segmentation, the quality of internal communication affecting interpersonal relationships, leadership's concern for employee needs, and training aimed at enhancing employee competencies (Mero et al., 2020). Shrestha (2020) further expands on these dimensions by adding reward systems, career development opportunities, employee involvement in decision-making, and cross-functional coordination strategies. Internal marketing also encompasses job security and recognition (Asiamah et al., 2018), as well as working conditions, which cover the physical environment, resource availability, and employee attitudes toward work (Nointin, 2018). Effective internal marketing strategies lead to improved employee productivity, innovation, and a positive public image of the organization (Varey, 1995), while also positively impacting employee satisfaction and motivation, which, in turn, enhances organizational commitment (Mero et al., 2020).

## 2.2. Organizational commitment

The degree to which employees are committed to organizational goals and feel a sense of loyalty is closely tied to the concept of organizational commitment (Ridwan et al., 2020). Upon analyzing the essence of „commitment“, it becomes clear that employee loyalty to the organization involves concern for its tasks, active involvement, engagement in achieving its goals, and working in the organization's best interest (Guzeller & Celiker, 2019; Ghosh & Swamy, 2014). Organizational commitment, understood as active participation within the company, encourages employees to put in extra effort and remain loyal (Almaududi Ausat, Suherlan, Peirisal & Hirawan, 2022). Such employees have a strong belief in the company's mission and goals, establishing a psychological connection with the organization, which results in greater involvement in their work (Guzeller & Celiker, 2019).

The development of organizational commitment theories began with Becker's „side-bet“ theory, where employees remained committed due to hidden investments that made disengagement costly. Over time, the focus shifted to psychological attachment, emphasizing emotional identification with the organization, which influenced employee retention. Porter, Steers,

Mowday and Boulian (1974) introduced a model focusing on acceptance, participation, and loyalty, establishing a link between commitment and employee turnover. Finally, Allen and Meyer's (1990) multidimensional model expanded on earlier approaches by integrating affective and continuance commitment, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse factors that influence organizational commitment (Ghosh & Swamy, 2014; Cohen, 2007). Organizational loyalty leads to employees perceiving themselves as integral components of the company, resulting in higher acceptance of organizational culture and values, which ultimately enhances business performance (Mazzarolo et al., 2021; Mero et al., 2020). Cohen (2007) identified two dimensions of organizational commitment: timing and bases of commitment. Timing differentiates between commitment propensity, which emerges when employees join the organization, and the development of stronger commitment over time as unrealistic expectations fade. The bases of commitment include instrumental commitment, driven by employee motivation, and affective commitment, which stems from employee socialization at work (Ghosh & Swamy, 2014).

Different models of organizational commitment have been proposed by various authors. Swailes (2002) identifies three types: continuance commitment, which arises from the employee's accumulated investments in the organization, where departure would result in significant losses; cohesive commitment, which is rooted in the company's social relationships, norms, and values; and behavioral commitment, which emerges from the employee's past decisions and their outcomes within the organization. A well-known approach, introduced by Allen and Meyer (1990), highlights three dimensions: affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Affective commitment, one of the most frequently mentioned types, develops from the employee's positive emotional attachment to the organization, where they identify with its goals and values (Narteh, 2012). Continuance commitment, on the other hand, is linked to the rewards and benefits that employees receive, which discourage them from leaving (Almaududi Ausat et al., 2022; Ridwan et al., 2020). Employees often perceive the cost of leaving as high due to the benefits they have accumulated over time, which may be difficult to replicate elsewhere (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Normative commitment refers to a sense of obligation to remain loyal to the company, driven by a formal sense of responsibility rather than emotional attachment (Swailes, 2002; Narteh, 2012). Luthans, Baack and Taylor

(1987) group the factors influencing organizational commitment into three broad categories: socio-demographic characteristics, organizational features, and the alignment between employees' personal characteristics and organizational attributes. In any case, committed employees are more willing to put in extra effort, leading to enhanced performance (Almaududi Ausat et al., 2022; Swailes, 2002; Martensen & Grønholdt, 2006), as well as an increased level of innovation (Narteh, 2012).

### 2.3. The relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment

Organizations that treat their employees as primary customers strive to implement strategies that enhance motivation and satisfaction, which in turn fosters loyalty to the organization. Consequently, internal marketing is closely linked to human resource management strategies focused on cultivating organizational commitment (Mazzarolo et al., 2021). Internal marketing encompasses a range of activities carried out by human resource managers to empower and reward employees for the quality they provide to customers. Additionally, it involves improving job content to create engaging and meaningful tasks, which, along with autonomy and participation, contribute to positive attitudes that are essential for organizational commitment (Asiamah et al., 2018).

The integration of marketing into human resource management activities involves strategies, techniques, and principles aimed at mobilizing, motivating, coordinating, and managing employees across all organizational levels to enhance overall performance. Moreover, internal marketing is recognized as a tool for attracting and retaining talented individuals whose values align with the organization's culture, thus fostering the development of organizational commitment (Bansal, Mendelson & Sharma, 2001). Rodrigues et al. (2023) summarize Allen and Meyer's (1990) perspectives, highlighting that work experience is a crucial dimension of internal marketing that significantly influences employees' psychological need to remain loyal to the organization. Key elements within work experience include strong interpersonal relationships, motivating work environments, autonomy, and clearly defined responsibilities. Ahmad et al. (2012) emphasize that factors such as job security, training, fair wages, information communication, employee empowerment, and the reduction of hierarchical differences among employees notably impact organ-

izational commitment. Mero et al. (2020) highlight the essential role of internal communication, which involves direct information exchange, understanding employee needs, and showing interest in their opinions, as a powerful influence of internal marketing. Empowering employees allows them to share their insights and apply their acquired knowledge and experience. To achieve optimal results, HR managers implement training programs and clearly outline expectations. Managers reward employees based on their competencies and performance levels. Thus, communication, empowerment, training, and reward systems are key dimensions of internal marketing that influence organizational commitment, as noted by Narteh (2012), Bansal et al. (2001), and Asiamah et al. (2018). Kim (2021) also supports the notion of a positive relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

To investigate the objective, an empirical study was conducted involving 306 respondents employed across various companies in the Republic of Serbia. The research utilized a convenience sampling method, allowing easily accessible respondents to complete an electronic questionnaire, which they then shared with their acquaintances. This sampling approach is noted for its efficiency, including speed, low costs, and accessibility to the target population, which in this case consists of employed individuals (Golzar, Noor & Tajik, 2022). Throughout the research process, no confidential personal information or identifiers (such as email or IP addresses) were collected from participants. The research was conducted from August to October 2024 in two phases. Initially, the questionnaire was distributed to respondents, who were then asked to forward it to their acquaintances. Geographically, the study covered Central, Southern, and Eastern Serbia. The questionnaire was designed to ensure that all questions and responses were addressed, allowing for its acceptance and completion by participants.

In the research model, internal marketing serves as the independent variable, formulated based on findings from studies by Foreman and Money (1995). The dependent variable is organizational commitment, measured using the scale developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), which assesses affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Reverse statements from their model were rephrased for better clarity. As noted by Suarez-Alvarez et al. (2018), cognitive processing

varies among individuals concerning items with positive and negative connotations, as well as their level of abstract reasoning ability, which can lead to incorrect conclusions when these items are combined, further supporting the employed method in this research. Respondents provided their opinions on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated strong disagreement and 5 indicated strong agreement with each statement. The reason for using the mentioned scale is reflected in its simplicity. Scales with fewer points (like a five-point scale) can simplify responses, while those exceeding five points may increase response difficulty, impacting participant engagement and data reliability (Alkharusi, 2022). Data analysis was performed using SPSS V26 software, utilizing statistical tests such as frequency analysis, internal reliability testing, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), correlation, and multiple regression analysis.

Regarding the sample structure, frequency analysis revealed that there are 114 male respondents (37.3%) and 192 female respondents (62.7%). In terms of age distribution, 57 respondents (18.6%) are aged 18-30, 159 respondents (52%) are between 31-50, and 90 respondents (29.4%) are over 51. Concerning educational background, 213 respondents hold college degrees (69.6%), 60 have completed secondary education (19.6%), and 33 possess higher education (10.8%). As for the type of companies they work in, 42 respondents (13.7%) are employed in businesses with 11-50 employees, 93 respondents (30.4%) work in companies with 51-250 employees, 24 respondents (7.8%) are in micro-enterprises with up to 10 employees, and 147 respondents (48%) work in large companies with over 250 employees. Additionally, 225 respondents (73.5%) are employed in the public sector, 63 respondents (20.6%) work in domestic private firms, and 18 respondents (5.9%) are in multinational corporations.

#### 4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results reveal a strong alignment between employees' work and the organization's vision, supported by structured training initiatives that enhance essential competencies. Employees feel well-informed about their roles and responsibilities, recognizing training as a valuable long-term investment. Additionally, a robust performance assessment and reward system are in place, which fosters confidence in their preparedness and ability to effectively perform tasks.

The results highlight that affective commitment is the most prominent form of organizational commitment among employees, underscoring the emotional connections they form within the workplace. This is followed by normative commitment, while continuance commitment appears to be less influential. Employees view the organization as highly significant to them, often perceiving colleagues as family, which reinforces their attachment to the workplace. Continuance commitment reflects employees' inclination to stay due to both practical needs and personal motivations, such as organizational benefits. Normative commitment further emphasizes a sense of loyalty, with employees believing it is reasonable for colleagues to show dedication to the organization. To assess internal consistency, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was employed, with a minimum value of 0.7 required for the variable to be deemed reliable (Nunnally, 1978). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Internal consistency test

Variable	Cronbach alpha
Internal marketing	0.976
Organizational commitment	0.960

Source: Authors

The findings from the internal reliability test indicate that all variables surpass the minimum acceptable value of 0.7. Notably, the internal marketing variable demonstrates a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.976. It can be concluded that all variables exhibit strong internal consistency, validating the continuation of the analysis. An Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was initially performed for the internal marketing variable. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was applied to evaluate sample adequacy, with a recommended threshold of greater than 0.5 (Asiamah et al., 2018). In this research, the KMO value was found to be 0.941. Additionally, the Bartlett test of sphericity yielded an Approx. Chi-Square of 5906.972, with 105 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 0.000, indicating that the sample size is adequate. Using Principal Component Analysis, factors were extracted that represent the minimum number of factors most effectively describing the relationships between the variables.

The findings indicate that three groups of factors were identified, which together account for 83.573% of the variance after the rotation. The first factor accounts for the largest portion, explaining 30.462% of the variance. The second factor explains 27.942% of the variance, and the third factor explains 25.169%

of the variance. The scale developed by Foreman and Money (1995) also identified three factors. These 15 variables were subsequently rotated using Varimax rotation, which primarily aims to enhance the differentiation between the squared coefficients of the pattern structure on each factor (Shrestha, 2021).

**Table 2:** Rotated Component Matrix

Rotated Component Matrix <sup>a</sup>			
Items	Component		
	1	2	3
9	,831		
12	,817		
10	,700		
8	,694		,563
11	,679		
14	,545	,540	
13		,744	
5		,732	
4		,732	
7		,668	,536
15	,579	,616	
2			,794
1			,748
3			,663
6		,556	,566

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.  
 a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Source: Authors

Factor loadings below 0.5 in Table 2 were excluded to enhance interpretative clarity. However, item assignments to components are determined based on the highest loading per item, ensuring each is attributed to the component with which it shows the strongest association. Based on the above, the results in Table 2 categorize the statements of Factor 1 (9, 12, 10, 8, 11, and 14) under the label „Reward System“. Factor 2, consisting of statements 13, 5, 4, 7, and 15, is identified as „Development and Training of Employees“. Factor 3 includes statements 2, 1, 3, and 6, which can be referred to as „Vision“. These identified factors align with those found in the study by Foreman and Money (1995), reinforcing the significance of this research and the validity of the findings utilized herein.

According to Cohen (1988), a correlation coefficient exceeding +/-0.5 is regarded as strong. The results presented in Table 3 indicate that the Pearson correlation coefficients reveal a strong direct correlation among all variables. When examining the relationships between the independent and dependent variables individually, the strongest correlation is observed between the reward system and organizational commitment (0.769), highlighting the critical role of both tangible and intangible rewards in fostering organizational commitment. To assess the significance of this effect, a multiple regression analysis was conducted (Table 4).

