

# Values and Lifestyle Segmentation of Poles 55+ and It's Implications for Consumers' Attitudes and Behaviour

Dominika Maison<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Interest in older consumers as the subject of marketing strategy is growing in Western countries (Gunter, 1998). However, in Poland, this group is still neglected by marketers and perceived in stereotypical way, and its marketing potential is underestimated. The main goal of this research was to provide understanding of the contemporary older Polish population and especially older Polish consumers, including their values, needs, attitudes, opinions and behaviors.

**Methodology:** In order to investigate the Polish “grey market,” we conducted survey research (CAPI) based on a representative quota – a random nationwide sample of n=1500 participants above 55 years old. Additionally, we also conducted qualitative research – 18 individual in-depth interviews (IDIs) at homes of consumers (ethnographic interviews).

**Findings:** Based on the factor and cluster analysis (Weinstein, 1994) from the quantitative survey, 5 segments of older Polish consumers were selected: Fulfilled Optimists (14% of population), Bored with Life (17%), Passive Materialists (22%), Family-oriented Non-materialists (22%), and Excluded Traditionalists (25%). Segments differed in values, lifestyles, attitudes toward life, family, work and general life satisfaction. As a consequence of those psychological differences, segments differed in consumer behaviour, preferences and perception of marketing communication (advertising).

**Originality:** Our analysis shows that key areas, which determine particular consumer behaviour in each segment are – contrary to common belief – not demographic characteristics, but mainly psychological aspects (such as attitude to life, optimism, attitude to money, open-mindedness and general curiosity).

**Keywords:** grey market, segmentation, values, consumer behavior, advertising

JEL: J14, M30, M37

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<sup>1</sup> University of Warsaw

Correspondence address: University of Warsaw, Psychology Department, Stawki 5/7 St., 00-183 Warsaw, e-mail: dominika@psych.uw.edu.pl.

## Values and lifestyle segmentation of Poles 55+ and it's implications for consumers' attitudes and behavior

Polish society, similarly to that of Western countries, is getting older, and the average lifespan of Poles is extending. In 1980, the average Polish woman lived 74,4 years, whereas in 2010 the average lifespan was 80,6. The average lifespan of Polish men is also getting longer – in 1980 it was 66 years, but in 2010 it was 72,1; within 30 years it has extended almost 6 years in both groups (GUS, *Report*, [http](http://)). Demographic trends in Western industrialized countries also show an increasing proportion of people over 55 compared to the rest of the population. Currently in Poland, 9,3 million people are over 55 years old, constituting almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the Polish population; this group is bigger than Poles age 19 and younger.

Very importantly, this group is not only growing, but it is also departing drastically from the negative stereotypical “elderly” regarding limitations of their physical and mental capacities, lack of energy and passion for life, lack of interest in anything new and lack of money. Today, 21% of Poles above 55 are still working, which means that they are not just stereotypical “poor pensioners.” Many of them are still active intellectually and physically: they travel, read books, go to the cinema and drive cars.

The consequence of the above described changes is that this group of the Polish population has great market potential as consumers, and this potential will grow even further in the coming years. However, for many years, marketers were not interested in older people as a target group. Marketing strategies began to be designed for this target group in Western countries 20–30 years ago, and this group was called the “grey market” (Gunter, 1998; Rennenboog and Spaenjers, 2011; Ahmad, 2002). In Poland this group of consumers is still underestimated, still often stigmatized and perceived through negative stereotypes. However, in Poland this group is no longer socially, economically or politically insignificant. For example, the disposable income of retired people's households (1 117 PLN) is higher than in the households of blue collar workers (989 PLN) or farmers (879 PLN)<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, the potential of this group as consumers is constantly growing.

In addition to economic changes among the group of older people, their values have also changed (Day et al., 1987; Sudbury and Simcock, 2009). Together with the transformation of Polish society from collectivistic to individualistic values, the older part of the society is no longer concerned only with their families, children and grandchildren; a large portion of them are becoming more concerned with their own needs. Their lifestyles are changing constantly, and the majority no longer fit with the “stereotypical” elderly.

The main goal of the research project was to increase understanding of the contemporary “older” Polish population and especially older Polish consumers – particularly their values, needs,

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<sup>2</sup> Source: INSE Analytics 2012.

attitudes, opinions and behaviors. We also wanted to see not only the stereotypical idea of this group, but also the diversity of this group – the different subgroups that can be found among Poles 55+ (different segments). The second goal of the study was to see to what extent different values, needs, lifestyles and attitudes influence different consumers' preferences and choices.

## | Methodology

In order to investigate the Polish “grey market,” we conducted computer assisted personal interviews (CAPI) based on a representative quota – random nationwide sample of  $n=1\ 500$  participants above 55 years old<sup>3</sup>. The structure of the sample was similar to the structure of the population of Polish people above 55 years old based on gender, age, level of education and size of place of living. With each participant we conducted a 40-minute survey including psychographics (values, interests, opinions, attitudes and behavior in different life areas), marketing questions (financial attitudes and behaviors, shopping styles, styles of spending money) and demographics. The goal of this part of the study was to obtain quantitative data describing the opinions and behaviors of this group of consumers. On the base of the data was also conducted segmentation (based on cluster analysis) (Ahmad, 2003; Gonzalez and Paliwoda, 2006; Sudbury and Simcock, 2007).

