
The Individual's Level of Globalism and Citizen Commitment to the State: The Tendency to Evade Military Service in Israel

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Abstract

The article inquires about the role of globalization on individual commitment to the state by studying the tendency of high school students to evade obligatory military service in Israel. We define five dimensions of the individual's level of globalism (ILG) and examine their impact on degrees of military service commitment. We suggest a new nondichotomous approach by considering, in addition to full evasion and full commitment to combat service, the option of *quasi-evasion*: to serve, but in a risk-free role. Investigating a sample of 2,705 eleventh and twelfth grade students, we find that quasi-evasion is widespread, involving 54 percent of all respondents and 40 percent of all males. More "globalized" individuals, those lacking active local ties and those with high levels of consumerism show a significantly greater tendency to evade military service. Counter to our expectations, students with lower levels of individualism also show a significantly greater tendency to evade military service.

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Introduction

This article aims to connect two of the most oft-studied social science phenomena in recent decades—the social consequences of globalization and contributions to national public goods. We explore a possible causal link between these phenomena in one salient case: the tendency to evade military conscription in Israel. While globalization has been related, among other things, to an increased connectivity and interdependence among people across borders and to an intensified consciousness of the world, it also changes conceptions of national sovereignty and may shift solidarities and perceptions of “us” and “others” within and outside nation-states. Such perceptions, in turn, may have a significant impact on the individual’s willingness to contribute to public goods.¹ Above and beyond secular conscientious objection, which is clearly on the rise in most modern societies, contemporary cultural trends such as self-centered individualism, the “me generation,” and materialist lifestyles are increasingly important as possible reasons for conscription evasion as well.²

Against this backdrop, this article highlights the conspicuous impact of the individual’s level of globalism (ILG) on high school students’ tendency to evade military service in Israel. The state of Israel has imposed obligatory military service and has faced significant external military threats ever since independence in 1948. Combined with powerful public discourse and social norms emphasizing the importance of doing military service, these conditions make it a particularly insightful test case for investigating the role of globalism in affecting commitment to army service. Specifically, we define five key dimensions of the ILG as being individualism, consumerism, self-perception as a world citizen, active local ties, and cognitive roots. We then examine their impact on high school students’ tendency to evade military service. While there exist several country-level measures of globalization that gauge macroeconomic, macrosocial, and macropolitical dimensions of globalization, there has been less effort to date to define or measure globalism at the individual level. One exception is Buchan et al. (2009) Individual-level Globalization Index (IGI) measure, which introduces an individual-level measurement of exposure to, and technical participation in, globalization in order to analyze relationships between globalization and individual cooperation with distal others in economic, social, and cultural interactions.³ Our ILG measures individual *attitudes* toward globalization such as self-perception as a world citizen, personal traits such as active local ties and cognitive roots, which nurture a dominant local as opposed to global identity, together with acculturation in the individualism and consumerism global culture. By doing so, we emphasize that the ILG is more than just exposure.

In exploring the relationship between the ILG dimensions and conscription evasion, we consider military service evasion to be more than a dichotomy. Beyond

outright service evasion and full contribution to high-risk combat service, we define quasi-evasion as the choice to serve in the military but in units that are not combat and thus involve military tasks that are much less risky. Quasi-evasion in this sense is akin to what could be dubbed “quasi-exit” or “riskless nonexit,” and may be a preferred mechanism to outright exit (noncompliance) in a context in which cultural norms and laws create high hurdles for full military service evasion.⁴ In an influential account of military conscription, Margaret Levi notes that citizens in liberal democracies tend to serve in the military and otherwise contribute to public goods even when the individual costs of doing so manifestly exceed the individual benefits.⁵ Levi’s own theory, she notes, may help to explain general patterns of compliance within a society but cannot offer an account of individual motivation, which forms the focus of the present article.

Conscription evasion in Israel has historically been relatively low considering the fact that any individual benefits could not possibly exceed the cost of losing one’s life. In the Israeli context, where more than 22,000 soldiers have lost their lives since 1948, conscription would appear to involve particularly tangible personal risks that might further increase the appeal of quasi-evasion. Compulsory military service in Israel provides a good case for studying the willingness of citizens to comply with government demands to contribute to local public goods. We argue that the ILG may be a useful explanatory variable in this context.

The article is structured as follows. The next two sections discuss the special role of military service in Israel and review the literatures on the role of globalization in affecting commitment to the state. The fourth section defines the dimensions of the ILG and spells out their hypothesized relationship with the tendency to evade military service. We hypothesize that a greater likelihood of evasion will be associated with higher levels of individualism, consumerism, and a self-perception of being a world citizen, and with lower levels of active local ties and cognitive roots in the national culture heritage and society. The fifth section discusses the methods and variables employed, while the sixth section discusses our main results. The last section concludes.

Compliance with Military Conscription: The Special Case of Israel

Since its establishment in 1948, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have been conceptualized as a “citizens’ army” and “melting pot” of Israeli society. The IDF has been instrumental in nation-building through the imposition of compulsory service for eighteen-year-old Jewish men and women and Druze men. The universal conscription has conventionally been attributed to two complementary incentives: the operational need for having the largest force possible, and the need for a social device which would help to forge a sense of national identity by welding together Jews from various countries and cultures. In the past, those who did not serve had to cope with a perception of “not belonging” to society and a deep sense of

abnormality. The system worked in a way that military service became a rite of passage to Israeli society in general, and consequently a qualification for the job market and in particular for a role in public and political life. Thus, a strong commitment to the collective was both a cause and an effect of near-universal conscription and, for men, continued to be so through service in the reserve army.⁶ Accordingly, Maysseless and Gal⁷ found, in the late 1980s, that the main influence on young Israelis' motivation to serve was a general social norm within families, social networks, and the media. We readily acknowledge that military service is, strictly speaking, a contribution to the national army and therefore not necessarily synonymous with a contribution to the nation-state. Yet, we believe this conceptual distinction is less clear-cut in the particular case of the IDF, precisely because of the unique place of IDF service in the public life of this endangered state. We follow Peri's claim that "Military service ceases to be a symbol of citizenship only in modern nation-states that no longer fight wars, or where the likelihood of conflict is remote. Israel still lives in a reality of permanent war. Disassociation from the army means disassociation from the state." In-line with Moscos and Chambers, we thus view military service as the "willingness to cooperate with the state, specifically represented by the military or the government's conscription agency." Or, as Levi puts it, "The study of military service in democracies reveals critical elements of relationship between citizen and the state."⁸