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.611, suggesting that 61.1% of the variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable, which is a significant proportion. In examining the influence of the individual dimensions of internal

**Table 3:** Correlation analysis

	Reward system	Development and Training of Employees	Vision	Organizational commitment
Reward system	1	0.866**	0.870**	0.769**
Development and Training of Employees	0.866	1	0.881**	0.736**
Vision	0.870**	0.881**	1	0.697**
Organizational commitment	0.769**	0.736**	0.697**	1

Note: \*\*- Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: Authors

**Table 4:** Multiple regression: dependent variable - organizational commitment

Independent variables	$R^2$	$\beta$	t	Sig.
Reward system	0.611	0.544	8.115	0.000*
Development and Training of Employees		0.301	6.747	0.000*
Vision		-0.041	3.583	0.627

Note: \*- Significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: Authors

marketing on organizational commitment, the reward system shows the strongest positive effect ( $\beta=0.544$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). This aligns with previous findings that highlighted the reward system as the key driver of organizational commitment. The dimension of development and training also shows a positive and statistically significant effect ( $\beta=0.301$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), suggesting that investing in employee education not only creates value but also positively influences organizational commitment. Despite the strong direct correlation between vision and organizational commitment, this relationship weakens when vision is assessed alongside other dimensions, leading to the conclusion that vision does not have a statistically significant impact on organizational commitment ( $\beta=-0.041$ ,  $p>0.05$ ).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The research findings indicate that both the reward system and development and training, as dimensions of internal marketing, have a statistically significant and positive impact on organizational commitment. While an initial strong correlation was observed between vision as a dimension of internal marketing and organizational commitment, multiple regression results did not show a statistically significant effect. Previous research has consistently demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between internal marketing and organizational commitment (Asiamah et al., 2018; Bansal et al., 2001; Rodrigues et al., 2023; Ahmad et al., 2012). However, this study is unique in examining the effects of specific dimensions of internal marketing on organizational commitment, as only a limited number of studies have addressed this topic. In this context, the reward system is particularly noteworthy. Foreman and Money (1995) identify rewards as a crucial dimension influencing organizational commitment, and Asiamah et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of financial rewards in this process. Consequently, the reward system fosters employees' intentions to remain loyal to the organization. As noted by Narteh (2012), rewards should encompass not just financial compensation but also fairness and the overall benefits package offered to employees. Regarding employee development and training, investing in human capital is viewed as a long-term investment that encourages employees' commitment to the organization. Human capital represents a unique set of knowledge possessed solely by employees within the organization, enabling them to apply it freely and contribute to their organizational commitment (Mar-

tensen & Grønholdt, 2006). However, the lack of impact from vision on organizational commitment can be explained by several factors. For employees to embrace the vision, alignment between the organizational culture and value system and their values is often necessary (Luthans et al., 1987). A misalignment in person-organization fit may account for the absence of a measurable influence from this dimension of internal marketing on commitment. Additionally, the potential lack of a clearly defined and communicated vision may leave employees uncertain about future expectations. Conversely, a well-articulated vision may fail if management lacks the communication skills or motivation to effectively convey it, rendering the vision merely a formal document rather than a guiding principle for the organization. Job nature may also lead to a lack of clarity, further exacerbated by insufficient resources or professional support. Furthermore, employees may only demonstrate short-term commitment to the organization, suggesting that long-term vision may not significantly influence commitment in such contexts. This opens avenues for further research.

The research findings offer both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, the results enhance scientific understanding in the areas of internal marketing, organizational commitment, and their interrelationship. While numerous studies examine specific dimensions of internal marketing and organizational commitment, there are relatively few that explore the specific relationships between these dimensions, creating a unique foundation for further research. This type of research is particularly scarce in the Republic of Serbia, contributing new scientific insights to the field. Additionally, the study addresses a gap by examining internal marketing from a multi-dimensional viewpoint, enriching theoretical frameworks related to employee commitment and internal communication strategies.

From a practical perspective, the findings are valuable for managers and business owners. By implementing specific dimensions of internal marketing, managers can identify the factors that significantly influence employees and their organizational commitment. Tailoring managerial approaches and working conditions based on the research findings can enhance organizational commitment, which in turn positively impacts overall organizational performance. This study provides actionable insights for organizations regarding which internal marketing dimensions are most effective in promoting employee commitment. By pinpointing key drivers and their effects, managers

can refine internal marketing strategies to boost employee loyalty and engagement. Moreover, the results assist HR and marketing professionals in prioritizing resources and strategies that align with organizational objectives, ultimately fostering improved performance and retention.

The research has certain limitations that serve as guidelines for future studies. The first concern is the sample size and structure. Future research should aim to expand the sample structure by utilizing appropriate representative sampling methods. This will ensure an adequate model structure concerning the socio-demographic characteristics of employees and organizational attributes, which is essential for achieving more objective scientific results. Although the study employed a commonly used scale in internal marketing research, future studies should consider

combining multiple research approaches and utilizing scales with high reliability to identify a broader range of internal marketing dimensions. Furthermore, the impact of these dimensions should also be examined concerning other aspects of organizational behavior, such as motivation, job satisfaction, engagement, and retention. It is beneficial to explore how internal marketing dimensions influence specific types of organizational commitment, including affective, continuance, and normative commitment. Relevant statistical techniques, such as confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM), should be employed to achieve more comprehensive results. Moreover, conducting research over successive intervals will help assess any changes in the internal marketing structure and the effects of its dimensions on organizational commitment.

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## Apstrakt

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### Uticaj dimenzija internog marketinga na organizacionu posvećenost

Goran Pavlović, Nevena Bevanda, Vuk Bevanda

Interni marketing predstavlja set pažljivo definisanih aktivnosti i strategija koje imaju za zadatak da privuku, motivišu i stvore lojalnost kod zaposlenih. Tretirajući zaposlene kao prve kupce, menadžment nastoji da stvori pozitivne stavove kod zaposlenih, koji pored svega ostalog podrazumevaju i organizacionu posvećenost. U pitanju su namere zaposlenih da ostanu lojalni i privrženi organizaciji, zadacima, njenim ciljevima, svojim kolegama itd. U tom pogledu, korisno je sagledati kako specifične dimenzije internog marketinga deluju na organizacionu posvećenost zaposlenih, što je ujedno i cilj ovog rada. Kako bi se ispitao cilj, istraživanje je sprovedeno na uzorku od 306 ispitanika u Republi-

ci Srbiji. Primenom faktorske i regresione analize utvrđeno je da dimenzije internog marketinga ostvaruju delimično statistički značajan i pozitivan uticaj na organizacionu posvećenost. Značaj ovog rada ogleda se u eliminaciji istraživačkog gepa koji se odnosi na ispitivanje uticaja specifičnih dimenzija internog marketinga na organizacionu posvećenost, čime je formirano znanje kao osnova za sprovođenje daljih istraživanja u navedenom problemskom području.

**Ključne reči:** *interni marketing, organizaciona posvećenost, lojalnost zaposlenih*

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## The role of agricultural cooperatives in the development and promotion of rural tourism: A case study of Azanja, Serbia

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**Abstract:** The aim of this paper is to examine and analyze the role of agricultural cooperatives in the development and promotion of rural tourism. The research was conducted in Azanja, Serbia, utilizing a mixed-method research with a questionnaire technique and a case study method during March and April 2024. The key findings indicate that improving conditions for rural tourism development requires effective networking among all stakeholders and coordinated promotional activities. Establishing partnerships based on shared interests is essential for rural tourism development. In this context, the agricultural cooperative Azanja should assume several important roles: initiator, educator, coordinator, logistics organizer, tourism animator, promoter, consultant, and supervisor. By taking on these responsibilities, Azanja can effectively support and stimulate rural tourism development. Furthermore, the agricultural cooperative Azanja has the ability to develop effective promotional strategies to increase the area's visibility on the tourist map.

**Keywords:** *promotion, tourism, rural tourism development, agriculture cooperatives*

**JEL classification:** Z32, M31

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the collection of relationships and phenomena that arise from foreign visitors' travels and stays in a location, provided that these visits do not signify permanent residency or a situation for generating income (Hunziker & Krapf, 1942). Understanding the notion of rural tourism requires an awareness of how tourism is classified according to the features of the geographical region, or the qualities of the tourist destination. Rural tourism refers to all types of tourism that take place in rural areas. Rural areas are defined by: low population density and structures that integrate in with the surroundings; the productive use of land for purposes other than agriculture, forestry, and livestock farming; the inhabitants' unique way of life, which is defined by their affiliation with small social groups and their relationship to the land; and their identity, which is strongly associated with the customs and culture that have been developed there (Čikić & Jovanović, 2015, p. 14). To stop the detrimental trends of rural depopulation, tourism in rural regions can be a major component in the development and regeneration of villages (Pivac, Dragin, Dragićević & Vasiljević, 2016). First and foremost, from an economic standpoint, rural tourism supports the revitalization and growth of the rural economy by generating new jobs, encouraging entrepreneurship with highly beneficial social effects, and keeping a sizeable amount of revenue within the local community. Second, from a demographic standpoint, rural tourism (particularly among the younger, working-age, and reproductively capable population) can slow down or even reverse the process of rural migration (Dejanović, 2024). This lessens the severity of depopulation in rural areas while also relieving the burden of an overwhelming influx of people into cities. Thirdly, from a social standpoint, by fortifying relationships, rural tourism encourages networking within the rural community. Fourthly, from a cultural perspective, rural tourism helps to maintain rural development, culture, and way of life. Even though rural tourism has the potential to bring these communities excit-

ing new opportunities, there is still a crucial research void. According to Liu, Chiang and Ko (2023), policy-makers presently lack the thorough data required to create and promote tourism programs in rural areas. Moreover, cooperative networks are essential to the development of integrated rural tourism and its promotion. The involvement of both external and local stakeholders in these networks is necessary to enable a cooperative mobilization of resources. Finally, this cooperative strategy improves rural communities' resources and capacities (Susila, Dean, Harismah, Priyono, Setyawan & Maulana, 2024).

This research aims to investigate how agricultural cooperatives, using Azanja (Serbia) as an example, may take an important role in significantly contributing to the growth and promotion of rural tourism. Azanja is a village in the Podunavlje District of the municipality of Smederevska Palanka, covering an area of 47.72 km<sup>2</sup>. 3256 people are living there as of the 2022 census. Azanja's population is primarily involved in agriculture. This region has extremely fertile, nearly fully arable terrain.

The significance of this paper lies in the fact that the development and promotion of rural tourism has become a major strategy for fostering economic growth which requires an all-encompassing strategy (Aref & Gill, 2009; Wei & Hu, 2022). In general, significant potential for the development of rural tourism has been revealed by an analysis of Serbia's natural and anthropogenic resources (Ćurčić, Mirković Svitlica, Brankov, Bjeljac, Pavlović & Jandžiković 2021). Moreover, Laban, Janković and Stojanović (2021) assert that the growth of rural tourism in Serbia presents a viable opportunity for promoting constructive economic and social progress in rural regions. Azanja should try to take advantage of the trend of accelerated development of rural tourism in Serbia and thus strengthen its economic base, slow down and stop demographic degradation. This implies that this local community should shift its focus from agriculture to rural tourism. In this transformation, marketing and promotional strategy play a key role. Such a strategy should highlight the area's cultural heritage, natural beauty, and agricultural practices, appealing to both domestic and international tourists (Aktürk & Şen Demir, 2021). By positioning itself as an attractive destination for rural tourism, Azanja can not only improve its economic prospects but also foster community pride and sustainability. In essence, this approach not only addresses immediate economic challenges but also contributes to the long-term vitality of the lo-

cal community, ensuring that Azanja thrives amid the evolving landscape of tourism in Serbia.

The paper is structured as follows. The first part of the paper is devoted to definitions and key types of rural tourism. The second part of the paper is focused on research methodology - research questions, research methods and techniques, as well as research procedure. After that, the results of the research were presented - first of all, the results of the field research were presented, followed with a case study and proposed business model of the agricultural cooperative Azanja. At the end of the paper, the key conclusions, as well as implications, certain limitations, and suggestions for future research on this topic are pointed out.