In addition to the survey, we also conducted qualitative research – a set of individual in-depth interviews (IDI) at the homes of consumers (ethnographic interviews) (Maison, 2010; Mariampolski, 2006). In total were conducted 18 interviews with peoples representing each segment. Respondents were chosen following purposive criteria selected based on the results of the quantitative study (dimensions mostly differentiating each segment). The aim of the qualitative research was to understand the different psychological aspects of selected segments and to test their reactions toward marketing communication (e.g. different advertising).

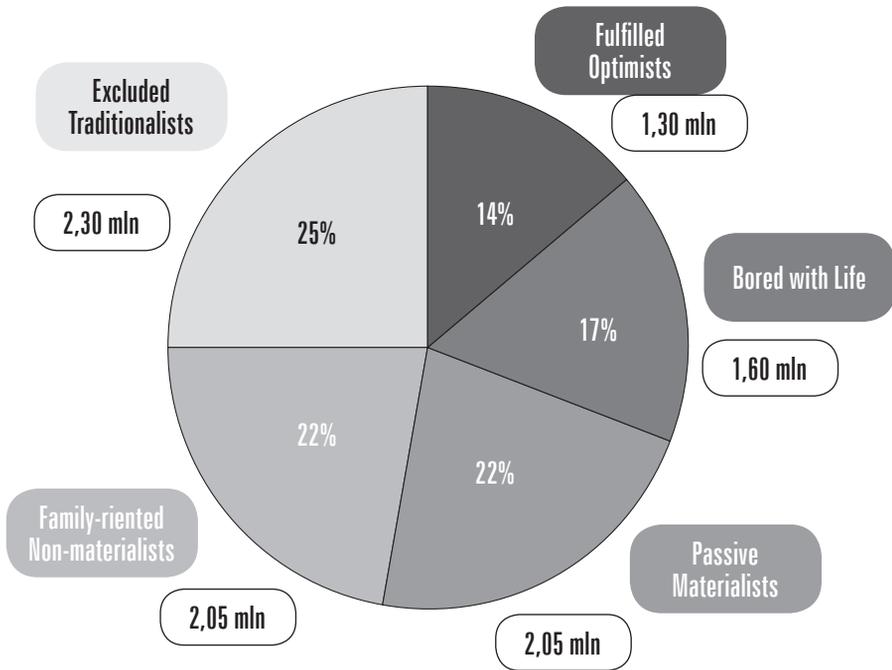
## | Results

### Segmentation of Polish consumers

The starting point for this analysis was factor analysis, which allowed us to reduce the variables used in the survey into factors. During the next step was conducted the cluster analysis. Based on the results of this analysis, we extracted 5 segments (subgroups), which were internally coherent but at the same time different from each other (Weinstein, 1994). Based on crucial and mostly differentiating characteristics (based on alpha value), we constructed 5 segments: Fulfilled Optimists (14% of population), Bored with Life (17%), Passive Materialists (22%), Family-oriented Non-materialists (22%) and Excluded Traditionalists (25%) – see Figure 1.

<sup>3</sup> The study was financed by Polish Central Bank (Narodowy Bank Polski, NBP) in 2012. It was part of a greater study about financial attitudes and behaviors of Polish people above 55 y. o. ([http://www.nbp.pl/systemplacniczy/obrot\\_bezgotowkowy/raport\\_60\\_plus.pdf](http://www.nbp.pl/systemplacniczy/obrot_bezgotowkowy/raport_60_plus.pdf)).

Figure 1 | Segmentation of Polish people over 55 y. o. and approximate size of each segment



*Fulfilled Optimists* (14%) are the youngest segment (over half of people in this segment are aged 55-59); however, it also includes some people 70 and even 90 years old (e.g. 20% above 65 y. o.), both men and women (50%/50%). It is the most educated segment – 38% have higher education degrees and 41% of this segment inhabit cities with populations above 50 000 (see Table 1). They have the best financial situations – their households’ average income is around 3300 pln (approximately 745 E). They like to have money, and they spend it willingly without feeling guilty. They consider money to be a means to satisfy their needs and not a goal in itself.

*Fulfilled Optimists* have very optimistic attitudes toward life; they are real optimists and are the most satisfied with life. They see the world around them as full of chances and possibilities. They have an internal locus of control – they believe that “life lies in their own hands.” In all aspects of their lives they make conscious decisions. They are active, physically and intellectually. They are very up to date – 88% of them use computers and 85% use the Internet.

For *Fulfilled Optimists*, the most important values are self-fulfilment, being active and curiosity about the world. Work is or used to be (for those who are retired) the important source of satisfaction and an important element of life. They try to remain professionally active as much as possible: 53% are still full-time workers and 6% are part-time. Family is also important to them – it is a source of joy and satisfaction for the individuals in this group. They consider their retirement to be time mainly for themselves to indulge in their hobbies and expand their interests in what makes them feel fulfilled and satisfied. Although their reality changed when they retired, they

managed to adapt to it. They learned how to make use of their free time effectively – they engage in sports, travel, read books, go to the cinema and spend time with friends.