Despite the first Intifada,⁹ most potential conscripts expressed very high motivation to serve and even to volunteer for combat units. The republican principle of the citizen-soldier is deeply ingrained in Jewish Israeli culture, which has promoted an ethos of devotion to the military effort as a core social value. A change in attitudes toward this republican contract has been manifested by a growing tendency of Israeli youth to evade military service in recent years. Yet, this is unlike the widespread "crisis of conscription" in the Western world which is characterized by high rates of conscientious objection, which Moscos and Chambers define as the refusal "either to bear arms or to serve in the military or continue to serve in the military because of religious or moral beliefs that are opposed to killing, or, more recently, are opposed to relying on nuclear weapons for deterrence."¹⁰ In Israel, by contrast, conscientious objection is still a marginal phenomenon.¹¹ For other reasons, however, the conscription rate reached an all-time low of 52 percent (out of the entire eighteen-year-old population) in 2008 with an additional 20 percent of male conscripts not completing their full duration of service (IDF data, 2008). The rate of Jewish nonservers (the total of evaders and those exempted by law), according to the Knesset's (the Israeli parliament) Center for Research and Information, has grown continuously over the past three decades, from 12.1 percent in 1980 to 16.6 percent in 1990, 23.9 percent in 2002, and 26 percent in 2007. These figures are only partly explained by the numerical growth in the number of ultraorthodox eighteen-year-olds (who are exempt from service by law) from 3.7 percent in 1980 to 11 percent in 2007.¹² Additionally, only about 40 percent of those eligible for combat service actually serve in combat units today, a fact that highlights the pervasiveness of a

form of quasi-evasion (IDF data, 2008). In 1989, 64 percent of potential conscripts supported the statement that for Israeli youth service in combat units is a “must,” compared to only 44 percent who supported it in 1996.¹³ By October 1996, the trend was so clear that then IDF Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak publicly declared that military service no longer represented a core social value in the Israeli mainstream.¹⁴

Israeli scholars attribute this decline in military service commitment to a growing materialist, consumerist ethos, a consequence of both economic growth within Israel and the rise of economic globalization, which have transformed Israeli society into a market society and reduced its citizens’ willingness to make the sacrifices required by military service.¹⁵ Two parallel and related processes are at work here. First, the ethos of the market economy, with its celebration of individualistic materialistic success, has eroded the role of the IDF in defining the social hierarchy.¹⁶ Second, the erosion of national identity, itself a possible consequence of globalization processes¹⁷ is weakening citizens’ loyalty to the state and, therefore, their willingness to contribute to the public good, thereby making “exit” or “quasi-exit” a more compelling option.

Globalization: Human and Social Aspects

Globalization has been conceptualized by J. A. Scholte as increased supraterritorial connections between individuals: “People [have] become more able—physically, legally, linguistically, culturally and psychologically—to engage with each other wherever on earth they might be.”¹⁸ While globalization has a large economic component, it also encompasses the flow of ideas and knowledge across different societies, the notion of a global civil society, and the environmental movement, which regards national boundaries as unimportant.¹⁹ The spread of popular culture is both a key ingredient of globalization and an important mechanism through which it operates, as ideas and identities are diffused through the electronic and audiovisual media, including cinema, television, and the highly interactive Internet, especially among young people.²⁰ Globalization may have influenced the nature of citizenship and individual identity. An increasing number of citizens no longer feel they “belong” in terms of national affiliation—undermining the near-monopolistic position of the nation-state as the central locus of a collective identity.²¹ Norris and Inglehart suggest that the degree of globalization through exposure to the news media significantly decreases nationalistic attitudes and increases trust and tolerance of strangers. The growth of the professional middle classes, the affluence generated by economic growth, the expansion of access to the mass media and living in a more permeable society play important roles in such exposure.²²

Adolescents, the relevant population when examining conscription intentions, have enough maturity and autonomy to pursue information and experiences outside the confines of their families. Yet, unlike adults, they are not yet committed to a definite way of life and have not yet developed ingrained habits of belief and behavior.

Adolescents are likely to be more open to what is new and unusual. They tend to be heavily engaged in music, movies, television, the Internet, and other media, which form the leading edge of globalization.²³ According to a 1998 United Nations Human Development Report, market researchers refer to “global teens,” young people “inhabiting the ‘global space,’ a single pop-culture world, soaking up the same videos and music and providing a huge market for designer running shoes, t-shirts and jeans.”²⁴ This focus on adolescents highlights the identity issues that are of key importance in the psychology of globalization. In addition to their local identity, young people develop a global identity based on an awareness of the events, practices, styles, and information that are part of the global culture.²⁵ While television is crucial in this process, the Internet is even more important, because it allows direct communication with other people worldwide through e-mail, chat rooms, interactive computer games, social networks, and so on. Lemish et al. (1998) have found that children aged seven to seventeen in Denmark, France, and Israel participate in similar activities and share the same media preferences and interests, regardless of the cultural differences among them; and the older the child, the more important transnational media become. This cultural and generational shift is clear to many middle-aged or older individuals, who can remember a time when their culture was firmly grounded in seemingly enduring traditions, barely touched by anything global.²⁶

Individual’s Level of Globalism

Dimensions and Hypothesized Relationships to the Tendency to Evade

When examining globalization, research has usually referred to the level of globalization of a state or society. However, globalization is also represented and understood in a different way in each individual. As we explain below, this representation is a combination of factors which constitute the level of globalization at the individual level. We propose that the ILG dimensions are: individualism; consumerism; self-perception as a world citizen; active local ties; and cognitive roots in the national culture and society. A depiction of the model we adopt is presented in Figure 1.