## 2. DEFINITIONS AND KEY TYPES OF RURAL TOURISM

Rural tourism has become a crucial element in maintaining and improving the standard of living in rural areas (Utami, Dhewanto & Lestari, 2023). Combining agricultural goods, eco-products, cultural assets, and other spatial components, rural tourism serves a range of purposes, including social, cultural, educational, environmental protection, recreational, and therapeutic endeavors (Lee & Kim, 2010). All tourism-related activities that are centered on the unique characteristics of nearby rural communities and their way of life are collectively referred to as rural tourism. Rural tourism is a unique type of tourism that depends on both human and natural resources in the area (Čikić & Jovanović, 2015). This type of tourism is characterized by the pursuit of attractions related to relaxation, the countryside, traditional culture, and escape from the urban way of life (Ivona, 2021). According to Bartoluci, Hendija and Petračić (2016), four main components make up rural tourism: (1) natural resources found in rural areas (such as rivers, lakes, mountains, forests, etc.); (2) the rural way of life, which includes events, customs, gastronomy, music, and dance; (3) the rural heritage, which includes buildings, history, stories, myths, legends, and memories; and (4) the rural activities, which include horseback riding, hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, boating, and so on. Rural tourism has the following characteristics (Roberts & Hall, 2001):

- It takes place in rural areas, in smaller settlements;
- Functional connection to the rural area, characterized by open space, direct contact with nature, heritage, traditional society, and production;

- Opportunity for tourists to participate in traditional activities and the lifestyle of the local population;
- Direct interaction between host and guest;
- Development of rural tourism is, as a rule, slow;
- Rural tourism requires long-term planning;
- Responsibility towards nature and the social community in the rural area;
- Emphasis on quality, not quantity, of tourist services;
- Adaptation of content to individual preferences of tourists;
- Sustainability - falls under the so-called sustainable tourism, which takes into account natural and social balance (harmony).

There are numerous types of rural tourism. The most popular type of rural tourism is known as agritourism, in which visitors come primarily to live and work on agricultural farms. On the other hand, wine and gastronomy tourism, ecotourism, and ethnotourism are growing in popularity within rural tourism. Table 1 presents the fundamental types of rural tourism.

The above-mentioned types of rural tourism are not all-inclusive because many different combinations of rural tourism may be found (such as wine and food tourism, religious and cultural tourism, health and spa tourism in rural areas, etc.). New types of rural tourism are also developing at a quick pace (Dejanović, 2024). Creative tourism is a different type of rural tourism. To meet their needs for expanding their creative potential and learning new information and skills

relevant to the rural tourist destination, this type of tourism involves traveling to rural areas to learn traditional crafts or handicraft-making techniques (Rudan, 2012).

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper includes mixed-method research, a combination of field research using a specially designed questionnaire and case study method. Two sections of the questionnaire were used to perform the field research. Three questions about the respondent's age, gender, and educational level were included in the first section of the questionnaire. There were three questions in the second section of the questionnaire about Azanja's potential for developing rural tourism. Adult Azanja residents (those with a government-issued document proving they are residents of Azanja) were included in the research during March and April 2024. Of the 234 surveys that were delivered, 209 surveys were fully completed properly. The research findings reflect the thoughts and ideas of the residents of Azanja regarding the potential for the development of rural tourism. They are based on a statistical analysis of the collected data by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), primarily in the area of descriptive statistics. The second research method, a case study of the agricultural cooperative Azanja through desk research and analysis of existing documents and data was performed to gather comprehensive information

**Table 1:** Types of Rural Tourism

Type of rural tourism	Key characteristics
Agritourism	Tourism activities taking place on a working farm.
Ecotourism	Tourism near protected natural rural areas.
Ethnotourism	The primary motive for tourists is to experience local customs and traditions.
Farmstead tourism	Tourism on traditional farmsteads.
Wine tourism	Touring wine routes, consuming wine, and attending wine-related events.
Gastronomic tourism	Consuming traditional local specialties.
Art tourism	Experiencing naive art, art colonies, and art schools in nature.
Religious tourism	Visiting and exploring religious sites in rural areas.
Cultural tourism	Visiting cultural landmarks in rural areas.
Nostalgia tourism	Tourism motivated by nostalgia and memories of one's birthplace and childhood.
Adventure tourism	Enjoying extreme sports in nature (rafting, paragliding, etc.).
Botanical tourism	The motive for tourists is to explore the plant life in rural areas.
Birdwatching tourism	The primary motive is to observe birds specific to a particular rural environment.
Hunting tourism	Hunting in a chosen rural tourist destination.
Fishing tourism	Fishing in rural areas.
Heritage tourism	Visiting historical monuments in rural areas.
Camping tourism	Camping in rural areas.

**Source:** adapted from Sasu & Epuran, 2016

regarding particular opportunities for development and promotion of rural tourism in this place.

The key research questions (RQ) are:

**RQ 1:** Do residents perceive Azanja as a place where rural tourism can be developed?

**RQ 2:** What roles can the agricultural cooperative Azanja undertake to develop and promote rural tourism?

**RQ 3:** How can agricultural cooperative Azanja organize its business model to develop and promote rural tourism?

#### 4. RESULTS FROM FIELD RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research included a total of 209 residents of Azanja, with a gender distribution of 65.1% male and 34.9% female. The largest age group represented was 41-50 years old, comprising 29.2% of the sample. Residents aged 31-40 years accounted for approximately 21%, while those aged 51-60 years constituted around 20%. The youngest age category (up to 30 years old) had the lowest participation rate at approximately 12%. Notably, this sample structure reflects the age distribution of the entire population in Azanja, where the average resident age according to the 2022 census was 46.14

years. Regarding educational level, the majority of residents (62.2%) completed secondary school. Primary school is followed by 21.1% of residents, while higher and university education together represented 16.7% of residents.

The following set of questions aimed to analyze the perceptions and attitudes of residents regarding the future of Azanja. The responses to these questions were intended to show how optimistic the residents of Azanja are about the future of the place where they live. The research results are presented in Table 2.

As presented in Table 2, 21.53% of residents completely agree that they believe in Azanja's future success as a rural tourism destination, with 33.97% selecting the option "to a large extent". Therefore, 55.5% of the residents can be categorized as having positive expectations for Azanja's future as a rural tourism destination. However, the other residents covered by the research are more cautious. A considerable proportion of residents (23.92%) indicated that they mostly believe in the future of Azanja as a rural tourism destination, while 18.18% expressed that they believe to a lesser extent. These residents are not sure that Azanja will become a popular tourist destination. Lastly, 2.39% of residents expressed their lack of belief in Azanja's potential as a rural tourism destination. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the residents of Azanja do not have a unified develop-

**Table 2:** The responses of residents about the future of Azanja

Responses	Number	Percentage
<b>Do you believe Azanja has a future as a rural tourism destination?</b>		
Completely	45	21.53
To a large extent	71	33.97
Mostly	50	23.92
To a lesser extent	38	18.18
I do not believe	5	2.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>What do you want Azanja to become in the future?</b>		
To remain a village	39	18.66
To become a small town	165	78.94
To become a city	5	2.39
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>What are your plans for the upcoming period?</b>		
I am staying to live and work in Azanja because I feel a strong attachment to this place and believe in its future.	175	83.73
I sometimes think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad.	28	13.39
I cannot decide whether to stay or go.	5	2.39
I often think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad.	1	0.48
I have decided - I am moving out of Azanja.	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Authors

ment vision. In such cases, it is very difficult to steer development in a particular direction. The vision of a place must be widely accepted, i.e., the majority of residents must perceive it as their commitment. It should be inspiring and drive activities towards fulfilling development goals. In Azanja, there is a significant number of residents who are hesitant and even openly express doubts about this vision. This practically means that on the path of transforming Azanja into a rural tourism destination, one can expect delays, passivity, lack of enthusiasm, and even open resistance to change. Therefore, it is necessary to communicate more with the residents of Azanja and explain to them all the benefits that rural tourism brings. Likewise, it is necessary to take the first steps that will, through concrete examples, realistically demonstrate that the development of rural tourism in Azanja is possible, i.e., that this vision is realistic.

The next important question also pertained to the vision for Azanja's future. The question "What do you want Azanja to become in the future?" offered three possible responses: (1) To remain a village; (2) To become a town; (3) To become a city. The majority of residents (78.94%) want Azanja to become a town. On the other hand, 18.66% of residents do not want Azanja to change much - they believe it should remain a village. Only 2.39% of residents wish for Azanja to become a city in the future. These research results are not surprising, considering that Azanja was a small town in the past. Many older residents of Azanja still remember those times, so the narrative about that period in the history of this place has been preserved. In that sense, given the age structure of Azanja's population, there is nostalgia for the "good old days" when Azanja was a town, i.e., when it had the status of a municipality. On the other hand, almost a fifth of the surveyed residents expressed a desire for Azanja to remain a village. Such a stance is largely based on resistance to change, i.e., on the desire to preserve the existing state.

The third question "What are your plans for the upcoming period?" had five possible responses: (1) I am staying to live and work in Azanja because I feel a strong attachment to this place and believe in its future; (2) I sometimes think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad; (3) I cannot decide whether to stay or go; (4) I often think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad; (5) I have decided - I am moving out of Azanja. The majority of residents (83.73%) answered that they are staying to live and work in Azanja because they feel a strong attachment to this place and believe in its future. Significantly fewer res-

idents (13.39%) sometimes think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad. A small number of residents (2.39%) cannot decide whether to stay or move out of Azanja, and only one resident chose the answer "I often think about moving to a bigger city or going abroad". None of the residents opted for the answer "I have decided - I am moving out of Azanja". These results are encouraging, as they show that over 80% of residents want to stay in Azanja, but caution should be expressed when interpreting the research results. Most of the residents who answered that they are staying to live and work in Azanja are older residents who practically have no alternative (their chances of finding a job in larger cities are small, they do not have enough resources to start a new life in a bigger city or abroad, they are tied to the rural household, i.e., agriculture as their sole source of income, and they have a strong sense of belonging to the local community). However, the residents who are considering leaving Azanja are mostly young people who do not see their future in the village, and who are ready to embrace new challenges.

## **5. RESULTS FROM CASE STUDY: AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE AZANJA AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM**

An agricultural cooperative is a type of organization that is voluntarily formed by a group of agricultural producers or consumers with the main aim of enhancing the working conditions and overall well-being of its members (Đoković, Pejanović, Mojsilović, Đorđević Boljanović & Plečić, 2017). The agricultural cooperative Azanja was established on March 23, 1894. Around 70 prominent farmers from Azanja participated in its founding, but the cooperative's membership quickly grew. Within the cooperative, specialized cooperatives were established (dairy, livestock, agricultural credit, etc.). In the period between 1920 and 1927, the administrative building of the cooperative was built, which still adorns the center of Azanja today. The development of the cooperative was interrupted due to the Balkan wars and the outbreak of the First World War. However, the cooperative was recovered after rehabilitation and consolidation. At that time, the cooperative had about 800 members. Within these cooperatives, special cooperatives (dairy, livestock, cooperative for agricultural loans, etc.) were established. The period of intensive development of

the cooperative in Azanja slowed down during the 1930s and later stopped due to the Second World War. The activities of the cooperative were renewed at the end of the 1940s in a completely new socio-political and economic environment. During the 1950s, the Vlaškodolska and Dobrodolska cooperatives were joined to the agricultural cooperative Azanja. In the following period, the agricultural cooperative Azanja achieved its best results. However, the deep economic crisis that occurred in the 1990s almost completely paralyzed the cooperative and resulted in a significant decrease in agricultural production, i.e. income (Dejanović, 2024). The cooperative, with great efforts, managed to survive in the local market and to carry out its activity, but on a scale that was not sufficient to achieve positive financial results. Regular business became almost impossible, so a reorganization plan was defined in 2015, the main goal of which was to allow the agricultural cooperative Azanja to rehabilitate and consolidate to continue its work. By observing the last few years, this cooperative has had only a few employees and has reduced its activities to a minimum. Improving the conditions for the development of rural tourism requires networking among all interested parties and coordination of their activities. Azanja agricultural cooperative is facing a business crisis that is not able to financially support the development of rural tourism, but it can create new ideas and business proposals. These new ideas could attract the attention of development agencies, governmental funds, and other potential investors. It is necessary to create partnerships based on common interests and initiate the process of rural tourism development (Ljubojević & Maksimović Sekulić, 2021). In this regard, the agricultural cooperative Azanja can assume several important roles, which are: initiator, educator, coordinator, logistics organizer, tourism animator, promoter, consultant, and supervisor (Dejanović, 2024).