*“Although I am retired, so I should have a lot of free time, I am running out of time constantly. There is so much to do. I go swimming, and while I’m at home I am circling from computer in one room, guitar in the other room and weights and newspapers in the third one” (man, 65 y. o.)<sup>4</sup>.*

*“I always liked to keep up to date. I have a computer for about 15 years. The world is changing. I look in the computer to see what’s happening around. I go to Google – when I want to look something up, like a word I don’t know or something I’d like to research. I often go to Wikipedia. But I don’t spend too much time on the computer – about 1,5-2 hours a day” (man, 62 y. o.).*

**Table 1 | Basic characteristics of segments**

	Fulfilled Optimists	Bored with Life	Passive Materialists	Family-oriented Non-materialists	Excluded Traditionalists
Age (mean)	60	62	66	67	74
Gender (% of women)	50%	61%	54%	62%	61%
Higher education	38%	9%	10%	7%	3%
Primary education	2%	6%	21%	25%	53%
Married	78%	73%	61%	71%	31% (59% widowed)
Full-time working	53%	33%	17%	19%	2%
Average household income	3 300 pln. (795 E)	2 350 pln. (566 E)	2 300 pln. (554 E)	2 190 pln. (527 E)	1 349 pln. (325 E)
Average income per person	1 600 pln. (385 E)	1 155 pln. (278 E)	1 200 pln. (289 E)	980 pln. (236 E)	850 pln. (204 E)

*Bored with Life* (17%) are quite similar to the Fulfilled Optimists from a demographic point of view, but they are very different in their attitudes toward life and everyday lifestyle (Table 1). Almost half of them are under 60 y. o., and the majority are married and living in the city. However, they are less educated than the previous segment; only 9% of them have higher education and 28% secondary (a similar education level to those of the following two segments: *Passive Materialists* and *Family-oriented Non-materialists*). Their income is also lower than that of *Fulfilled Optimists* (2 354 pln. per household, approximately 566 E), but higher than all other

<sup>4</sup> All citations in the text came from the qualitative part of the studies – 18 in-home in-depth interviews (ethnographic interviews). They illustrate and add information to the qualitative data from the survey.

segments. Even though they are not satisfied with their financial situation (they have one of the lowest evaluation of their financial situation) and future perspectives. They are materialists, and money is important to them; it defines their self-esteem and the way they perceive each other, and it is also a source of frustration (because they always have less than they would like to have).

These individuals live day by day without clearly defined aims and goals. They feel as though they haven't achieved anything special in life and there are no life areas that bring them satisfaction. They don't have clear values in their life or things are really important to them. They are indistinctive in many aspects of life: behaviour, opinions and values. *Bored with Life* are characterised by passive attitudes. They are considerably less familiar with new technologies than the previous segment. Their everyday lives have always been focused on daily activities (work, family and household duties). They used to work and had families, but they never derived satisfaction or self-fulfilment from these areas. They rather considered them to be their duties, something everyone has to deal with. Therefore, after retirement and the children leaving home, most of them couldn't find any activities around which they could organise their time. Although they were looking forward to retirement, seeing it as an extended holiday they deserved from their hard life (as they perceived it), it turned out they struggled to adapt to their new reality. Deprived of elements of everyday routine, they became lost, leading them to feel as if their life had already ended and there wasn't much left for them to do (even though some of them are only 60 years old or younger).

*"In this house I like the living room the most. This is where I am most of the time. What do I do here? Well, I watch TV, I look out of the window what is going on in the street, looking at people passing by."* (woman, 61 y. o.)

*"My husband looks things up for me on the Internet. I don't. I'm usually afraid to press the wrong key."* (woman, 65 y. o.)

*"At home you have to clean, you have to cook. I like it when children come to visit me but then there's such mess in the kitchen that it takes me half a day to clean it up. I like going shopping to the market, I go to see what's new."* (woman, 62 y. o.)

Passive Materialists (22%) are people of all ages – younger (below 60) as well as older (over 70). They inhabit places of all sizes: villages and small, medium and large cities.

Similarly to the *Bored with Life* segment, the majority of this group have vocational or secondary education. Despite their average financial situation, *Passive Materialists* are marked by the strongest sense of inferiority associated with money. Typical for materialists, their values, life goals, and dreams are all linked to finances – money was and is the ultimate goal for them, the indicator of success (in attitude toward money they are quite similar to that of *Bored with Life*; however they are more extreme materialists). For this segment, the lack of money is the most common reason behind feeling inferior and the excuse for being passive. For *Passive Materialists*, money

is extremely important, and they would like to have as much of it as possible. Regardless of the amount of money they have, *Passive Materialists* always feel they don't have enough and that the people around them are in a much better financial situation – that's why they are constantly feeling inferior with regards to their own financial situation.