Individualism

Many have noted that Western culture encourages a desire to lead “a life of one’s own” and to fulfill personal goals.²⁷ Today’s rapid communications and the convergence of the personal computer with fiber-optic technology have created a “flat-world” platform, which empowers individuals from every corner of the world to both collaborate with and compete against others.²⁸ In this shrinking world, the individualistic Western outlook is available to people worldwide, even in traditionally highly collective cultures. At the same time, there is a profusion of individual roles and identities linked to categorical groups that are collections of people who share particular traits but not a thick cultural environment.²⁹ Hofstede and McCrae’s

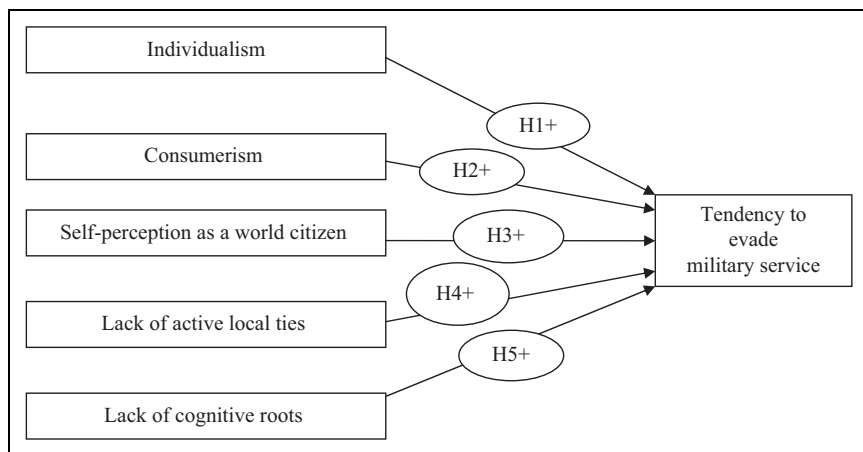


Figure 1. Research model

(2004) selective migration hypothesis suggests that today, “individuals may move in or out of a social group to find a niche appropriate for their personality traits.” As a result, it appears individual commitment to collective identities—religious, ethnic, national, or linguistic—has increasingly become voluntary and changeable rather than automatic and lasting.³⁰ Hence, we hypothesize that higher levels of individualism, as a manifestation of acculturation to the culture of globalization, reduce the willingness to contribute to the public good and encourage greater levels of free riding.

Hypothesis 1: The greater the individual’s level of individualism, the greater will be his/her tendency to evade military service.

Consumerism

Contemporary Western consumer society is argued to have a strong homogenizing effect, emphasizing consumption for its own sake. People increasingly want goods that bring immediate satisfaction, requiring little study or development of skills. Rising standards of living and the expansion of debt and credit have enhanced this trend, reducing people’s ability to defer gratification and encouraging a hedonistic outlook. Practices of democratic engagement have allegedly been crowded out by the materialistic value orientations of consumer culture, with its emphasis on hedonism, financial success, and projecting the right.³¹ Moments of national pride or solemnity are ignored in favor of channel hopping and the culture of cool interactivity to be found on the web; “the shopping mall” has replaced the Mall in London or Washington. To the extent that these trends have happened, we can therefore expect

greater levels of consumerism, a dominant characteristic of the globalization culture literature, to be related to greater reluctance to contribute to the public good, including military service.

Hypothesis 2: The greater the individual's level of consumerism, the greater will be his/her tendency to evade military service.

Self-Perception as a World Citizen

While national forms of citizenship appear to be in crisis, the notion of global citizenship has been said to be too difficult and abstract to grasp, preventing strong loyalties to supranational institutions.³² At the same time, human rights and environmental issues are examples of global culture which do seem to attract transnational individual loyalties. Beck refers to the growing "globalization of biography" and "place polygamy" of individuals: "What is coming to the fore is the *inner* mobility of an individual's own life, for which coming and going, being both here and there across frontiers at the same time, has become the normal thing."³³ An increasingly multilocal or transnational life may further hollow out nation-state loyalties: "Cultural globalization is transforming the context in which, and the means through which, national cultures are produced and reproduced"³⁴ The central psychological consequence of globalization is a transformation in identity, that is, in how people think about themselves in relation to the social environment. Cosmopolitan lifestyles are also strongly related to less nationalistic orientations.³⁵ Hence, self-perception as a world citizen may therefore decrease the willingness to contribute to the local public good.

Hypothesis 3: The greater the individual's self-perception as a world citizen, the greater will be his/her tendency to evade military service.

Active Local Ties

Interpersonal Internet networks might be the ultimate manifestation of the strength of weak ties, through which ideas, values, and behaviors reach a larger number of people and traverse greater social distance.³⁶ Furthermore, Internet networks may reduce local social capital and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from it, which may in turn reduce the capacity of a society to work together in resolving collective problems.³⁷ As an archetypal immigrant society, Israel has always aimed to increase bonding social capital by creating new forms of social solidarity and a new, encompassing national identity. The encouragement of youth movements and reinforcement of the social aspect of conscription served this goal.