**Initiator.** This role of agricultural cooperative Azanja represents the first step in stimulating the development of rural tourism in this area. The agricultural cooperative Azanja cannot decide on its own to transform the Azanja area into a rural tourism destination. Nor can it finance the activities necessary to steer Azanja's development in this direction. However, it can initiate ideas and propose changes. In this sense, the agricultural cooperative Azanja could assume the role of an initiator that would create the initial impetus for the development of rural tourism in this area. This implies first forming a „core“ composed of several rural households interested in engaging in rural tourism and that (wholly or partially) possess the

conditions for this activity (having accommodation capacities and the ability to serve tourists with food and drinks produced within their households). The role of the initiator involves not only making a list of households showing interest in rural tourism but also their initial engagement in creating the first proposals and plans for rural tourism development in this area.

**Educator.** In the initial stages of rural tourism development, it is necessary to raise the level of knowledge and skills of the local population (Apostolopoulos, Liargovas, Stavroyiannis, Makris, Apostolopoulos, Petropoulos & Anastasopoulou, 2020). The main obstacle to promoting rural tourism is the lack of skilled staff within the cooperatives. This highlights the need for training and education programs to equip employees with the necessary competencies (Đoković et al., 2017). Agricultural cooperative Azanja can play a significant role in organizing education: (1) developing training plans, i.e., selecting topics and dates; (2) contacting and engaging proven experts in this field who would participate in the implementation of this training; (3) forming a group of participants; (4) providing adequate space and equipment for training and workshops; (5) performing technical tasks such as photocopying services, distribution of printed materials, serving participants during breaks, etc.; (6) performing administrative tasks, i.e., keeping various records (on participant attendance, their impressions of the training, recording suggestions for improving the quality of training, as well as sending various notifications and information to training participants). The role of the educator is very important because raising the level of knowledge and skills creates the conditions for the development of rural tourism in this area.

**Coordinator.** This role pertains to the next phase of rural tourism development. Agricultural cooperative Azanja should assume the role of coordinator in a network that would bring together rural tourist households in this area. This role entails the following activities: (1) providing assistance and support in introducing interested rural households into the central information system for hospitality and tourism (e-turista); (2) performing joint tasks for rural tourist households, such as sales and promotion; (3) coordinating joint appearances at tourism fairs and events; (4) representing the interests of rural tourist households from this area before local self-government bodies and at the national level; (5) coordinating promotional and marketing activities, such as organizing press conferences for special events, attracting media attention, and maintaining relationships with the media, etc. Rural tourist households would have

main autonomy in most matters related to rural tourism but with the possibility to contractually transfer some tasks to the agricultural cooperative Azanja and pay a corresponding fee for these services.

**Logistics organizer.** Modern tourism activity requires a developed logistical system that involves optimizing all flows of materials, energy, and information necessary for shaping the supply chains of tourist locations and creating tourist products (Tadić, Zečević & Krstić, 2012). In this context, the agricultural cooperative Azanja could assume the role of supplying rural tourist households with various materials necessary for carrying out this activity, as well as providing accompanying services. For example, the agricultural cooperative Azanja could supply rural tourist households with various items such as bed linen, towels, napkins, spices, hygiene products, cosmetics, printed materials, and everything else that would make the guests' stay more pleasant and fulfilling. A special service of the agricultural cooperative Azanja could offer tourists transportation to rural tourist households and attractive locations in the surrounding area.

**Tourism animator.** In the initial stages of rural tourism development in a particular area, the role of the animator is typically assumed by the host, offering guests activities that are more or less common in the countryside (e.g., animation and guiding guests on short and interesting excursions, spending time in nature, sports, recreational, cultural, and entertainment activities). All these activities should be initiated by the host, through spontaneous communication between the host and tourists. In this way, the host appears not only as someone offering hospitality but also as an animator aiming to ensure tourists are satisfied and leave with positive impressions and memories of the destination (Đorđević, 2016). However, with the development of rural tourism, tourism animation has become increasingly important, and other service providers must participate in these activities alongside the host. This opens the possibility for agricultural cooperative Azanja to be engaged in these tasks. This implies that the agricultural cooperative Azanja gains a clearer picture of the guests, their mentality, habits, specific requirements, desires, and interests to create a tourism animation program as a unique quality in the tourism offer of the rural environment. In this regard, tourism-cultural animation, which contributes to the affirmation of rural values, is particularly important. This form of animation acts as a mediator between the guest's culture and the cultural-historical heritage of the Azanja area (helping the guest better understand the culture of the local population and the

host to better understand the culture of their guest). With this in mind, within tourism animation, socializing with guests, recreation in ecologically preserved areas, and involvement in agricultural activities on the farm (e.g., agricultural work, preparation of local specialties, fruit picking, collecting aromatic herbs, traditional crafts), as well as familiarization with folklore, folk customs, and beliefs should be organized (Selaković, 2014).

**Promoter.** Agricultural cooperatives can use marketing initiatives to effectively promote rural tourism, attract visitors, and improve their overall attractiveness (Kalogiannidis, Karafolas & Chatzitheodoridis, 2024). The objective is to develop a compelling story around the cooperative's unique offerings, use both digital and conventional marketing channels, and form strong ties with the tourism industry. Cooperatives can successfully raise awareness of their rural tourism experiences while also contributing to the region's economic and cultural life (Apostolopoulos et al., 2020). Furthermore, agricultural cooperatives should collaborate with travel bloggers, influencers, and social media celebrities who specialize in rural tourism. Their support can help the cooperative reach new audiences and provide legitimacy to its services. A destination's image can be defined as the subjective perception that people have of a place that is shaped by their own or other people's experiences and information about the location. As a result, how visitors view the quality of the tourism offering is directly influenced by the destination's image, and this is further reflected in how they rate their whole experience. How visitors assess their travel experience will affect their propensity to return and their readiness to suggest the location to other travelers (Marković, Borisavljević & Rabasović, 2024). Utilizing social media platforms and travel blogs can help reach a broader audience and attract potential visitors. Additionally, hosting events or festivals that celebrate local culture and agriculture could draw attention and encourage tourists to visit. By implementing these strategies, the agricultural cooperative can position Azanja as an appealing rural tourism destination and attract more visitors to the area.

**Consultant.** Agricultural cooperative Azanja can assume the consulting role indirectly (by hiring a consultant for the needs of rural tourist households) or directly (by providing consulting services itself). These services will be necessary for rural tourist households at every stage of development, especially at the beginning. In this domain, there may be a need for a wide range of consulting services (legal consult-

ing, financial consulting, tax advisory services, marketing consulting, etc.) (Feisali & Niknami, 2021). In any case, the agricultural cooperative Azanja could act as an intermediary between rural tourist households facing challenges and consultants offering appropriate solutions. This role would enable a crucial channel for transferring necessary knowledge and skills to the local community.

**Supervisor.** Agricultural cooperative Azanja should essentially closely supervise developments in rural tourism in this area and, in good faith, point out errors and omissions, „little things“, or „details“ that shape tourists' impressions of the destination to rural households. For example, agricultural cooperative should signal what needs improvement to enhance tourist satisfaction (Gava, Ardakani, Delalić, Azzi & Bartolini, 2021). Likewise, it should identify shortcomings that could lead to disrupting the natural balance and way of life in Azanja. Additionally, it is important to visit rural tourist households and point out deficiencies with the desire to help them rectify these observed shortcomings (constructive criticism). Furthermore, agricultural cooperative Azanja should monitor the extent to which defined plans are being fulfilled, i.e., whether the set goals have been achieved, and determine the reasons for any deviations.

The list of mentioned roles is not exhaustive. Agricultural cooperative Azanja can assume other roles depending on the needs that arise during the development of rural tourism in this area. It is important to emphasize that initially, it cannot be expected spectacular results and high profits. However, as the number of arrivals, overnight stays, and spending increases, the positive effects will become more apparent. When the first benefits are demonstrated, development will accelerate, and the demand for new products and services will increase.

## 6. PROPOSED BUSINESS MODEL FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE AZANJA ORIENTED TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM

A business model rationally describes how an organization creates and delivers value. In other words, a business model is a set of assumptions about how an organization will operate, i.e., how and to whom it will sell its products and services. Various methodologies and tools are used in theory and practice to create business models. Consequently, there is a va-

riety of business models depending on their orientation, such as business models oriented to technology, organization or strategy, and components (such as finances, procurement, service provision, revenues, value proposition, customers, network, resources, and strategy) (Wirtz, Pistoia, Ullrich & Göttel, 2016). One of the most commonly used templates is the „Business Model Canvas“ which consists of nine segments: (1) Customer segment; (2) Value proposition; (3) Channels; (4) Customer relationships; (5) Revenue streams; (6) Key resources; (7) Key activities; (8) Key partners; and (9) Cost structure (Pigneur & Osterwalder, 2010). In the following text are described the key segments of the business model of the agricultural cooperative Azanja which will benefit rural tourism development and promotion.

**Customer segment** is the part of the business model where the target audience for value creation is defined, i.e., who the most important customers are. When considering this question in the specific case of the agricultural cooperative Azanja and its potential role in rural tourism development, it can be stated that the customers, or service users, are primarily rural tourism households in the Azanja area and its surroundings.

**Value proposition** is part of the business model where it is necessary to define the core value that the organization delivers to the customer. In other words, it is necessary to answer the question, „What problem does the organization solve for its customers?“. For example, rural tourism households first need to register, i.e., fulfill the legally prescribed conditions for engaging in rural tourism. Agricultural cooperative Azanja can facilitate this process by offering them appropriate assistance and support (familiarization with regulations, document collection, filling out applications). After this first step, the next challenge follows - attracting tourists, as registration alone is not enough to achieve business success. Agricultural cooperative Azanja can offer rural tourism households a service of mediation in the sale of tourist services and thus enable them to fill their capacities and increase income, and profit. Likewise, it can supply them with appropriate products (materials), services, and information necessary to maintain their business and increase tourist satisfaction. Additionally, the agricultural cooperative Azanja can offer its clients support in promotion to make them more visible in the market.

**Channels** are the part of the business model that explains where, how, and when the product or service is delivered to customers. When choosing distribution channels, specific requirements and needs

of customers should be considered. Specifically, in the case of the agricultural cooperative Azanja, there are two answers to the question of how to deliver the service: (1) Directly - when representatives of the agricultural cooperative Azanja communicate directly with the client and deliver the service; (2) Indirectly - when agricultural cooperative Azanja engages intermediaries (partners) to deliver the service. The first method has its advantages, as it allows for direct control over the entire service process and enhances communication and relationships with the client. In the second case, the service process is more complex, as it involves multiple parties. An important question that requires an answer is also „Where to deliver the service?“. In essence, location refers to the place where people and service capacities are allocated. In that sense, the agricultural cooperative Azanja can deliver most of its services at the location of the user (in the rural tourism household). However, in some cases (e.g., educational services), it will be necessary for the client to come to the service organization, i.e., to the agricultural cooperative Azanja premises intended for training and workshops. Finally, it is also necessary to answer the question „When to deliver the service?“. In fact, it is a question of the time availability of the service. In modern conditions, service users are very sensitive to the working hours of the service organization. They demand that working hours be aligned with their business and life activities, and an increasing number of users expect the service to be available 24/7. Meeting such expectations requires significant investments and increased costs (engagement of more people, work in multiple shifts, increased overhead costs). In this sense, the service organization needs to find a compromise between increasing costs and increasing customer satisfaction. Modern technology offers some solutions that can make sales channels efficient and economical for the organization while being convenient for the client (e.g., online communication and sales). In line with these trends, the agricultural cooperative Azanja should also utilize these opportunities and make some of its services available to clients through electronic distribution channels. Likewise, new technological solutions can significantly aid in communication, i.e., establishing interaction between the service provider and the user.

**Customer relationships** are an essential segment of the business model, explaining how the organization will establish, maintain, and enhance relationships with its clients. The agricultural cooperative Azanja already has established relationships with many agricultural households that have expressed

a willingness to engage in rural tourism. These relationships are based on personal familiarity and the experience of living together in the local community. The built relationships should be harmonious, reciprocal, and supportive, allowing for easy formation of partnerships to address common challenges. This represents a solid foundation for developing valuable relationships in the field of rural tourism.