*Passive Materialists* are convinced that life is always hard for them – it is a segment with the strongest sense of injustice; they're frustrated and disappointed with the situation they're in and the world around them. At the same time, this is a segment with a strong external locus of control – they don't feel responsible for their success or failures, but believe their situation has resulted from good/bad fortune or other people's behaviour or bad intentions. They feel nostalgic about the times of communism, which meant equal chances, without disproportions in terms of wealth. Such an attitude results mainly from the fact that they consider themselves to be a rather poor part of society and envy others for their financial status (however objectively they often are not as poor as their financial self-esteem). They often declare their willingness to do something, to be unusual, not wanting to be typical pensioners, but at the same time not doing anything – mainly due to the conviction of lack of possibilities associated with financial or health-related limitations.

*“Money is a very important thing in life. Today when you don't have money you don't mean anything. If you are poor, you can't go anywhere, buy anything for yourself.*  
(man, 70 y. o.)

*“Exercise is important and I would like to play tennis but I can't afford to rent a court. I would like to ride a bike, I have two at the allotment house. But they are old and I'm not going to ride a 20 years old bike. If my wife and I had proper bikes we would definitely go cycling to Wilanow or anywhere else. But I can't afford to spend 2,5-3 000 PLN on a decent bike.”* (man, 60 y. o.)

*Family-oriented Non-materialists* (22%) are also people who represent all age groups (similarly to *Passive Materialists*). In this segment there are considerably more women than men (62% vs. 38%). The structure of place of residence reflects that of the whole population in Poland – they live in all sizes of cities. This segment includes people with vocational, secondary and primary education. This is the most family-oriented segment, to whom family is of real value (beyond just a declaration). It means a lot for them and defines their lives. They are stay-at-home people by choice – they feel good spending time at home with their close ones and looking after them. This segment is the most attached to fundamental values (mainly family safety, responsibility, respect for others) and spiritual values (religion, modesty, etc.). The happiness and success of their families is a source of satisfaction for them.

Work used to be a source of satisfaction for them but mostly not as a place for self-actualization or a career but more as a place to meet other people and the motivator to stay active longer. That's why often after retiring they do not stop engaging in activity (more or less connected to their

profession), some of them are social activists and volunteers. Most of them are happy after retirement that they can have more time for their family: children, grandchildren, and other relatives. In respect of technology they are not very up-to-date – only 13% of them use computers and 11% use the Internet (Table 2).

Contrary to two previous segments (*Bored with Life* and *Passive Materialists*) money means the least to this segment, which is marked by the least emotional attitude toward it – they only require enough money to cover their basic needs. They would never neglect their family for money or career. They certainly aren't materialists, since other things in life are more important to them. Additionally, they don't judge themselves or others by their financial status. Despite not having the best financial situation objectively (with the second lowest income per person – after *Excluded Traditionalists*), *Family-oriented Non-materialists* evaluate their situation rather positively – significantly better than some other wealthier segments (e.g. *Bored with Life*, *Passive Materialists*).

*“I am glad my daughters do what they like to do. My grandchildren like to visit us, they treat our house as theirs. There were many things I did in my life, many places I saw, but what I would consider my greatest success are my kids.”* (woman, 61 y. o.)

*“Maybe it's not great house but we all feel good here. It's my asylum, a place where kids like to come. Girls come over even when they don't have time, even just for a moment to be together.”* (woman, 65 y. o.)

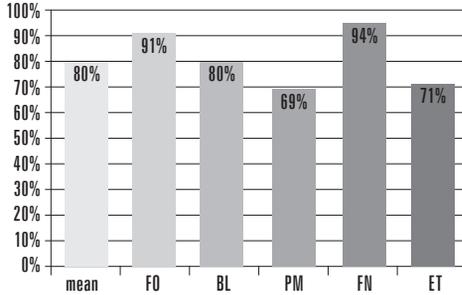
*Excluded Traditionalists* (25%) – the biggest segment and the most stereotypical and old-style “seniors.” They are the oldest segment (half of them are over 75), although people under 50 years old can also be found here (with similar psychological characteristics). There are more women (61%) than men (39%) in this segment, mainly due to the female life expectancy being higher than males'. The majority of the people from this segment inhabit small towns. It is the worst-educated segment; half of the people have only primary education and the rest have vocational or secondary education.

*Excluded Traditionalists* is a segment with the lowest level of satisfaction with life (Figure 2.1), but also the hardest objective life situation (they are the oldest and least educated, with the lowest income and often with health problems). Their feeling of general dissatisfaction is strengthened by their external locus of control – they believe their lives were not particularly successful due to bad fortune and bad intentions of other people, and not because of themselves (Figure 2.2). They are the most conservative (Figure 2.3 and 2.4), old fashioned and totally not open to new technologies; almost nobody in this group uses a computer or the Internet, and only a few use mobile phones (see Table 2).