In Israel, active local ties may be manifested by active membership in youth movements, a love of hiking, commitment to national values, attachment to and pride in the state, and a family tradition of strong commitment to military service. Active local ties as thus conceived strengthen the sense of continuity between the

experiences of succeeding generations, shared memories of specific events and turning-points of collective history, and a sense of a shared destiny.³⁸ Given the difficulties of life in Israel and the country's ongoing security concerns vis-à-vis its neighbors in the Middle East, a lack of strong active local ties has led more and more Israelis to prefer "leaving the neighborhood." Indeed, Israel has always had relatively high levels of emigration but this phenomenon has grown in recent years, and now involves a severe "brain drain." Emigration—which Israelis once saw as a personal failure with a sense of betrayal—has become socially tolerable behavior. In the same way, we can hypothesize that a lack of strong active local ties, which may be related to a lower local identity and might (but need not always) stem from higher individual levels of globalization, will be associated with a greater propensity to evade military service.

Hypothesis 4: The weaker the individual's active local ties, the greater will be his/her tendency to evade military service.

Cognitive Roots

In mathematics, the concept of cognitive roots refers to a meaningful unit of core knowledge that can be made the focus of attention at any time and which contains the possibility of long-term meaning (Tall et al. 2000).³⁹ In our context, the concept refers to basic familiarity with the national heritage and culture, which may reinforce a person's identification with national values. Like active local ties, strong cognitive roots strengthen the sense of continuity between generations and bind individuals through a shared pool of cultural and historical knowledge. Strong cognitive roots are thus likely to increase people's feeling of "belonging" and willingness to contribute to the local public good. Conversely, a lack of cognitive roots may decrease this willingness, and increase the tendency to evade military service.

Hypothesis 5: The weaker the individual's cognitive roots, the greater will be his/her tendency to evade military service.

Method and Variables

Data were collected in March and April 2009. After conducting a pilot study with a focus group, we distributed a questionnaire among 3,760 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students from twelve Israeli high schools located around the country. The students were of diverse social and religious backgrounds. Nine of the schools were located in large and mid-size cities and three in the periphery. Ten schools were secular and two belonged to the national-orthodox Jewish stream. Schools from the ultraorthodox Jewish stream, which their students are exempted by Israeli law from military service, were excluded from the study. In accordance with regulations, we received approval from the Chief Scientist of Israel's Ministry of Education and the consent of the headmaster of each school. The questionnaire included items

measuring the dependent variable (tendency to evade) and the independent variables (the dimensions of the ILG). Several items gathered demographic data—specifically, cohort (grade level); whether the student was in a premilitary boarding school; gender, ethnicity (Jewish or non-Jewish), and religiosity (secular versus conservative or orthodox). In addition, respondents were asked whether they were aware of their personal health profile as determined by the IDF, and if so, whether they had been given a combat profile. While we add a note of caution due to potential validity problems with self-reported measures of social-economic status (SES) completed by adolescents, we used the measure of Ensminger et al. (2000) which has been previously applied and validated on such a population.⁴⁰ The questionnaire was distributed to all eleventh- and twelfth-grade students in each of the schools. Students were instructed to answer the questions anonymously and were informed that the data would be used for research purposes only. The response rate was 72 percent, with 2,705 questionnaires returned out of the original 3,760. This response rate is higher than 55.6 percent which is suggested as a norm by Baruch (1999).⁴¹ Males comprised 49.9 percent and females 50.1 percent of the final sample.

Dependent Variable

The tendency to evade military service was measured through five items. Three items were taken from Mayselless and Gal (1989)⁴²: “If service were on a voluntary basis how would you choose to serve?”; “If you are assigned to a combat unit will you try to be switched to a non-combat unit?”; and “To what degree are you willing to serve as an officer?” The first item was answered on a five-point scale, with 1 = I would volunteer for one year; 2 = I would volunteer for two years; 3 = I would volunteer for three years; 4 = I don’t know; and 5 = I would not volunteer. The second and third items were measured on a five-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The two additional items were developed by the authors for this research. Respondents were asked whether they “intend to serve as an officer in a combat unit”; this was measured on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The final item dealt directly with the tendency to evade. Respondents were asked to choose one of the following options: “(1) I am considering not serving in the army at all; (2) I will serve but will try, as far as possible, to get an easy and risk-free job; (3) I intend to serve a meaningful non-combat role; (4) I intend to serve in a combat unit; or (5) I intend to volunteer for an elite combat unit.” Cronbach’s α for this variable was .84.

Independent Variables

The ILG was measured in terms of the five independent variables discussed above. Unless otherwise indicated, all the scales described below were measured on five-point Likert scales. (1) *Individualism* was measured through eleven items drawn from Shulruf et al. (2007) measurement tool for individualism and collectivism.⁴³

