

Chapter 45

Understanding Political Consumerism, Political Participation, and Their Antecedents: Evidence From Turkey

Ertem Gulen

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Oguzhan Aygoren

Bogazici University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Political consumerism is a form of self-expression where consumers boycott or buycott a brand, company, or a product. The increase in the amount of these actions in recent years has led scholars and marketers improve their understanding of how and why consumers engage in political consumerism and what its predecessors are. By employing a wide scale survey among 360 participants in Turkey, this study presents empirical and qualitative evidence for boycott behavior and investigates how other forms of political participation and individual level characteristics have an effect on political consumerism. Results suggest main reason for boycott behavior in Turkey is due to political reasons and conservatism as an individual level value orientation has a negative effect on boycott behavior. In addition, online activism and voting participation behaviors have positive effects on political consumerism.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, consumers are experiencing a transition from being a passive buyer to being a prosumer (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010), creating new consumption experiences and participating in the process of collaborative marketing. In addition, spread of Internet and new media technologies help consumers to use their power to create a change in society and form a civic engagement. This is a form of political participation by consumers, thus leading to a recent phenomenon named as political consumerism. Boycott and boycott are two main forms of political consumerism and academic literature on this field is not yet mature. Also, empirical studies in the field is rare and context dependent. By employing a survey based study among Turkish consumers, this study presents individual level antecedents for political participation in the forms of activism and political consumerism.

Literature suggests that political consumerism, just like any other form of civic and political participation, requires resources and psychological engagement (Baek, 2010; Neilson & Paxton, 2010; Newman & Bartels, 2011; Shah et al., 2007; Stromsnes, 2009). Emergence of political consumerism dates back to World War II, caused by societal changes after war and historical social shift from materialist to post materialist values and personal values. Moreover, diffusion of Internet and new media technologies and changing citizenship practices and norms also constitute the standpoint of this more general understanding of political consumerism. On the grounds of these facts, political consumerism qualifies as a form of political participation. It is becoming more and more popular thanks to increasing power of consumers.

Despite the studies in the literature examining the predictors of political consumerism, most work focus on Western societies. In spite of its historical and contemporary significance, political consumption, as a research area, has been ignored or attracted by very few scholars in Turkey. Given that literature lacks empirical evidence on understanding and conceptualizing political consumerism among Turkish consumers, the aim of this study is to understand the reasons for boycott behavior and propose a model in understanding its antecedents in Turkey.

Remaining of the chapter continues with a literature review on political consumerism and other forms of political participation. Then a section is devoted to political consumerism in Turkey. This section is followed by individual level antecedents and hypothesis. Finally, findings, discussion and conclusion are presented.

BACKGROUND

Political Consumerism: Rise of Consumption as a form of Political Participation

Consumer's behavior of buying or boycotting a particular brand or product because of ethical, social, ideological, political or environmental motivations consciously rely on 18th century; however, political consumerism is a relatively new concept which started to attract scholar's interest after 1970s. With its simplest form, political consumerism represents the use of purchasing power to support or damage a brand or company. Consumers select the producers and products in order to change the given institution or market in a way they want them to be more ethical or else (Boström et al., 2005; Schudson 2007). The first and most known definition of political consumerism is having a great impact on the term of political consumerism to be popular in the literature (Micheletti, 2003; Dubuisson-Quellier, 2009; Holzer, 2006).

21 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/understanding-political-consumerism-political-participation-and-their-antecedents/295029

Related Content

A Review of Political Participation between Youth and Elderly People in Zimbabwe: Youth and Elderly Political Participation

Obediah Dodo (2019). *International Journal of Political Activism and Engagement* (pp. 1-14).
www.irma-international.org/article/a-review-of-political-participation-between-youth-and-elderly-people-in-zimbabwe/241856

Advanced Predictive Analytics Driving Sustainable and Equitable Green Innovations Through Data-Driven Optimization and Strategic Insights

Mahima Bansod (2025). *Advancing Social Equity Through Accessible Green Innovation* (pp. 1-16).
www.irma-international.org/chapter/advanced-predictive-analytics-driving-sustainable-and-equitable-green-innovations-through-data-driven-optimization-and-strategic-insights/370237

A Review of Political Participation between Youth and Elderly People in Zimbabwe: Youth and Elderly Political Participation

Obediah Dodo (2019). *International Journal of Political Activism and Engagement* (pp. 1-14).
www.irma-international.org/article/a-review-of-political-participation-between-youth-and-elderly-people-in-zimbabwe/241856

The Relationship Between Urbanization and Household Income: Lesson From Amhara Region Metropolitan Cities

Melaku Kebede (2020). *International Journal of Political Activism and Engagement* (pp. 1-12).
www.irma-international.org/article/the-relationship-between-urbanization-and-household-income/258304

The Evolution of Cyberspace, the Blogosphere, and Their Impact on Political Autonomy and Political Participation

Michael Wabomba Masinde (2017). *Defending Human Rights and Democracy in the Era of Globalization* (pp. 81-100).
www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-evolution-of-cyberspace-the-blogosphere-and-their-impact-on-political-autonomy-and-political-participation/166644