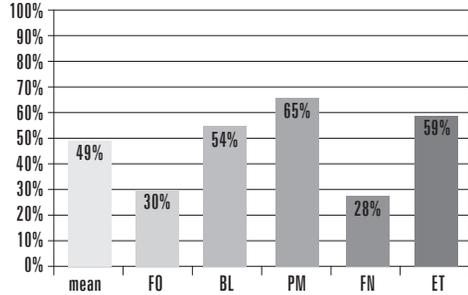
They are very passive in daily life (sometimes because of their objective state of health, as well as the perception of it), they don't read books and they don't have hobbies. They watch TV or listen

Figure 2 | Psychological characteristics of segments

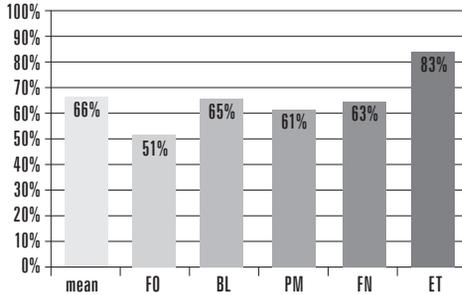
2.1 | Overall I am satisfied with I achieved in life



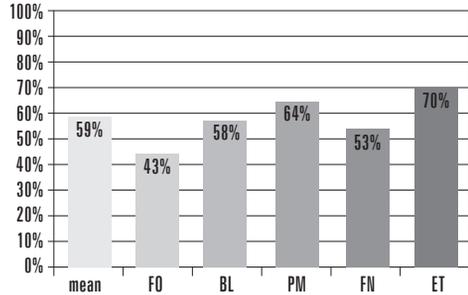
2.2 | Many of my personal failures were caused by reluctance, envy or incapability of people around me



2.3 | The family works best when the woman takes care of household and the man earns money



2.4 | Even if the child thinks his parents are wrong, he should argue with them



- FO – Fulfilled Optimists N=208
- BL – Bored with Life N=259
- PM – Passive Materialists N=336

- The graphs show summary of 'I rather agree' and 'I definitely agree' answers
- FN – Family-oriented Non-materialists N=322
  - ET – Excluded Traditionalists N=375

to the radio (mostly the most conservative catholic channels, such as Radio Maryja) (see Table 2). They do not like change. Their home is their asylum. They are more attached to religious values than other segments. They are also most attached to the traditional vision of family, especially in terms of division of duties: the woman is responsible for the household and children, and the man provides the money (Figure 2.3). This segment feels extremely excluded because of retirement – they now face a lack of contact with people, lack of money, lack of hobbies and lack of goals in their life. Although work used to be tiring for them and was treated mainly as a source of income, at the same time it allowed them to escape their daily worries (conflicts, stress associated with difficult financial situation, marriage problems). They perceive the purpose of this stage of their life is to wait to die.

This group has the lowest income and has a significantly lower subjective evaluation of their own financial situation (much lower than *Family-oriented Non-materialists*, whose income is only slightly higher). At the same time for *Excluded Traditionalists*, money is important in life. It is also the reason behind their feelings of inferiority – their low income makes this group feel worse than others. This group gets more support from children than other segments.

“After retirement everything changed, how to say it, mentally. One is afraid of diseases, before that there were no such thoughts. At the beginning retirement was fun, but now one waits only for sickness and death...” (woman, 67 y. o.).

“We pensioners don't buy clothes. This jacket is about 40 years old and I don't need a new one. Why would I? I don't need much. Soap, shampoo, comb, that's about it” (man, 82 y. o.).

Table 2 | Technology and media in segments

	Fulfilled Optimists	Bored with Life	Passive Materialists	Family-oriented Non-materialists	Excluded Traditionalists
Use of computer	88%	39%	14%	13%	1%
Having mobile phone	97%	89%	69%	77%	37%
Average time per day spent watching TV	4,2	4,4	5,2	4,5	5,4
Percentage of people listening to the radio	86%	77%	62%	82%	70%
Percentage of listening to Radio ZET	59%	48%	33%	29%	15%
Percentage of people listening to Radio Maryja	10%	11%	18%	33%	35%