This tool measures three dimensions of individualism, as follows: competitiveness (sample item: "I define myself as a competitive person"); uniqueness (sample item: "I enjoy being a unique person distinct from others"); and responsibility (sample item: "I take responsibility for my own actions"). This tool originally contained twelve items, but we excluded one item which was unclear to the focus group, probably due to their relatively young age ("I see myself as 'my own person'"). (2) *Consumerism* was measured through sixteen items adapted from the Consumer Involvement Scale of Juliet Schor (2004), which deals with teenagers and which was validated by Bottomley et al. (2007).⁴⁴ Schor's scale measures three factors: dissatisfaction (sample item: "I wish my parents gave me more money to spend"); consumer orientation (sample item: "I like shopping and going to stores"); and brand awareness (sample item: "I like clothes with popular labels"). Based on our experience with the focus group, we changed three of the original items to make them more appropriate for Israeli sixteen- to eighteen-year-olds. (3) *Self-perception as a world citizen* was measured through thirteen items over three dimensions: global openness, attitude toward global governance, and global connectedness. For global openness, we took three items from the Global Openness Measure developed by Suh and Kwon (2002)⁴⁵ (sample item: "I have a real interest in other cultures or nations") and two from the World Values Survey (WVS, 2005)⁴⁶ (sample item: "I am ready to work and contribute for environmental issues all over the world"). Attitude toward global governance was measured through two items based on the WVS (2005) (sample item: "Israel should give away a small part of its budget in order to finance UN activities") and three additional items dealing with global government and Israeli participation in global task forces (sample item: "It seems logical to establish a global government"). Global connectedness was measured through three open items designed to capture the amount of time the respondent spent surfing international Internet sites as a percentage of his or her total surfing time; the number of the respondent's virtual friends from outside Israel as a percentage of the total number of virtual friends he or she communicates with through ICQ (or similar software); and the number of the respondent's virtual foreign friends as a percentage of the total number of friends he or she is connected with through Facebook. (4) *Cognitive roots* were measured by eight items relating to fundamental acquaintance with Israeli history, tradition, national heritage, and geography. Sample questions include: "Israel's independence was declared on November 29th" (true/false); "The three Jewish pilgrimage holidays are: ___"; and "The distance between Metula (Israel's northernmost city) and Eilat (its southernmost city) is approximately ___ km."⁴⁷ (5) Finally, *active local ties* were measured through ten items. Three dichotomous items captured personal information related to affiliation with a youth movement ("I am active in a youth movement") and the military service of the respondent's father ("My father serves in the reserve/professional army").⁴⁸ The remaining items for this variable were measured with five-point Likert scales. Two items related to the student's physical acquaintance with the country (sample item: "I can say that I have participated in hikes all over Israel"). An additional two items

were taken from the WVS (2005) (sample item: “I am proud to be an Israeli”). One item was taken from Erez and Gati’s (2004) scale⁴⁹ (“I feel ‘attached’ to the state of Israel”), and the final two items related to ideological values (“I am committed to the existence of a democratic, independent Jewish state”) and whether the respondent sees his or her future in Israel (“As an adult I will prefer to live abroad”).

Cronbach’s α for the five independent variables were: individualism (Cronbach’s α .71); consumerism (Cronbach’s α .83); self-perception as a world citizen (Cronbach’s α .78); cognitive roots (Cronbach’s α .65); and active local ties (Cronbach’s α .75). As we wanted to examine whether the independent variables impact the tendency to evade above and beyond relevant other variables, we controlled for cohort (grade level, twelfth = 1), studying in a premilitary boarding school, gender (male = 1), preconscriptio personal health profile (combat profile = 1, noncombat and don’t know = 0), ethnicity (Jewish = 1), religiosity (secular = 0, conservative and orthodox = 1), the location of the school on an urban/rural dichotomy (urban = 1), and SES of the family as self-reported by the subject.

Data Analysis

To evaluate the factor structure of the fifty-eight items representing the five independent variables, we used a principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The initial factor analysis revealed fourteen factors. Three factors included items relating to the three dimensions of individualism (competitiveness, uniqueness, and responsibility). A second set of three factors included items relating to the three dimensions of consumerism (dissatisfaction, brand awareness, and consumer orientation). Three additional factors included items relating to the three dimensions of self-perception as a world citizen (global openness, global governance, and global connectedness). Two factors included items relating to cognitive roots; and the last three factors included items relating to active local ties. Three items did not relate to any factor and were dropped from further analyses. Following Gorsuch (1983),⁵⁰ we performed a second-order factor analysis which revealed five clear factors corresponding to the five dimensions of the ILG. As the students under examination were nested in different schools, we first analyzed the data using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), which takes into consideration that students from the same school can be more similar to each other than students from different schools (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992).⁵¹ Results of the HLM showed no random variance of the different schools. Hence, we used linear regression for further analysis.

Results

We first examine the distribution of the dependent variable within our sample. Figure 2 presents for the whole sample and for different subsamples the distribution of this variable into three groups: committed, quasi-evade, and evade.