**Revenue streams**, as an element of the business model, show how the organization will generate income. Agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to clearly define which services it will sell, to whom, in what volume, and at what price. Revenue estimation can be calculated by multiplying each service by its price and presenting it dynamically over specific periods. The business model can include two different types of business revenues: (1) transactions based on one-time payments from users or (2) recurring revenues that involve delivering the proposed value over a defined period (e.g., monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, or annual subscriptions for services). Based on the previous remarks, it is entirely clear that the agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to define its service portfolio (service lines), and pricing policy, i.e., a price list that will include, in addition to base prices, discounts, and bonuses for specific categories of service users. Revenue projection also involves adopting a sales plan that must contain precisely expressed sales targets, defined by the principles and methodology of financial planning (forecasting).

**Key resources** are the part of the business model that describes the resources the organization has at its disposal, i.e., the resources necessary to create and deliver value to consumers (clients). Every business model requires the engagement of key resources to function. These resources can be human, financial, physical (material), and intellectual. The organization can wholly or partially own these resources, and certain resources can be leased or engaged from business partners on a commercial basis. In the specific case of the agricultural cooperative Azanja, a list of existing key resources may be identified: (1) Premises - e.g., offices and meeting rooms; (2) Equipment - e.g., computers, projector, projection screen, whiteboard, flipchart, etc.; (3) Personnel who would be engaged in providing services; (4) Financial resources - budget projection. After that, a list of missing key resources should be made, along with a plan for how they can be acquired. When compiling this list, one should not be excessive in demands but should ensure that only the necessary resources are secured, enabling the organization to create and deliver value to users (operate in

the rural tourism market, maintain relationships with service users, and generate revenue). As the business develops in this field, the list can be expanded to include resources that add value.

**Key activities** describe the activities that the organization needs to carry out to create and deliver value, i.e., for the business model to function. Therefore, this section should answer the question „What does the organization need to do to create and deliver value to users?“. It should be emphasized that the business model does not require every activity to be presented in detail, but it is important that it is concisely described or sketched in the form of a short algorithm or a map of the processes necessary to create and deliver the appropriate service. Thus, the agricultural cooperative Azanja should start thinking like a service organization. Following each of the proposed roles (initiator, educator, coordinator, logistics organizer, tourism animator, consultant, and supervisor), the agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to develop corresponding services that it would offer to rural tourism households, as well as other interested parties. Each of these services consists of certain interconnected activities, procedures (actions), and processes aimed at creating value for the client.

**Key partners** are extremely important for the functioning of the business model. Every organization should be capable of creating partnerships, with whose help and support it will create and deliver value to customers (users). In other words, companies form alliances to optimize their business models, reduce risk, or secure resources. Theory and practice distinguish four basic forms of partnerships: (1) Strategic alliances between non-competing organizations; (2) Strategic partnerships between competitors; (3) Joint investments for developing new businesses and conquering new markets; (4) Customer-supplier partnerships to ensure continuity in the supply chain. In this sense, agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to enrich its list of partnerships, i.e., include key partners who will enable it to establish itself in the rural tourism services market.

**Costs** - this part of the business model should describe the most important costs incurred in creating and delivering value to customers (clients). These costs cannot be avoided, as the functioning of any business model entails certain costs. The most important thing is to objectively estimate the scope and structure of costs for key activities, key resources, and key partnerships. One of the most common mistakes when defining business models is underestimating costs. Many attractive and innovative business models have failed

because they were not based on a realistic assessment of costs. Therefore, it is crucial to carefully and objectively assess costs by type, bearer, and time of occurrence. The agricultural cooperative Azanja has no experience in service activities, i.e., it has never been involved in rural tourism and cannot rely on extrapolating costs from the period when it was exclusively engaged in agricultural production. Services in the field of rural tourism require a completely new cost calculation and adaptation to current market conditions. In doing so, the agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to decide whether it will be an organization that will primarily rely on price competitiveness (meaning it will strive to suppress competition with low prices) or will use non-price factors of competitiveness to differentiate itself from other market participants. In the first case, the agricultural cooperative Azanja will be forced to minimize costs to gain price competitiveness. In the second case, the focus will shift from costs to creating additional value for the customer (user).

## 7. CONCLUSION

The agricultural cooperative Azanja has the potential to assume a strategic role in the development and promotion of rural tourism in this area. Improving the conditions for rural tourism development requires networking among all stakeholders and coordination of their activities. It is necessary to create partnerships based on common interests and initiate the process of rural tourism development. In this regard, the agricultural cooperative Azanja needs to take on the roles of initiator, educator, coordinator, logistics organizer, tourism animator, promoter, consultant, and supervisor. Among the mentioned roles, the role of rural tourism promoter is particularly important. This role implies establishing and developing adequate communication with target groups. Potential service users should first be presented with basic information about Azanja, and then the key features that differentiate Azanja from other rural tourism destinations should be presented.

The results of this research highlight how important agricultural cooperatives like Azanja are to the growth and promotion of rural tourism. The research emphasizes the necessity for additional research into how cooperative organizations might promote cooperation amongst various stakeholders, improving the implementation of rural tourist initiatives. From a practical standpoint, results outline several cooperative roles and provide a framework for others inter-

ested in increasing their influence in rural tourism. Cooperatives can better direct their operations and increase their influence on the growth of rural tourism by clearly defining their roles. The focus on building strong relationships with target audiences emphasizes how important it is for cooperatives to invest resources in tailored marketing plans that highlight their unique offerings. The results also emphasize the value of policymakers and practitioners supporting cooperative agricultures, showing how these organizations can promote sustainable tourism growth and support rural communities' long-term survival while protecting cultural heritage.

The conducted research has some limitations. The study was primarily conducted among 209 Azanja residents. Although the sample structure was generally fairly balanced in terms of gender, age, and education, future studies on this topic should involve a larger sample of residents. Furthermore, the study

used a questionnaire with close-ended questions, thus respondents were unable to give their comments and observations. It would be beneficial to conduct interviews with key leaders in the agricultural cooperative Azanja as an additional study technique to identify important constraints and challenges that they face when establishing and promoting rural tourism in Azanja. Furthermore, the proposal for future research is to undertake longitudinal studies to analyze the development stages of rural tourism in Azanja.

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## Apstrakt

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### Uloga zemljoradničkih zadruga u razvoju i promociji ruralnog turizma: studija slučaja Azanje, Srbija

Aleksandar Dejanović, Jelena Lukić Nikolić

Cilj ovog rada je da istraži i analizira ulogu zemljoradničkih zadruga u razvoju i promociji ruralnog turizma. Istraživanje je sprovedeno u Azanji, u Srbiji, primenom tehnike upitnika i studije slučaja tokom marta i aprila 2024. godine. Ključni zaključci ukazuju da poboljšanje uslova za razvoj ruralnog turizma zahteva umrežavanje svih zainteresovanih strana i koordinaciju promotivnih aktivnosti. Neophodno je da se kreiraju partnerstva zasnovana na zajedničkim interesima i da se inciraju aktivnosti ka razvoju ruralnog turizma. U tom kontekstu, posebno je važno da

zemljoradnička zadruga Azanja preuzme ulogu inicijatora, edukatora, koordinatora, organizatora logistike, turističkog animatora, promotera, konsultanta i supervizora kako bi podržala i stimulisala razvoj ruralnog turizma. Pored toga, zemljoradnička zadruga Azanja treba da primeni promotivne strategije pomoću kojih će Azanju učiniti vidljivijom destinacijom na turističkoj mapi.

**Ključne reči:** *promocija, turizam, razvoj ruralnog turizma, zemljoradničke zadruge*

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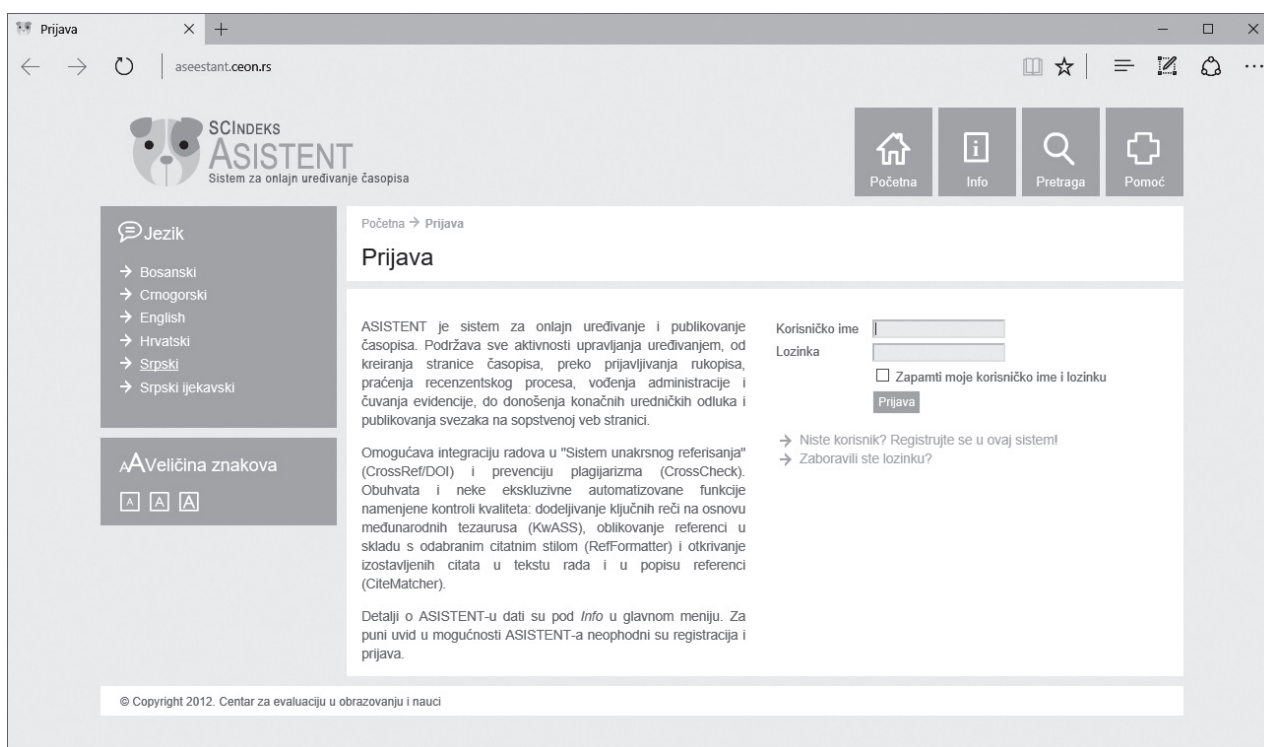
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## Tehničko uputstvo za korišćenje sistema e-Ur: Elektronsko uređivanje časopisa



Poštovani,

Časopis Marketing počinje sa elektronskim uređivanjem kroz sistem e-Ur kojim rukovodi Centar za evaluaciju u obrazovanju i nauci (CEON).

Usled toga, Marketing mora da ispuni niz zahteva koji su postavljeni kroz važeći Akt o uređivanju naučnih časopisa. Step en usaglašenosti sa uslovima koje postavlja Akt o uređivanju naučnih časopisa ubuduće će biti osnov za kategorizaciju naučnih časopisa. Niz uslova koji se postavljaju pred naš časopis automatski će biti ispunjeni pristupanjem sistemu elektronskog uređivanja e-Ur. Pomoću sistema elektronskog uređivanja celokupan uređivački postupak biće daleko jednostavniji, brži i transparentniji, a autor će moći u svakom trenutku da ima uvid u kojoj se fazi uređivačkog postupka nalazi njegov rad. Usaglašavanje sa novim pravilima teći će postepeno i zahteve ćemo postepeno usvajati do konačnog i potpunog usaglašavanja sa uslovima koji se nalaze pred svim naučnim časopisima.

Sa zahvalnošću za razumevanje i napore koje ćemo zajedno uložiti kako bismo naš časopis osavremenili i usaglasili sa važećim uslovima, na zajedničku korist svih, u nastavku Vam dostavljamo detaljno tehničko uputstvo za korišćenje sistema e-Ur. Redakcija će ubuduće ISKLJUČIVO na ovaj način primati radove.

