

**Understanding and Predicting Consumers' Boycott Participation:
An Application of the Theory of Planned Behavior**

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ABSTRACT

Despite a worldwide growth in the number of boycott campaigns, the results of related studies are inconclusive as the motives behind individual participation in such campaigns are still largely ignored. Drawing on a socio-cognitive theory, namely the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the paper will aim to understand and predict consumers' participation in the boycott launched in the Arab World against American companies. This campaign, which has built gradually in the Middle East as a sign of civilian protest against the US policy in the region, is an ideal test bed for the studying of consumer boycotting motives. The analysis will be based on an empirical investigation conducted in Lebanon prior to the July 2006 war with Israel, and this through a survey administered to a randomized systematic sample of 500 Lebanese consumers. The analysis will be performed by splitting the sample into two sub-samples, grouping Muslim and Christian participants, the two main religious groups in the Middle-East. This innovative application of a social psychology theory to this area of consumer behavior, namely that of consumers' passive resistance to purchasing in such a volatile and complex research setting is expected to yield significant contributions at all the theoretical, empirical, and practical levels. This research area is of an increasingly sensitive nature due to its importance both for business stability and international relations.

Keywords: Consumer attitudes, boycotting intentions, Theory of Planned Behavior.

1. Background

Consumer behavior has chiefly advanced knowledge and modeled the processes by which consumers make decisions on whether to purchase or not in the context of every day situations. By and large, consumer behavior modeling has produced heuristic tools, which guide understanding surrounding these processes. Outside the realms of normative routine purchasing situations, social psychology approaches can predict, with some degree of success, some purchasing decisions commonly influenced by social and cultural practices.

In nowadays marketplaces, boycotting decisions are increasingly being used by consumers as an economic voting means against companies, and even more countries, judged for some reason to be unethical. In fact, consumer behavior research describes a boycott as “the attempt by one or more parties to achieve certain objectives by urging individual consumers to refrain from making selected purchases in the marketplace” (Friedman 1999, p. 4). Often organized by pressure groups, boycotts urge consumers not to buy specific products or the products of a particular country, in order to exert a commercial pressure on the latter to adopt ethical practices in their policy and behavior. Accordingly, boycotting could be tackled under the broader topics of ethical purchasing behavior or socially responsible consumption.

Although boycotts of various place and time considerations, objectives, targets and levels of participation have started attracting attention in contemporary consumer research (Herman 1992; Peñaloza & Price 1992), empirical investigations testing the motives behind consumers' participation are still limited (Klein, Smith, & John 2004). In fact, in light of how little is known conclusively about the antecedents of consumer boycotting behavior, many researchers have called for the use and development of sounder theoretical frameworks and methods in boycotting research (Klein, Smith & John 2002; Kozinets & Handelman, 1998; Sen, Gurhan-Canli, & Morwitz 2001; Klein, Smith, & John 2003; Klein et al. 2004).

In an effort to investigate empirically the various theoretically anticipated motives affecting consumers' decision to join and sustain participation in boycotts, and to improve the understanding and possibly the prediction of this behavior, the work described in the present article tried to foster research in this area by applying one of the most established theories in the attitude literature. A consumer social psychology perspective was considered to be a suitable approach for the study of the Arab consumer boycott launched against American products as a sign of protest against U.S. policy in the Middle East. The *theory of planned*

behavior (Ajzen 1991) was chosen for the study of boycott participation in a geographical area, which is not only of a sensitive nature but also of a great importance for both business stability and international relations.

2. The Theory of Planned Behavior

The expectancy value models are remarkably popular in applied social psychology, with the theory of reasoned action (TRA, Ajzen & Fishbein 1980), being until the late 1980s the most widely used model of all. This cognitive model of behavior posits a causal link between behavioral beliefs/outcome evaluations, and normative beliefs/motivation to comply, respectively with attitudes and subjective norms, as well as another simultaneous causal link between the latter two and the intention construct.

The addition of the “perceived behavioral control” (PBC) construct in the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1985, 1987) has been shown to improve the predictive capabilities of the earlier model, particularly for behaviors that are not under volitional control (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen 1992). According to Ajzen and Madden (1986), perceived ease or difficulty of performing a behavior reflects beliefs about the presence of internal as well as external factors that may further or impede performance of a behavior. Consistent with this line of reasoning, PBC which refers to a person’s expectations regarding the degree to which they are capable of performing a given behavior, has been found to contribute to the prediction of both intention and behavior. Whether these resources and obstacles are internal or external to the person is immaterial especially in the case of boycott participation. The theory is concerned only with the extent to which they are believed to be present and are perceived to facilitate or impede performance of the behavior under consideration. Unlike the locus of control behavioral concept (Rotter 1966), PBC refers to one's perception of control in specific situations, rather than a generalized individual predisposition. Accordingly, the researcher considered PBC to be a more relevant concept to assess in the context of this research.