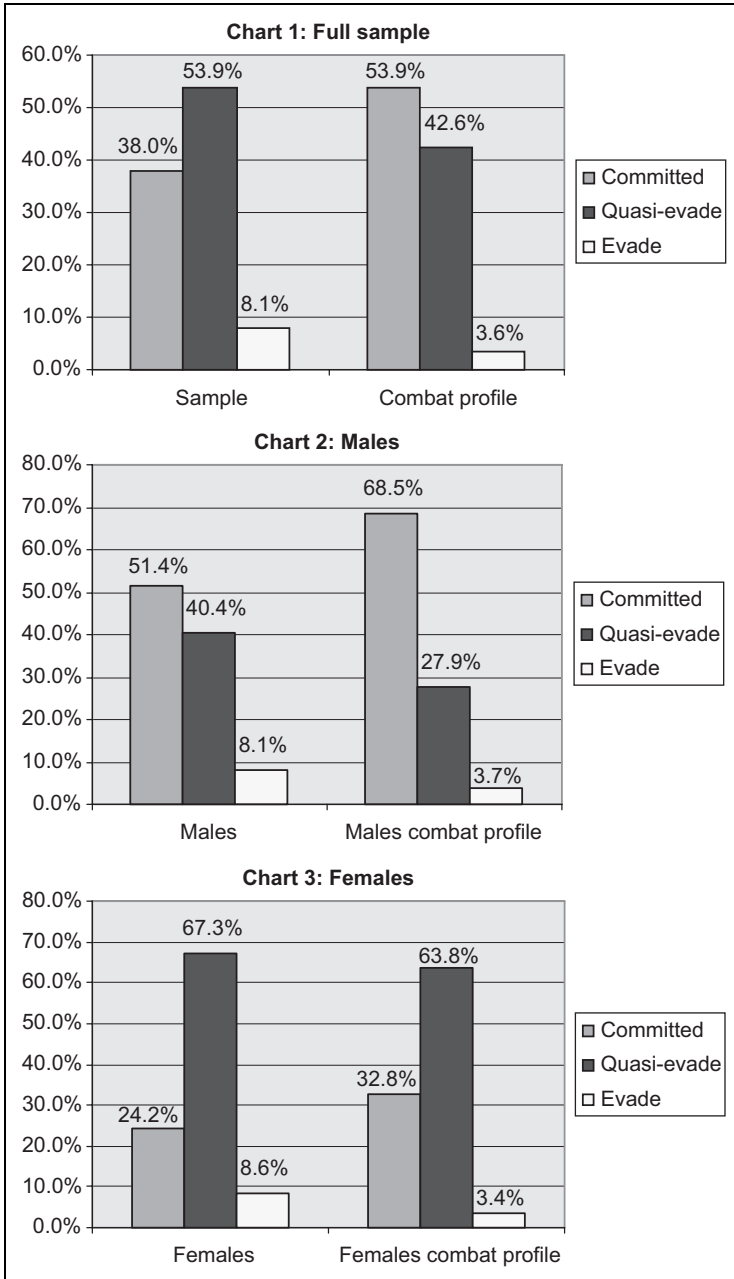


Figure 2. Intention to evade military services

To calculate these, we conducted a number of steps. First, we reversed all answers to questions that did not have the lower level of the scale indicating commitment. Second, we summed the answers of each respondent. Thirdly, we classified the answers to each of the five relevant questions as answers indicating if the person is committed, intending to evade or quasi-evade. In scoring the first item (“If service were on a voluntary basis how would you choose to serve?”), those answering 1, 2, or 3 indicating they would volunteer for one, two, or three years were classified as “committed.” The answer 4 which referred to “don’t know” was classified as “intending to quasi-evade.” The answer 5 which corresponded to “I would not serve” was classified as “intending to evade.” Answers to the second, third, and fourth questions were distributed in a similar manner, with the middle answer (i.e., “3”) in both representing a classification of “quasi-evade,” 1 and 2 indicating commitment, and 4 and 5 indicating evasion (again, after reversing was done where needed). The reversed answers to the fifth question were classified as follows: answers 1 and 2 were classified as “committed,” answers 3 and 4 were classified as “quasi-evade”; and an answer of 5 was classified as “intending to fully evade.” Fourth, we identified that a summed response of five to eleven could only be achieved by respondents who responded a “committed” answer on all five questions and that a summed response of twenty-two to twenty-five could only be achieved by respondents who responded “evade” answers on all five questions. Finally the summed response has been divided by the number of questions (five) and normalized to the [0,1] interval (CSGR Globalization Index, 2005),⁵² with 0 = fully committed to combat service and 1 = fully intending to evade.

Based on these calculations, those with normalized average scores between .85 and 1 were classified as intended to evade service. This group is represented by the right-hand bar in all three charts of Figure 2. We then identified as “committed” those respondents whose normalized average score on the five items fell between 0 and .3 and, in addition, those who explicitly reported in both the second and the final questions their intention to serve in a combat unit (even if their mean score on the five questions was above .3). This combined group is represented by the left-hand bar in all charts of Figure 2. The rest of the respondents—including those hoping for easy jobs and those aiming for more meaningful noncombat roles—were grouped together as intending to quasi-evade. They are represented by the central bar in all charts of Figure 2. Altogether, 38 percent of the respondents in the full sample indicated they intended to serve in combat units, including those who planned to volunteer for an elite combat unit and those who hoped to be officers. In all, 8 percent reported they intended to totally evade service. A clear majority, 54 percent of our total sample, indicated that they intended to serve, but not in combat units (i.e., to quasi-evade). Interestingly, among those with a military combat health profile, only 54 percent reported they intended to serve in combat units; a full 43 percent intended to quasi-evade, and 4 percent to totally evade service. Among the males with a combat health profile (Chart 2 of Figure 2), 69 percent said they intended to serve in combat units (IDF data show that only about 40 percent of those having combat

profile actually realize their potential and serve in combat units, mainly due to their own choice) compared to 33 percent of the females with the same profile (Chart 3). This difference is statistically significant ($Z = 12.64, p < .001$). Charts 2 and 3 also show that more females intended to quasi-evade (67 percent) than males (40 percent). This difference, too, is statistically significant ($Z = 13.9, p < .001$).

Due to agreed data disclosure restrictions with schools principals, we can only say that students from all schools in the central area of the country, as well as students from schools in the social periphery from other cities, report a remarkable low rate of commitment (mean score on the dependent variable was .51). Students from schools from rural areas (mean score .42) and national orthodox students (mean score .32) reported a remarkable high rate of commitment (mean score on the dependent variable for the entire sample was .45). When asked how they would act if military service were on a voluntary basis, 58 percent of the male respondents in our sample reported that they would volunteer for service of either a full or partial term. For comparison, when asked the same question in 1988,⁵³ 94 percent of male respondents gave that answer. This difference is statistically significant ($Z = 27.69, p < .001$). This salient change since 1988, pinpoints the shift toward abandonment of the republican ethos that defined devotion to the military effort as a core collective value in Israel.