Uredništvo

## 1. PRAVLJENJE KORISNIČKOG NALOGA – Registracija korisnika u sistem

- a) Kada se prvi put registrujete u sistem na web adresi <http://asestant.ceon.rs/index.php/mkng> izaberite opciju

- b) Na stranici za registraciju:

- Koristite **isključivo** LATINICU bilo da podatke unosite na srpskom ili engleskom jeziku
- **Obavezno** popunite sva polja koja su označena sa zvezdicom (\*), bez toga nećete moći da dovršite proces registracije.
- Poželjno je da popunite i ostala polja, ali to možete uraditi i naknadno preko opcije **Moj profil**, kada se prijavite na svoj nalog. Takođe sve podatke o sebi, kao o korisniku, moguće je kasnije izmeniti.
- Zapišite na sigurno mesto vaše korisničko ime i loziku, u slučaju da je zaboravite.
- Stranicu **OBAVEZNO POPUNITI DVA PUTA**, i na srpskom i na engleskom jeziku na sledeći način:

- Proveriti da li je u prvom polju **Jezik obrasca** podešena opcija **Srpski**

- Uneti sve podatke koji slede na srpskom jeziku **LATINICOM**
- U prvom polju **Jezik obrasca** podesiti opciju **English**
- Uneti sve podatke na engleskom jeziku
- Poslednje opcije se odnose na Vaš status u časopisu (Čitalac, Autor, Recenzent)
  - Profesori treba da obeleže sve tri opcije, autori se mogu istovremeno prijaviti i kao čitaoci.

- Na kraju kliknite na plavo dugme **Registracija**, u dnu stranice.
- Završili ste postupak registracije i automatski ste prijavljeni na svoj nalog.

## 2. PRIJAVA PRETHODNO REGISTROVANOG KORISNIKA – uređivanje profila; odjava

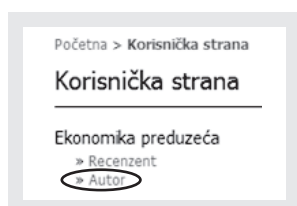
- a) Na web adresi <http://scindeks-eur.ceon.rs/index.php/mkng/> upisati korisničko ime i lozinku i kliknuti na plavo dugme **Prijava**

- b) Podake o Vama možete u svakom trenutku menjati u opciji **Moj profil**, u meniju sa leve strane. Ulaskom u ovu opciju naći ćete se na identičnoj stranici kao prilikom registracije Vašeg naloga.

- c) Nakon unetih izmena pritiskom na dugme **Sačuvaj** izvršićete izmene u Vašem profilu.
- d) Po završetku rada odjavite se pritiskom na opciju **Odjava**, u meniju sa leve strane.

### 3. PRIJAVA NOVOG PRILOGA – predavanje prve verzije rada Uredništva

- Po prijavi (*videti uputstvo 2.a*) odaberite opciju **Autor**.



- Za početak prijave priloga izaberite opciju **Kliknite ovde**

Započnite prijavu novog priloga  
Za početak prijave priloga **KLICKNITE OVDE.**

#### Nalazite se na 1. koraku prijave priloga – početak

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1.korak Započnite s prijavom priloga

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Bayton, J. (1958), „Motivation, Cognition, Learning – Basic Factors in Consumr str. 282-289.
- Radovi u zbornicima sa konferencija:  
Dianoux, C., Linhart, Z. and Kettnerova, J. (2007), Impact of Nudity in Adv Spain, France and the Czech Republic. *Proceedings of the 15th Annual Conference Central and Eastern Europe*, (ured. Reiner Singer and Petr Chadraba) Beč, Au:

1. Prijavljeni prilog ne sme biti prethodno objavljen
2. Naslovi, apstrakti (do 200 reči) i ključne reči dati su na dva jezika (a) srpskom i (b) engleskom, odnosno izuzetno na nekom drugom svetskom jeziku ako se taj rasprostranjeno koristi u određenoj oblasti nauke
3. Rad treba da bude pripremljen kao jedan dokument (koji sadrži tekstualni deo, fusnote, reference, grafike i tabele) u MS Word (doc) ili Rich Text Format (rtf) formatu
4. Osnovni naslov rada mora biti kratak i jasan, po mogućstvu sa više podnaslova, u zavisnosti od dužine i profila rada, odnosno problema koji se obrađuje. Forma naslova: centriran, boldiran; svi podnaslovi treba da budu standardno formatirani i pozicionirani uz levu marginu
5. Svaki prilog mora imati kratak uvod na početku rada u kome je objašnjena suština i orijentacija priloga
6. Koristiti pojedinačni prored i font Times New Roman, veličine karaktera 11 i sve marginae od 1 inča (2,54 cm).
7. Tabele i ilustracije treba da budu numerisane (1,2,3...) sa linijskim proredom i smeštene u sam tekst. Navedene margine (2,54 cm sa sve 4 strane) treba da ostanu prazne. Sve tabele i ilustracije moraju biti pregledne. Kada se pominju u tekstu, neophodno je da se navode po brojevima. Tabele i ilustracije mogu biti u eps, pdf, wmf formatu ili jednostavno nacrtani u Wordu ili Excelu
8. Fusnote i ostale napomene treba da budu prikazane na dnu svake strane, a ne na kraju rada. Potrebno je da fusnote budu numerisane.
9. Lista referenci treba da bude data po abecednom redu prezimena autora. Direktni citati treba da budu navedeni pod znacima navoda.
10. Pri navođenju referenci u tekstu i na kraju rada koristiti APA (American Psychological Association) stil. Primeri su navedeni u nastavku teksta. *Napomena:* U slučaju direktnih citata neophodno je navesti broj stranice sa koje je tekst preuzet.

**1. Knjiga/monografija:** Prezime, Inicijal imena. (godina). *Naslov*. Mesto:Izdavač.

### 1.1. Jedan autor knjige

**U tekstu:** (Maričić, 2008, p. 77)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Maričić, B. (2008). *Ponašanje potrošača*. Beograd: Centar za izdavačku delatnost Ekonomskog fakulteta.

### 1.2. Više autora knjige

#### 1.2.1. DVA autora

**1.2.1.1. rad *domaćih* autora/domaća publikacija:**

**U tekstu:** (Stanković i Đukić, 2014, p. 126)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Stanković, Lj. i Đukić S. (2013). *Marketing* (3. izdanje). Niš: Ekonomski fakultet.

**1.2.1.2. rad *inostranih* autora/inostrana publikacija:**

**U tekstu:** (Kotler & Keller, 2014, p. 126)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Kotler, P. T. and Keller K.L. (2016). *Marketing management* (15<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: Pearson.

#### 1.2.2. TRI DO PET autora

**1.2.2.1. rad *domaćih* autora/domaća publikacija:**

**U tekstu:**

- **prvo navođenje:** (Maričić, Gligorijević i Milisavljević, 2012, p. 250)

- **svako naredno navođenje:** (Maričić i sar., 2012, p.250)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Maričić, B., Gligorijević, M. i Milisavljević, M. (2012). *Osnovi Marketinga* (5. izdanje). Beograd: Centar za izdavačku delatnost Ekonomskog fakulteta.

**1.2.2.2. rad *inostranih* autora/inostrana publikacija:**

**U tekstu:**

- **prvo navođenje:** (Kotler, Armstrong, Harris & Piercy, 2011, p. 56)

- **svako naredno navođenje:** (Kotler *et al.*, 2011, p. 56)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Kotler, P., Armstrong, G., Harris, L. and Piercy, N. (2011). *Principles of Marketing European Edition* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). London: Pearson.

#### 1.2.3. ŠEST i više autora

**U tekstu- svako navođenje:** (Lovreta i sar., 2010, p. 117)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Lovreta, S., Brennan, B., Petković, G., Veljković, S., Crnković, J. i Bogetić, Z. (2010). *Menadžment odnosa sa kupcima*. Beograd: Data Status i Centar za izdavačku delatnost Ekonomskog fakulteta Beograd.

#### 1.3. BEZ autora:

**U tekstu:**

- **prvo navođenje:** (American Psychological Association [APA], 2009)

- **svako naredno navođenje:** (APA, 2009)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> Edition). (2009). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

**2. Članci u naučnim časopisima:** Prezime, Inicijal imena. (godina). Naslov. *Naziv časopisa, volumen (broj)*, prva strana – poslednja strana članka.

**2.1. Štampano izdanje naučnog časopisa:**

**U tekstu:** (Bayton, 1958, p. 285)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Bayton, J. (1958). Motivation, Cognition, Learning – Basic Factors in Consumer Behavior. *Journal of Marketing*, 22 (3), 282-289.

**2.2. Onlajn izdanje naučnog časopisa:**

**U tekstu:** (Ognjanov i Stojanović, 2012, p. 115)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Ognjanov, G. i Stojanović, Ž.. (2012). Stavovi potrošača na Zapadnom Balkanu prema oznakama na prehrambenim proizvodima. *Marketing*, 43 (2). Preuzeto sa: [http://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/0354-3471/2012/0354-347112021130.pdf#search=%](http://scindeks-clanci.ceon.rs/data/pdf/0354-3471/2012/0354-347112021130.pdf#search=%22ognjanov%22)

22ognjanov%22 (datum preuzimanja/pristupa, format: dd.mm.gggg. )

**NAPOMENA:** U slučaju da je naučni članak rezultat istraživanja više autora, pravila citiranja su ista kao i za knjige.

**3. Radovi u zbornicima sa konferencija (saopštenja štampana u celini):** Prezime, Inicijal imena. (godina). Naslov. U: Inicijal imena, Prezime urednika/redaktora (ur.), *Naziv zbornika* (prva strana – poslednja strana članka). Mesto: Izdavač.

**U tekstu:**

- **prvo navođenje** (Dianoux, Linhart & Kattnerova, 2007, p. 42)

- **svako naredno navođenje** (Dianoux et al., 2007, p. 42)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Dianoux, C., Linhart, Z. & Kettnerova, J. (2007). Impact of Nudity in Advertisements: Comparison of the First Results from Spain, France and the Czech Republic. In R. Springer & P. Chadraha (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Marketing and Business Strategies for Central and Eastern Europe* (pp. str. 41-49), Vienna: WU.

**NAPOMENA:** ostala pravila citiranja (broj autora, domaći/inostrani autori, onlajn izvori) su ista kao i za knjige i naučne članke.

**4. Diplomski, master, magistarski i doktorski radovi:** Prezime, Inicijal imena. (godina). *Naslov* (vrsta rada). Ustanova gde je objavljen rad. Mesto.

**U tekstu:** (Popović, 2015, p.49)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Popović, A. (2015). *Specifičnosti primene marketing koncepta u visokoškolskim ustanovama* (doktorska disertacija). Ekonomski fakultet. Niš.

**NAPOMENA:** ostala pravila citiranja (broj autora, domaći/inostrani autori, onlajn izvori) su ista kao i za knjige i naučne članke.

**5. Tekst preuzet sa Interneta :** Prezime, Inicijal imena. (godina). *Naslov*. Preuzeto ... (datum) sa ... (Internet adresa).

**U tekstu:** (Oliveira, 2009)

**U spisku referenci na kraju rada:** Oliveira, A. (2009). *The Motivation Process*. Preuzeto 02.04.2014. sa: [www.sam.sdu.dk/~amo/ppt/capit4.pdf](http://www.sam.sdu.dk/~amo/ppt/capit4.pdf).

**NAPOMENA:** ostala pravila citiranja (broj autora, domaći/inostrani autori, onlajn izvori) su ista kao i za knjige i naučne članke.