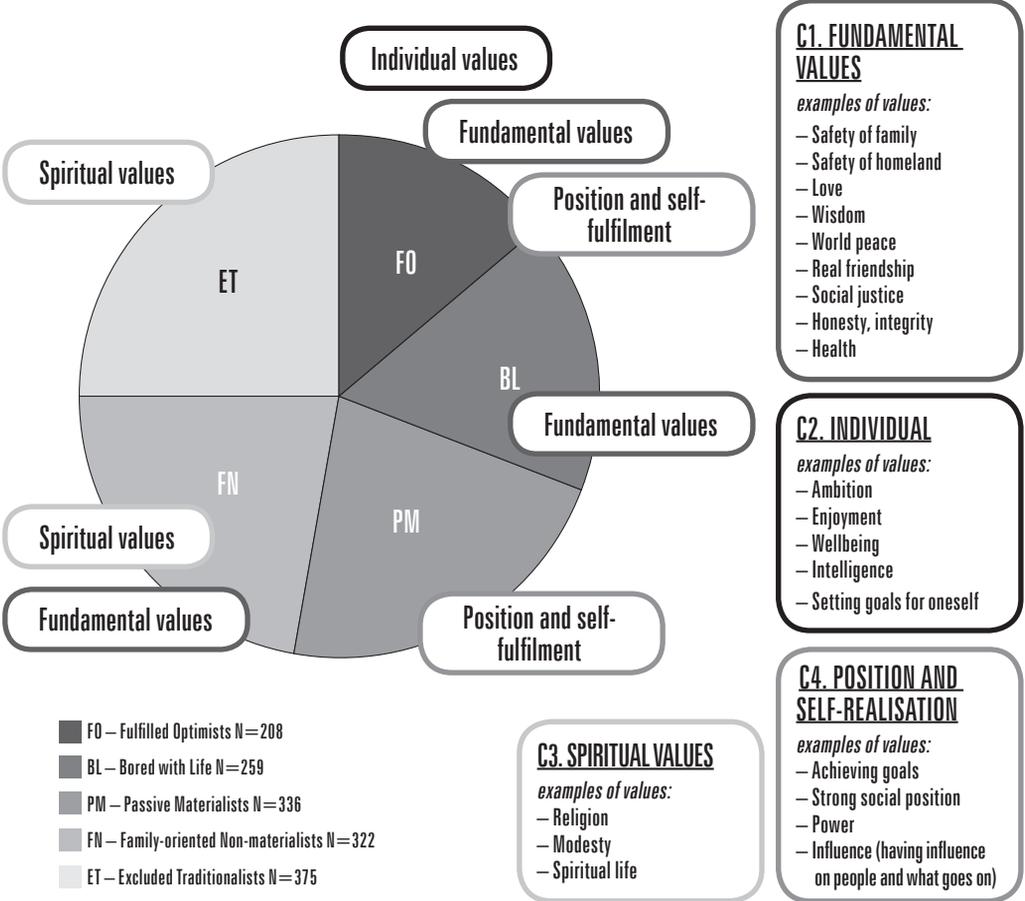
## | Value structure among different segments

Because the segmentation was mainly based on values, before looking closer at different consumer behaviours of divided segments, it is worth a closer look at their values. In order to measure their values, we gave respondents a list of 32 values (inspired by Schwartz, 1992). Based on factor analysis, we divided 4 basic groups of values: (1) fundamental values, (2) individual values, (3) spiritual values, and (4) position and power values (see Figure 3).

The summary of values dominated in each segment (presented at Figure 3) show how much these groups differ from each other. The *Fulfilled Optimists* segment is the most complex in terms of values – many aspects of life and different values are important to them. It is the only segment in which the people rate individualism highly, such as those associated with self and self-development. At the same time, although not as much as *Passive Materialists*, they care about values associated with position, status, power and achievement. Many of them achieved high social position, and some of them could be considered successful. But also basic values are relevant and important to them: family, wisdom, world peace and justice.

*Bored with Life*, in contrast to *Fulfilled Optimists*, have the least distinctive system of values out of all segments – just like the majority, they pay attention to fundamental life values; however,

Figure 3 | Value structure in different segments (based on factor analysis) – picture shows dominating values in each segment



no particular values are important to them. *Passive Materialists* are mainly focused on having control and influence on what’s happening around them. They value people who have achieved significant social status, especially when it’s associated with high financial status. Their values are connected to power and status – having influence on others and having high position.

In term of values, *Family-oriented Non-materialists* are totally different from *Bored with Life* and *Passive Materialists*. Fundamental values, such as safety of family, friendship, wisdom and love are extremely important to them. They also value spiritual values – particularly living in modesty, religiously. In turn, the most important values for previous segments, connected to power, status and money, are irrelevant to them.

The last segment, *Excluded Traditionalists*, only believe in spiritual values, especially religion. Therefore, for these people, obeying church rules is the only right way to live.

## | Financial attitudes and behaviour in different segments

In the next step of analysis, we look at how different segments behave in the financial world, such as if different psychographic structures of segments have consequences in different engagements in the financial system; for example different levels of banking and usage of different banking products. The analysis shows that segments differ greatly in general-level banking (Table 3). The most advanced are *Fulfilled Optimists*, who have the highest banking penetration rate – all of the people from this group have a bank account, and almost everyone uses debit cards (98% – see Table 3). They are also most inclined to use credit cards (35%). They're enthusiastic about electronic banking channels – often starting to take advantage of it and learning how to use it only after retiring. Because they are generally open to new experiences, they are also very open to learning how to use new services and try out new solutions. This segment is also characterized by the level of savings they possess – 76% of them have some savings that is much above that of the general population (35% in the whole population of Poles above 55 have savings). This behavior is not only a consequence of their good financial situation but mostly an approach to life. They have a high level of self-control and can control their finances and delay gratification.

*Bored with Life*, in terms of level of bank account penetration, are in second place and are very similar to the first segment (95%). Also, the majority of them use debit cards (91%). However, they are much less open to more advanced financial services, such as credit cards (9% vs. 35% in the previous segment) or accessing their bank accounts through the Internet (22% vs. 73% *Fulfilled Optimists*). This means that they are only at a basic level of banking (bank account and bank card), but not advanced in the higher level of banking (credit cards, online banking). Moreover, they are not particularly enthusiastic about banking in general – they are suspicious of banking and expect a lack of honesty in bank sector.