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations between all variables and controls. It should be noted that the scores for all variables were reversed when needed and normalized so that all values would lie between 0 and 1. An examination of Table 1 reveals no high intercorrelations among independent variables, which might indicate multicollinearity. None of the correlations approach the .80 standard suggested by Berk (1983)⁵⁴ as indicating the presence of serious multicollinearity problems. Of the fifty-five relevant correlations in Table 1, the highest is .42.

To test our hypotheses, we ran linear regression models using, first, just the control variables (Model 1), and second, both the control variables and theoretical variables (Model 2), as shown in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 2, Model 1, the eight control variables together explain 19 percent of the variance of the tendency to evade, and all coefficients are statistically significant (six at the $p < .001$ level and two at the $p < .01$ level). None of the results here are surprising. Regarding ethnicity, non-Jewish students eligible for military service (such as non-Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union) tend to evade more than Jewish and Druze students. Regarding religiosity, secular students are known to evade more than conservative and national-orthodox students. This is in-line with IDF data (2008) indicating that national-orthodox conscripts tend to contribute more and volunteer more for combat units. IDF data also indicate that females tend to evade more than males, and that students who have been assigned a combat health profile tend to evade less than those with noncombat profiles, probably because they know they have the option to fulfill their individualistic aspirations through service (on which more below). Students in premilitary boarding schools are significantly less likely to evade than

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations

	N	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Cohort	2705	.52	.50	1												
2 Gender	2661	.50	.50	-.01	1											
3 Ethnicity	2508	.95	.23	.01	-.02	1										
4 Religiosity	2626	.34	.47	.01	.05**	.05*	1									
5 Combat profile	2635	.49	.50	.32**	.18**	.06**	.02	1								
6 Military boarding school	2442	.02	.14	0	.08**	-.01	.05**	.09**	1							
7 SES	2671	.87	.16	0	.02	.12**	-.16**	.07**	-.10**	1						
8 Urban/rural	2705	.81	.39	-.03	-.03	-.07**	-.04	-.07**	.05*	-.05*	1					
9 Lack of ALT	2705	.38	.20	-.03	-.01	-.24**	-.13**	-.16**	-.10**	-.20**	.13**	1				
10 Lack of CR	2705	.28	.23	-.11**	-.08**	-.14**	-.03	-.11**	-.04	-.12**	.01	.25**	1			
11 World citizen	2705	.47	.17	-.02	-.10**	-.08**	-.18**	.02	.02	.10**	.07**	.03	.02	1		
12 Individualism	2702	.69	.13	.01	.12**	-.03	.02	.14**	.07**	.05*	.14**	-.08**	-.07**	.16**	1	
13 Consumerism	2702	.47	.17	-.03	-.20**	-.42*	.10**	-.06**	-.03	-.19**	.10**	.13**	.16**	-.03	.13**	1
14 Tend to evade	2705	.45	.26	.01	-.17**	-.12**	-.14**	-.34**	-.15**	-.06**	.10**	.42**	.16**	-.02	-.17**	.09**

Note: SD = standard deviation; SES = socio-economic status; ALT = active local ties; CR = cognitive roots.

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed).

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed).

Table 2. Regression with the Dependent Variable

Tendency to Evade Military Service				
<i>n</i>	Model 1		Model 2	
	2272		2272	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	.71***	.04	.46***	.05
Cohort	.06***	.01	.06***	.01
Gender	-.06***	.01	-.06***	.01
Ethnicity	-.11***	.02	-.04	.02
Religiosity	-.07***	.01	-.05***	.01
Combat profile	-.17***	.01	-.15***	.01
Military boarding school	-.23***	.04	-.14***	.04
SES	-.09**	.03	.05	.03
Urban/rural	.04**	.01	.03*	.01
Lack of ALT			.44***	.03
Lack of CR			.02	.02
World citizen			-.05	.03
Individualism			-.19***	.04
Consumerism			.06*	.03
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	.19		.30	
Adjusted <i>R</i> ² change			.11***	

Note: SES = socio-economic status; SE = standard error.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

students in regular schools, due to the nature of the school and the fact that students in such schools must sign a commitment to serve in the IDF for six years after graduation. The results for cohort show that twelfth-grade students, who in the spring (when the data were collected) would face conscription in just a few months, reported a higher tendency to evade than eleventh-graders, for whom service was still more than a year away. Students from lower SES tend to evade more, perhaps because they feel less cared for by the state. However, in-line with Mayselless and Gal (1990), who explain that SES does not influence motivation to serve, we find that after entering the ILG dimensions in Model 2, the SES variable is no longer significant. Finally, as in Mayselless and Gal (1990), we find that students from urban environments tend to evade more than those from rural environments.⁵⁵

Turning to Model 2, we find that two of our hypotheses—2 and 4—were supported, while Hypothesis 3 was not. Hypothesis 2, predicting that higher levels of consumerism would be associated with a greater tendency to evade, did receive empirical support. The coefficient for consumerism is significant and positive ($B = .06$, $SE = .03$, $p < .05$). Hypothesis 4, proposing that individuals with stronger active local ties will have a lower tendency to evade military service (and vice versa), is also supported, with a significant and positive coefficient ($B = .44$, SE

= .03, $p < .001$). Model 2 explains 30 percent of the variance of the tendency to evade, which is 11 percent above and beyond the control model ($p < .001$). Hypothesis 1—predicting that students with higher levels of individualism would have a greater tendency to evade military service was rejected. The coefficient for individualism is significant but negative ($B = -.19$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). Hypotheses 3 and 5—predicting, respectively, that a stronger self-perception as a world citizen and fewer cognitive roots would be associated with a greater tendency to evade—were not supported, as their coefficients are nonsignificant. The results for Hypothesis 3 may be due to the fact that for seventeen- and eighteen-year-old students, the first two dimensions of this variable (openness to foreign cultures and to global issues, and attitude toward global governance) are remote ideological issues with a faint cosmopolitan flavor that carry little salience in regard to the immediate and tangible prospect of military service. In other words, it may be that the concrete prospect, in the lives of adolescents, of at least two or three years of military service may overshadow the influence of more abstract notions of world citizenship. We would expect that self-perception as a world citizen would have more impact on the consequences of ILG with different populations and issues.