**DETALJNIJE INFORMACIJE O APA STILU REFERENCIRANJA SU DOSTUPNE NA:** <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

- d) Pročitajte ih pažljivo i potvrdite samo onda kada Vaš rad zaista ispunjava date uslove. Ukoliko Vaš rad to ne ispunjava, uredite ga i potom nastavite postupak prijave. Tek kada budete sigurni da Vaš rad ispunjava postavljene uslove **označite sve kockice**.
- e) Na ovaj način preuzimate odgovornost da Vaš prilog zaista i ispunjava postavljene uslove, na osnovu čega će biti doneta odluka o ulasku u uređivački postupak.
- f) Pređite na sledeći korak pritiskom na dugme u dnu **Sačuvaj i nastavi**

**Nalazite se na 2. koraku prijave priloga – metapodaci - najznačajniji korak u prijavi novog priloga**

- a) **Metapodaci** su podaci o radu koji se, nezavisno od toga što se oni uključuju u sam rad, **posebno unose u sam sistem** kako bi pratili rad i omogućili dalje praćenje citiranosti rada i ostalih relevantnih parametara.
- b) **Metapodaci** uključuju:
- Podatke o autoru
  - Naslov i sažetak
  - Ostale podatke
- c) Potrebno je da metapodatke **unesete isključivo LATINICOM** bilo da podatke unosite na srpskom ili engleskom jeziku.
- d) **Podatke o autoru** sam sistem preuzima sa Vašeg profila. Oni takođe **moraju biti ispisani LATNICOM**.
- e) **Obavezno popunite sva polja koja su označena sa zvezdicom (\*)**.

f) Stranicu **OBAVEZNO POPUNITI DVA PUTA**, i na srpskom i na engleskom jeziku na sledeći način:

- Proveriti da li je u prvom polju **Jezik obrasca** podešena opcija **Srpski**
- Uneti sve metapodatke koji slede na srpskom jeziku **obavezno LATINICOM**



- U prvom polju **Jezik obrasca** podesiti opciju **English**
- Uneti sve metapodatke na engleskom jeziku



- Pređite na sledeći korak pritiskom na dugme u dnu **Sačuvaj i nastavi**

### Nalazite se na 3. koraku prijave priloga – prilaganje datoteke

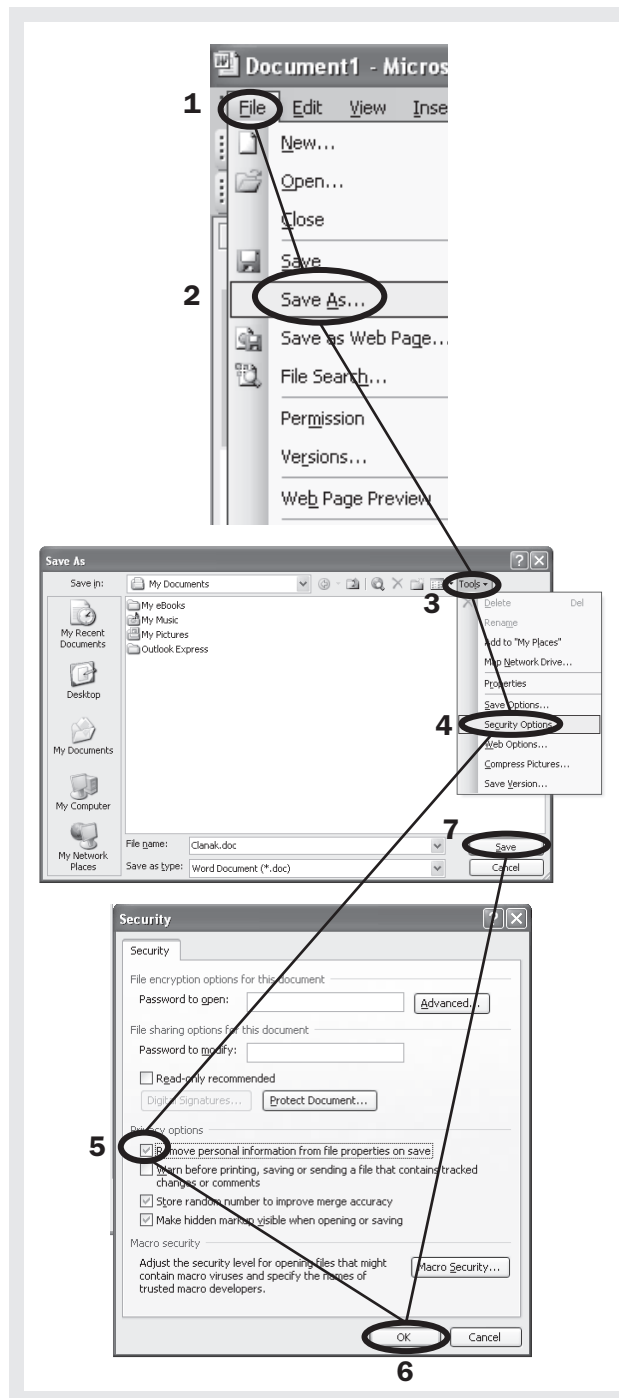
- Na ovom koraku u sistem podnosite samu **datoteku (fajl) u WORD formatu (.doc ili .docx)**
- Vodite računa da se Vaš **rad podnosi u verziji koja tek treba da ide na recenziju**. Ne treba podnositi rad koji je prošao postupak recenzije izvan sistema. Smisao sistema **e-Ur** jeste upravo u vršenju uređivačkog, time i postupka recenzije kroz sistem, na osnovu čega se vrši evaluacija kvaliteta uređivanja časopisa, pa i samog rada.
- Datoteka (fajl) u WORD formatu ne sme sadržati podatke o autoru – afilijaciju**. Sistem zahteva da postupak recenzije bude anoniman, odnosno da recenzent kada dobije rad nema u njemu i podatke o autoru. Nakon okončanja postupka recenzije Autor će podatke o sebi uneti u rad, pre predaje za objavljivanje.
- U slučajevima kada se Autor poziva na svoju knjigu ili članak, **neophodno je izostaviti oblike sa**

**prisvojnim pridevima „moj rad“, „naš rad“ i sl.** i pozivati se kao da je u pitanju drugi autor (npr. *Videti više o tome Petrović, P..*).

- Neophodno je da **autor u datoteci (fajlu) Microsoft Word iz Properties ukloni ličnu identifikaciju** na sledeći način:

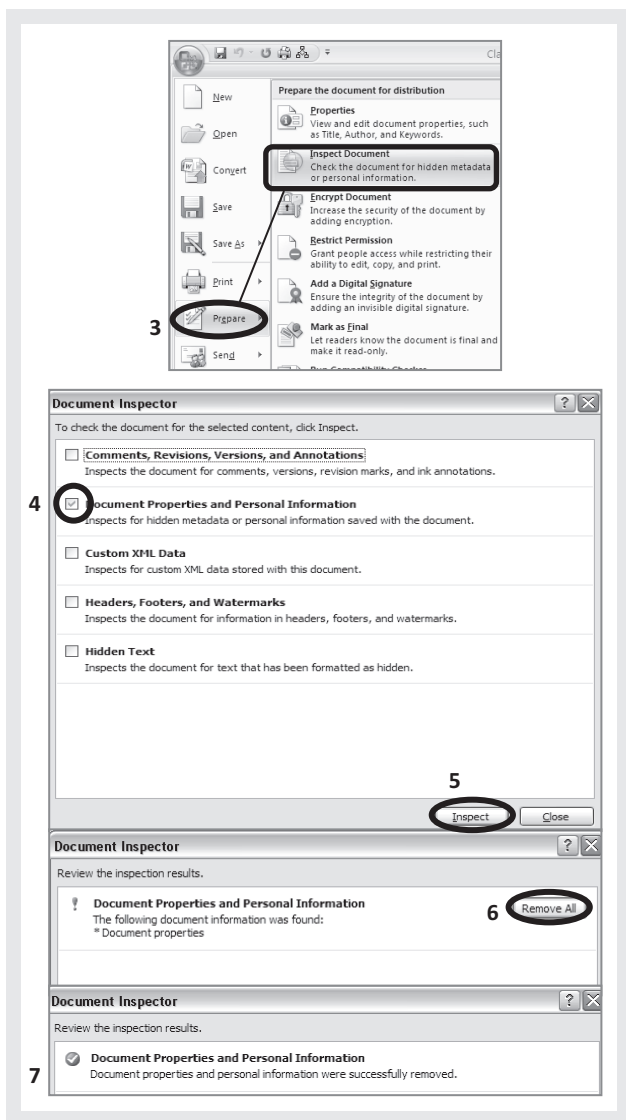
#### ► Za verzije Word zaključno sa 2003:

File > Save As > Tools > Security > Remove personal information from file on save > OK > Save



► **Za verziju Word2007:**

- a) Kliknite na **Office button** u gornjem levom uglu prozora
- b) Izaberite opciju **Prepare**, a zatim opciju **Inspect Document**
- c) Označite **Document Properties and Personal Information**
- d) Kliknite na dugme **Inspect**
- e) Kliknite na dugme **Remove All**
- f) Program će potvrditi brisanje ličnih podataka
- g) Kliknite na dugme **Close**

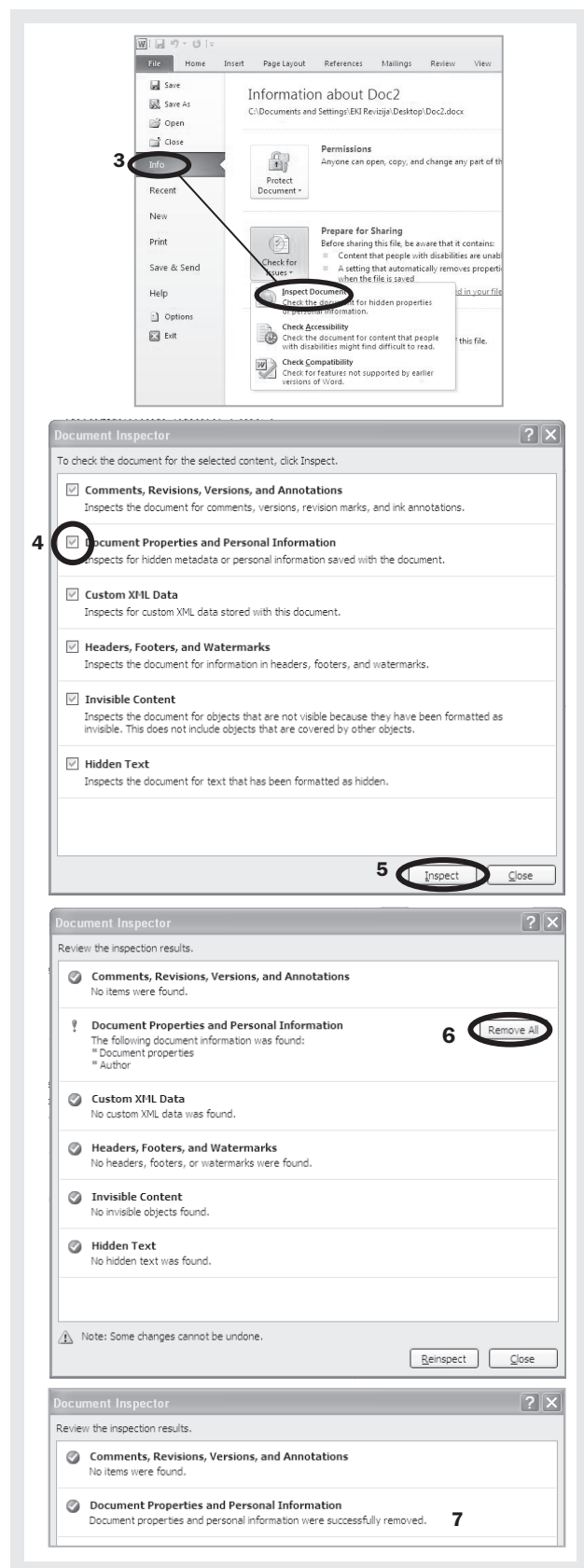


► **Za verziju Word 2010:**  
(slično kao i 2007)

- a) Izaberite opciju **Info**, a zatim opciju **Inspect Document**
- b) Kliknite na dugme **Inspect**
- c) Kliknite na dugme **Remove All**

d) Program će potvrditi brisanje ličnih podataka

e) Kliknite na dugme **Close**



- Zahtev anonimnosti recenzije postavlja važeći Akt o uređivanju naučnih časopisa, donet od strane Ministarstva za nauku i tehnološki razvoj, koji je moguće pronaći na Internet adresi: [http://ceon.rs/pdf/akt\\_o\\_uredjivanju\\_casopisa.pdf](http://ceon.rs/pdf/akt_o_uredjivanju_casopisa.pdf)
- Datoteka (fajl) u WORD formatu moraju u sebi sadržati sve metapodatke (naslov i sažetak) i na srpskom i na engleskom, identične onima koje ste uneli u prethodnom koraku. U slučaju da tokom procesa recenziranja dođe do promene metapodataka, Glavni urednik će izvršiti njihovu izmenu.
- **Sledite detaljna uputstva za prilaaganje datoteke koja sadrži Vaš prilog** koja su Vam data na stranici na kojoj se nalazite:

### 3.korak Prilaganje datoteke

1. POČETAK 2. METAPODACI 3. **PRILAGANJE DATOTEKE** 4. DODATNE DATOTEKE 5. POTVRDA

Da biste priložili rukopis, unesite naziv odgovarajuće datoteke na lokanom disku Vašeg računara, uključujući i putanju do datoteke. To možete učiniti tako da:

1. Kliknite (dole) na *Browse* (ili *Choose file*), čime otvarate prozor za navigaciju u Vašem računaru.
2. Locirajte datoteku i označite je.
3. Kliknite na *Open* u prozoru *Choose File*, čime upisujete naziv datoteke u odgovarajući prostor sistema e-Ur.
4. Kliknite na *Pošalji datoteku*, čime se datoteka s računara prenosi na e-Ur stranicu časopisa.
5. Kada se naziv i podaci o datoteci ispišu na ekranu, kliknite na *Sačuvaj i nastavi*.