Even though the individuals in the next two segments, *Passive Materialists* and *Family-oriented Non-materialists*, are very different in respect of values and lifestyle, they are quite similar in their level of banking (however, *Passive Materialists* are slightly more advanced). In respect to basic bank products, they are in the middle comparing to the rest of population; 2/3 of them possess bank accounts, much less have debit cards (51% PM and 41% FN) and not many use online banking (14% PM and 4% FN). However, what strongly differs between those segments is attitude toward saving and having savings – almost two times more have savings is the second segment than in the first (see Table 3). The difference in this financial behavior is a consequence of the differences in their values and general attitude toward life. *Passive Materialists*, because of their strong materialism, are not very effective in saving, and they prefer to spend money here and now, instead of bothering about the future. They have low self-control and low tolerance to delay of gratification. *Family-oriented Non-materialists*, on the contrary, are much more future oriented, control themselves, and are not impulsive in spending money.

*Excluded Traditionalists* are the group with the lowest level of banking on all levels. Only 17% have bank accounts, and they can't see any benefits of having a bank account. This segment is

much more afraid of new financial solutions than people from other groups – they don't have credit cards and don't use online banking (see Table 3 and Table 4). Also, the smallest group of them possess savings (14%). However, this is probably not only a consequence of a bad financial situation, which does not differ much from *Family-oriented Non-materialists*, where a few more people have savings. What is very remarkable is that, in this group, the biggest number of people save for their own funeral, in contrast to, for example, the *Fulfilled Optimists*, who more often than the rest of the population save for traveling (21%). Those goals of savings fit very well with the basic values of selected segments. It is not surprising that *Fulfilled Optimists*, who follow individualistic values such as enjoyment and ambition, would like to travel. But *Excluded Traditionalists* and *Family-oriented Non-materialists* for whom fundamental and spiritual values are more important think more about their own funeral as a goal of savings. However, it is very plausible that, in those two groups, there is a slightly different motivation underlying this behavior. *Excluded Traditionalists* (37% of those who save) are saving for their funeral, because they think a lot about their upcoming death and don't trust their family to care enough about them, but *Family-oriented Non-materialists* (15%) don't want to cause financial problems for their beloved family members after their death.

Table 3 | Level of financial products penetration in segments

	Fulfilled Optimists	Bored with Life	Passive Materialists	Family-oriented Non-materialists	Excluded Traditionalists
Having a bank account	100%	95%	63%	69%	17%
Use of online banking	73%	22%	14%	4%	0%
Having a bank card (debit)	98%	91%	51%	41%	6%
Having credit card	35%	9%	4%	1%	0%
Having savings	76%	29%	27%	44%	14%
Purpose of savings: for family*	39%	27%	23%	23%	18%
Purpose of savings: for traveling*	21%	5%	3%	3%	0%
Purpose of savings: for funeral*	3%	1%	1%	15%	37%

\*) – base for percentage are people having any savings in each segment

## Marketing communication

The last analysis was concerned with understanding how the different values and psychological structure of each segment have consequences in different functioning as a consumer and especially different perceptions of marketing communication. This analysis was made based on qualitative interviews, during which respondents belonging to each segment watched a set of ads and talk about them. The analyses of their reactions toward the presented ads showed big differences, which were consequences of different values and life attitudes in each group.

**Table 4 | Different opinions about banking and finances in different segments**

Segment	Statement
Fulfilled Optimists	<i>"I have a very simple account. I have a cash card and a credit card. Using them makes my life a whole lot easier. I use Internet banking. And when I go online to make payments and I see announcements about changes or suggestions I always read them."</i> (woman, 64 y. o.)
Bored with Life	<i>"Now you have to count every penny. When I go to pharmacy I always asked for a cheap equivalent, because I don't want to choose between food and medicines. I like being able to buy something nice."</i> (man, 71 y. o.)
Passive Materialists	<i>"I even went to a fortune-teller inquiring about money. But she told me that I have to really want it to win it. And I try to close my eyes and imagine having a lot of money. But I don't see it. If I could, then maybe I would win this money. I try but it's hard to see anything."</i> (woman, 65 y. o.)
Family-oriented Non-materialists	<i>"I have enough money for everything I need – bills, some shopping. I don't pay too much attention to material goods, which I don't need. I prefer to spend money on my children or grandchildren – their home improvement, language schools. I don't collect money but give them as much as I can."</i> (man, 57 y. o.)
Excluded Traditionalists	<i>"I've never had a bank account. In fact, when I used to work there were no bank accounts. You were getting cash in hand only. And I got used to it – that's how I know exactly what I'm getting. It's easier for me to manage my money this way. When your money is in the bank you can't see it."</i> (woman, 63 y. o.)

One of the tested ads advertised APAP painkiller produced by the pharmaceutical company USP. The ad, called "Mister Antoni," shows an older couple in a romantic relationship planning an excursion outside of the city. What was remarkable was the reaction of the representatives of each segment toward the ad: what elements of the ad attracted their attention, their overall impression, and who identified with the characters and who didn't (Table 5).