Discussion and Conclusions

This article aimed to define and measure the dimensions of a new construct, which we call the ILG and to explore the relationship between these ILG dimensions and the tendency to evade military service in Israel prior to conscription. In addition, we introduced a new approach to the analysis of military service evasion in a context where service is obligatory by introducing the notion of quasi-evasion: the choice to serve in a risk-free role, as opposed to either fully evading service or volunteering to serve in a combat unit. A majority (54 percent) of our full sample of high school students, and 43 percent of those with a combat profile, actually declared their intention to seek such a quasi-evading noncombat role.

Salient among our regression results was the finding that lack of active local ties as well as higher levels of consumerism both significantly increase the tendency to evade. Higher levels of individualism, measured here as individual competitiveness, uniqueness, and responsibility, were found to reduce rather than increase the tendency to evade. The effect of active local ties can be explained partly by the fact that such ties are concrete and tangible (in contrast to, for instance, self-perception as a world citizen). Additionally, these ties—manifested, for example, by active membership in a youth movement or a love of hiking—express a familiarity with and love of the country, as seen also in the fact that such individuals see themselves as likely to remain in Israel as adults.

Regarding individualism, the negative and significant relationship between this variable and the tendency to evade is interesting, given that the globalization literature suggests that individualism should be associated with a repudiation of government and its demands. The particular contingencies of the Israeli context may help

explain this finding, although for the same reason these results may not be widely generalizable. Young Israelis increasingly report that they are driven by individualistic motivations such as the desire for self-fulfillment, personal achievement, independence from parental patronage, and personal responsibility. In this context, military service may actually be used by some Israeli youngsters as a vehicle to pursue their individualistic goals.⁵⁶ Thus, while the notion of army conscription as a rite of passage to the Israeli mainstream is declining over time, the military may still be seen as a rite of passage to adulthood and independence. Soen (2008)⁵⁷ found that salient motivations among eleventh- and twelfth- grade students for serving in the military were “to assume responsibility” (66 percent of his sample), “to experience new situations” (71 percent), and “to acquire mental maturity” (68 percent). The students thus may have recognized the personal benefits of their military service as fulfilling their individualistic needs.

Our study has made a theoretical and empirical contribution by defining a new construct, the ILG, measuring its dimensions; and exploring the relationship between this construct and the tendency to contribute to a national public good. However, these contributions should be seen in light of several theoretical and methodological limitations. First, while we would defend our definition of ILG as adopted in this article as plausible, it is clearly not the only way to conceive the ILG. For instance, we acknowledge that highly consumerist teenagers with few active local ties and low cognitive roots might be viewed as exceedingly cut off from the world as well as from their own nation, though we would term such individuals as being “globalised.” Yet, irrespective of how appropriate the overall term ILG is deemed to be, our findings on the effect of the five individual-level dimensions that constitute the construct ILG would still stand. Second, this research relied on self-report data, meaning that some respondents may have been reluctant to report their intention to evade. The 8 percent of respondents in our sample who stated their intention to fully evade service should therefore be regarded as a conservative estimate. Third, the representativeness of our sample is less than optimal as Israeli Ministry of Education data report that 24 percent of Jewish children learn in national-orthodox schools, whereas in our sample these children only constituted 7 percent. Our results may thus be more generalizable to secular populations. However, by controlling for religion in our regression analyses we have examined the impact of the ILG factors above and beyond the impact of religiosity. Fourth, Israel has real and measurable security concerns of a scale arguably not elsewhere found in Western societies. To the extent that it constitutes a unique case regarding conscription and national security, the generalizability of our results may therefore be reduced. On the other hand, the microlevel consequences of globalization studied here are clearly common to most contemporary societies. To the degree that this is the case, our findings regarding the effect of traits such as consumerism and active local ties (though not, perhaps, individualism) appear to be relevant well beyond the Israeli case.⁵⁸ Fifth, we examined only intent to evade, not actual evasion. This is both a limitation and, potentially, a practical contribution of our article, as our results suggest ways in

which future conscripts may be influenced by policy making while they still belong to the education system. Sixth, the definition of the control variable “combat profile” (classifying those who have a noncombat profile together with those who don’t know their profile) might have caused distortion, as those who do not know their profile may end up with a “combat profile.” Hence, we ran the proposed models on a subsample comprising of only those who are already aware of their military profile as well as on the entire sample but including a control variable indicating awareness (or unawareness) of army profile. In both cases, the results were similar to those reported in Table 2. One last theoretical caveat is in order. While this article has specifically investigated the role of ILG in influencing the tendency to evade military service, we hasten to add that ILG evidently cannot constitute the only factor explaining this tendency. Other factors not studied here are equally likely to play a role in high school students’ decision to quasi-evade such as convenience (doing service in a location close to home or to attractive cities), social congeniality (doing service together with friends, acquaintances, or ethnic or lifestyle peers), and post-military career prospects (doing service in military units that impart or enhance non-military skills that are likely to be valued on the labor market). Future research could fruitfully investigate other motivations, as well as the ILG as related to other aspects of a citizen’s commitment to the state and to public good contributions, and by using different sociopolitical contexts. Another fruitful direction for future research would be a longitudinal study comparing ILG before conscription with actual evasion and quasi-evasion rates.

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Notes

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Bios

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