Sadržaj priložene datoteke možete da proverite ukoliko kliknete na njen naziv. Pritom možete da je zamenite novom ili revidiranom datotekom.

Datoteka s prilogom

Datoteka još nije priložena.

Postavi datoteku priloga

Browse...

Pošalji datoteku

Sačuvaj i nastavi

Poništi

### Nalazite se na 4. koraku prijave priloga – prilaganje dodatne datoteke

- Ovaj korak Vam uobičajeno neće trebati, već pređite direktno na korak br. 5.

Dopunska datoteka

Nema postavljene datoteke.

Postavi datoteku

Browse...

Odaberite "Sačuvaj" da biste postavili datoteku (nakon toga možete priložiti još dopunskih datoteka).

Želim ovu datoteku (bez metapodataka) da učinim dostupnom recenzentima, budući da neće ugroziti anonimnost recenzije.

### Nalazite se na 5. koraku prijave priloga – potvrda prijave priloga

- Poslednji korak Vam omogućava da **klikom na ime datoteke** u polju *Izvorno ime datoteke* prekontrolišete poslednji put da li ste u sistem položili odgovarajući dokument.

Kratak pregled datoteke

ID	IZVORNO IME DATOTEKE
86	CLANAK.DOCX

Dovrši prijavu priloga

Poništi

- U slučaju da utvrdite da ste podneli pogrešan dokument, pre dovršetka prijave priloga, kliknite na opciju **3. Prilaganje datoteke** i naćićete se na 3. koraku prijave priloga. Ponovite postupak i izaberite odgovarajući dokument koji će zameniti stari.

#### 5. korak Potvrdite prijavljivanje priloga

1. POČETAK 2. METAPODACI 3. PRILAGANJE DATOTEKE 4. DODATNE DATOTEKE 5. POTVRDA

- Klikom na dugme **Dovrši prijavu priloga** završavate postupak i Vaš rad je tog momenta predat Uredništvu.

## 4. POSTUPAK NAKON PREDAJE PRILOGA

- Nakon obavljenog postupka predaje priloga Vaš rad se nalazi u postupku uređivanja, o čijem toku ćete od samog početka biti obavestavani putem mejl adrese koju ste uneli u sistem prilikom registracije. Molimo Vas da elektronsku poštu na adresi koju ste uneli prilikom registracije proveravate redovno.
- Promena imejl adrese, putem koje će Vas sistem obavestavati Vašem prilogu, moguća je pod opcijom **Moj profil**
- Osim putem obaveštenja elektronskom poštom, u svakom trenutku prijavom u sistem možete videti u kojoj se fazi nalazi Vaš rad.
  - a) Po izvršenoj prijavi odaberite opciju **Autor**.
  - b) Pred Vama će se otvoriti prozor **Aktivni priloz** u kome ćete moći da vidite status svih Vaših priloga koje ste podneli Uredništvu.
  - c) Klikom na aktivne opcije možete se informisati:
    1. O samom prilogu klikom na aktivni **naslov priloga**
    2. O postupku uređivanja i rokovima u kojima će određene faze uređivačkog postupka biti realizovane, klikom na aktivni **status priloga**.

Početna > Korišnik > Autor > Aktivni priloz

Aktivni priloz

ID	IMENLO PRILLOZI	RUBRIKA	AUTOR(I)	NASLOV	STATUS
61	10-11	ČLA	Petrović	CLANAK	U RECENZIRANJU

1 - 1 od 1 stavke(j)

Zapoćnite prijavu novog priloga  
Za početak prijave priloga KLIKINITE OVDE.

## 5. INDEKSIRANJE (ODREĐIVANJE KLJUČNIH REČI)

- Indeksiranje rada, odnosno određivanje ključnih reči (KR) je takođe operacija od velike važnosti. Rad koji je dobro indeksiran, lakše će biti pronađen od strane onih kojima je potreban i verovatnije će biti citiran. Zato se u e-Ur indeksiranju poklanja najveća moguća pažnja. S tim ciljem razvijen je i ugrađen u e-Ur sistem za podršku dodeljivanja ključnih reči (KWASS: KeyWords Assignment Support System).
- KWASS se koristi u dva koraka:
  1. Sistem najpre automatski generiše određeni broj KR. Zaseban modul (AKwA: Automatic KeyWords Assignment) analizira naslov i apstrakt i ekstrahuje iz odgovarajućeg rečnika/tezaurusa određeni, obično veći broj KR koje najbolje opisuju sadržaj rada. AKwA KR se upisuju u gornji okvir u rubrici pod nazivom Ključne reči na stranici Uređivanje metapodataka.
  2. Po obaveštenju da Vam je rad prihvaćen ili uslovno prihvaćen (odluka: Prihvatiti, Neophodne izmene, Ponovo predati na recenziju) pristupite toj rubrici i overite AKwA KR. Pri tom koristite alatku (KeFiR: KeyWords Final Refinement) koja Vam omogućava da svaku pojedinačnu reč prihvate ili zamene drugom. Prihvaćene pomoću odgovarajućeg dugmeta prepisujete u zaseban (donji) okvir u istoj rubrici.
- Odabir KR za zamenu obavlja pretraživanjem istog rečnika/tezarusa iz koga su i ekstrahovane:
  - U donji okvir (slika u nastavku) unosi se niz od nekoliko slova da bi se izlistali svi termini u rečniku koji zapoćinju tim nizom, a zatim
  - Klikom na onu koja Vam najviše odgovara upisujete tu reč u predviđeni okvir.
  - Ako u rečniku ne nalazite reči koje bi bile dobra zamena ili dopuna AKwA rećima, izuzetno možete upotrebiti reč po sopstvenom izboru. U Vašem interesu je da izbegavate reči koje nisu šire prihvaćene i retko se javljaju, makar precizno opisivale Vaš rad.
  - Preporučljivo je, ako je moguće, da izbor KR pored pojmova obuhvati još bar po jedan termin koji se odnosi na geografsku lokaciju, karakteristike korišćenog uzorka i opis metoda istraživanja. Ukupan broj KR trebalo bi da bude orijentaciono 10.



# Instructions to Authors

- In *Marketing* we accept only original work, not submitted for publication elsewhere and previously not published.
- Both empirical and conceptual papers are welcome.
- All manuscripts submitted for publication in *Marketing* are subject to double blind peer review. The first round of the review process lasts one to two months approximately. Number of rounds depends upon reviewers' suggestions and final decision of the editors.
- The manuscripts should not be less than 30,000 characters including spaces (about 10 pages).
- The writing style should be academic using short and clear sentences. Prior to submitting, please make sure that the manuscript was copy edited, preferably by a native English speaker.
- The manuscripts should be submitted as a single document in Word of Rich Text Format, including title, abstract, key words, JEL classification, main body of the text, tables, graphs, charts, figures, illustrations and references. Tables, figures and other illustrations should be numbered (1,2,3...) and clearly labeled at the top with a legend at the bottom.
- Use A4 page format, Times New Roman 11, all margins 1 inch (2.54 cm), single line spacing throughout the text (including tables, figures, graphs, references etc).
- The cover page should contain following elements: **title of the paper** (center alignment, bold), author's name and affiliation (center alignment), **abstract** (left alignment), *key words* (left alignment, italic) and JEL classification (left alignment).
- Please make sure that the title of the paper is not too long and use subtitles if necessary.
- Abstract should be up to 200 words with maximum of 5 key words.
- **Headings (1,2,3...)** and only one level of *subheadings* (1.1., 2.1., 3.1...) should be numbered, left aligned, bold/italic.
- Use footnotes (not endnotes) only if necessary, numbering them properly.
- References should be placed within the text as well as at its end, using APA style. **For detailed instructions please follow the link: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/08/>**

## Examples of referencing using APA style:

### In the text

#### Two Authors:

Research by Wegener and Petty (1994) supports... (Wegener & Petty, 1994)

#### Three to Five Authors:

First time you cite the source

Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry & Harlow (1993) in their seminal work...

(Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993)

Subsequent citations:

Kernis et al (1993) showed...

(Kernis et al., 1993)

#### Six or More Authors:

Harris et al. (2001) argued...

(Harris et al., 2001)

### At the end of the paper

#### Books:

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Location: Publisher.

Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). *APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

#### Edited book:

Duncan, G. J., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (Eds.). (1997). *Consequences of growing up poor*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

#### Articles in periodicals:

Author, A. A., Author, B. B., & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. *Title of Periodical, volume number* (issue number), pages.

Harlow, H. F. (1983). Fundamentals for preparing psychology journal articles. *Journal of Comparative and Physiological Psychology, 55*, 893-896.

#### Articles in on-line periodicals and sources

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Online Periodical, volume number* (issue number if available). Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/>

Bernstein, M. (2002). 10 tips on writing the living Web. *A List Apart: For People Who Make Websites, 149*. Retrieved from <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/writeliving>

**Articles with DOI**

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date of publication). Title of article. *Title of Journal*, volume number, page range. doi:0000000/000000000000 or <http://dx.doi.org/10.0000/0000>

Brownlie, D. (2007). Toward effective poster presentations: An annotated bibliography. *European Journal of Marketing*, 41, 1245-1283. doi:10.1108/03090560710821161

**Newspapers:**

Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. *Title of Newspaper*. Retrieved from <http://www.someaddress.com/full/url/>

Parker-Pope, T. (2008, May 6). Psychiatry handbook linked to drug industry. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from [http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/06/psychiatry-handbook-linked-to-drug-industry/?\\_r=0](http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/05/06/psychiatry-handbook-linked-to-drug-industry/?_r=0)

**Electronic books**

De Huff, E. W. (n.d.). *Taytay's tales: Traditional Pueblo Indian tales*. Retrieved from <http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/dehuff/taytay/taytay.html>

- The authors should submit their papers online, using the following web link: <http://aseestant.ceon.rs/index.php/mkng>

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Once you create your profile/log in, chose the option Author and go to Active submission. There you would find a link Start a new submission.

The screenshot shows the SCINDEXS ASSISTANT interface. The top navigation bar includes Home, About, User Home, Search, Current, Archives, and Help. The left sidebar contains Marketing, User: galja (with links to My Journals, My Profile, Log Out), Author (with links to Submissions, Active (0), Archive (0), New Submission), Language (English, Srpski), and Font Size. The main content area displays the breadcrumb 'Home > User > Author > Active Submissions', a table for 'Active Submissions' (empty), and a 'Start a New Submission' section with a 'CLICK HERE' link and the ISSN 0354-3471.

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- The submission has not been previously published, nor is it before another journal for consideration (or an explanation has been provided in Comments to the Editor).
- The submission file is in Microsoft Word or RTF format.
- Where available, URLs for the references have been provided.
- The text is single-spaced; uses a 12-point font; employs italics, rather than underlining (except with URL addresses).
- The text adheres to the stylistic and bibliographic requirements outlined in the Author Guidelines, which is found in About the Journal.

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**In Step 3:** Enter Metadata you will need to fill in the provided field with additional data, no matter whether they have already been included within your paper.

**In Step 4:** Upload supplementary files you may opt to add e.g. data sets, research instruments, infographics, etc.

**In Step 5:** Confirmation you will finish your submission after which you will get a notification e-mail confirming your submission.





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