*Fulfilled Optimists* received the ad very positively. What they liked especially was the picture of happy, very optimistic old people. Even though they do not identify themselves with "seniors," they liked to see such people happy and satisfied with life. They were especially attracted by the developing romantic relationship among an older couple as shown in the ad. This was very attractive element of the ad because it broke the stereotype of elderly people.

On the contrary, this ad was not at all entertaining for *Bored with Life* – good relationships between people it is not their world. Usually they don't have good relations with others, including family. They are suspicious and don't trust others. Moreover, for them this was the ad about pain, sickness and sadness in old age. *Passive Materialists* focused their attention only on the old car of Mister Antoni, and they therefore perceived him as not an interesting character at all (due to low material status). They perceived the ad through their own values: power and status. *Family-oriented Non-materialists* focused on the ad scene where the old mother is confiding in her daughter about her relationship with Mister Antoni. For them, it was a story about the good relation between mother and daughter. The last segment, *Excluded Traditionalists*, have seen in the ad only the sad life of old people, but could identify with the ad based on the age of the characters.

Table 5 | Perception of the “Mister Antoni” ad in different segments

	Fulfilled Optimists	Bored with Life	Passive Materialists	Family-oriented Non-materialists	Excluded Traditionalists
Overall impression (perception of atmosphere)	Joy, fulfillment, optimism	Sorrow, old age, pain	Monotony, boredom, lack of credibility	Warmth, closeness, family relations	Peace, security
Elements attracting attention (decoded message)	Relation between man and woman (breaking stereotypes, enjoying life regardless of age)	The problem of pain, sickness, old age	Bad car of Mister Antoni – low material status of character	Mother and daughter relation (their good friendship)	Old age of characters, end of life
Identification with the message	Yes – because of the same values (joy of life, optimism)	No – because world of good relations with others is not their world	No – because of lack of their values (lack of status, power and aspiration)	Yes – based on family values and relations showed in the ad	Yes – based on old age of characters

The example of analysis of perception of advertising communication described above in each segment supports the thesis that basic human values can underlie differences in sensitivity to different keywords or key visual signals in the ad, and this can have consequence is the different effectiveness of the same ad in different segments. One ad directed to older consumers can capture the attention of some of them and be completely ineffective to others. As a consequence, different brands can be appealing to different segments of consumers. This results supported the thesis that values and other psychological constructs are very important dimensions in advertising effectiveness (Fennell, 1997).

## Summary and conclusions

A variety of terms are used to describe people in the age group above 55, such as older, oldsters, senior citizens and the elderly; however, most of them are not relevant descriptions for the majority of the contemporary population of people of this age. This group changed dramatically during the last decades, not only in Western countries, but also in Poland. First of all, they are now a very different demographic cohort than they were 40 years ago. Second, they are no longer a homogenous group. We can observe great diversity within Polish people above 55. Among them, next to stereotypical seniors are many others, for example, those who are still young physically and mentally, independent of how old they really are (Lewis, 2012; Kohlbacher, Sudbury and Hofmeister, 2011; Yoon, et al., 2005). This was supported by the study described above – even people of the same age can be completely different in respect of their values and lifestyle. And as a consequence, they can behave totally differently as consumers. Some, like *Fulfilled Optimists*, are open to everything that is new, modern and up to date. Others, like *Passive Materialists*, are constantly frustrated, looking for more products to buy, which can confirm their status and

position; however they can't afford most of the products they dream about. In turn, *Excluded Traditionalists*, the most traditional and old-fashioned segment, are the most loyal consumers to old solutions, products and brands. They still are using those products they were using when they were young.

From the presented study we can see that important demographic variables in the past, such as age, education or gender, should be treated very carefully nowadays as predictors of consumer behavior (Jacobs and Whittaker, 2012). Contemporary consumers are much less differentiated by demographic characteristics, but much more by internal values, needs and psychological features. This can have a stronger influence on one's choice of products used than demographic features do. Moreover, in order to influence the behaviour and consumer choices made by people 55+ , it is not enough to know how they behave in the consumer area. It is necessary to gain an understanding of a wider context, including their needs, motives, values, attitude to money, work and family, and to learn about many other common attitudes and beliefs, because all of those aspects determine consumer choices and behaviour. Our analysis shows that key areas, which determine particular consumer behaviour in each segment are – contrary to common belief – not demographic characteristics, but mainly psychological aspects (such as attitude to life, optimism, attitude to money, open-mindedness and general curiosity).

Marketers should remember that older citizens are an interesting target group for many regular products of daily use as well as different kinds of services (Lepisto, 1997). In particular, contrary to common belief, some in this group have earned quite a decent income, which could be spent on various consumer goods. Marketers should also remember that this group is highly incoherent; therefore one type of communication is insufficient (usually the communication relies on the senior stereotype). Obviously there are segments that will respond to traditional communication. However, the majority will not appreciate it at all and might even be put off by it (Kohlbacher, Prieler and Hagiwara, 2011).

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