All in all, the TPB has been effectively applied to the understanding and prediction of various behaviors (see Ajzen 1991; Conner & Armitage 1998 for reviews). The researcher believes that one area where the modeling effectiveness of the TPB is likely to be highly suitable is the Lebanese consumers’ boycott of American products as a sign of protest against U.S. policy in the Middle East. This latter boycott ensued from the official Arab boycott of Israel that has started in 1951, when seven members of the Arab League Council decided this step

comes as a logical extension of the league's military campaign to combat Israel. This research has also the potential to advance the TPB framework to predict the boycotting intentions of consumers in other Middle Eastern markets, and possibly in other similar market contexts.

The TPB proposes that intentions are the direct antecedents of behavior, and that they can be predicted by attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. The model also assumes that the latter components are respectively determined by salient beliefs and their evaluations as such: behavioral beliefs for attitude toward the behavior, normative beliefs for subjective norms, and control beliefs for perceived behavioral control. Accordingly, individuals are more likely to carry out a particular behavior if they believe that the behavior will lead to specific outcomes which they covet, if they suppose that people whose views they value think they should carry out the behavior, and if they consider that they have the needed resources and opportunities to do so.

3. Consumer Boycott as a Form of an Ethical Purchase Behavior

The literature suggests that ethical purchase behavior involves not only the buying from companies and nations whose behaviors and offerings are deemed ethical, but also the refrain from purchasing from those whose practices are judged to be unethical. In the latter case, the term refers to a “deliberate restriction of choice in purchase behavior” (Smith 2001). The research development on ethical purchase behavior was accompanied in the last three decades by studies on consumer social consciousness. Anderson and Cunningham (1972) explain that “socially conscious individuals, whose orientations are reflected in a variety of socially responsible behaviors, would manifest social consciousness in consumption decisions.” Engel and Blackwell (1982, p. 610) further described these consumers as “those persons who not only are concerned with their own personal satisfaction, but also buy with some consideration of the social and environmental well-being of others.” Similarly, the “consumer citizenship” concept describes the increasing number of consumers seeking to act beyond their own interests and taking into account the impact of their choices on others (Doane 2001).

Research in this field supplements a rising recognition that power grows out of the shopping basket. According to Dickinson & Hollander (1991), consumers increasingly use their “purchase votes” in the marketplace to elect the sort of society they wish to belong to. Yet there appears to be a shortage in the research addressing ethical consumer decision-making process, and more specifically explaining the intention of either boycotting certain products.

Though considered as “the most manifest and deliberate form of ethical purchase behavior” (Smith 2001), boycotts have seldom been a topic in the business ethics literature (Brinkmann 2002). Also, while most effective when a considerable number of consumers choose to participate in the campaign, boycotting is still understudied by social scientists.

Research related to boycotts appears to be of significant practical importance due to the repercussions that the latter can have on the performance of companies. Since groups calling for boycotts are swift in claiming success, and targets are unenthusiastic to disclose the actual consequences that these campaigns have on their operations, the scale and exact impact of boycotts appears to be difficult to assess (Klein & John 2003). Nonetheless, recent research shows that boycotts do occur and are often successful (Friedman 1999). Indeed, studies suggest that boycotts are effective in that the mere pronouncement of a boycott can have negative effects on an organization's share price, pushing the latter to take either reactive defense strategies or corrective actions (Davidson, Worrell and El-Jelly 1995; Pruitt & Friedman 1986). Contrastingly, Koku, Akhigbe, & Springer (1997) claim and support a positive financial impact of both actual and threat of boycotts on organizations. The authors explain their findings asserting that target entities may be very effective in counteracting the boycotts by taking prompt and appropriate measures. They also propose “buycotts”, as a mitigating factor, whereby sympathizers may decide to actively support the targeted organization by increasing their purchases (Friedman 1996).

4. Consumer boycott participation motives

The literature acknowledges two types of boycotts: (a) economic or marketing policy boycotts, which aim to change the target company's marketing practices; and (b) political, social or ethical control boycotts (Smith 1990), which “attempt to coerce their targets toward specific ethical or socially responsible actions” (Sen, et al. 2001, p. 400). In all instances, boycotts appear as a “protest tactic” (Herman 1992) and a “concerted non-mandatory organized effort” (Garett 1987), coercing targets to modify their policies or behavior.

Though a few studies tackle consumers' drive to participate in micro- or corporate level boycotts, work on consumers' motives to participate in macro-level campaigns are, to the best of our knowledge, quasi-inexistent. The exception is an attempt by Abou Aish, Hassan, and Abosag (2005) to develop a “macro-boycotting behavior framework”, using the country of origin (Han 1989, Johansson 1985) as a key variable behind consumers' boycotting decision. Macro-boycotting campaigns are “directed against a country's brands, due to

military, political and/or diplomatic conflict” (Abou Aish et al. 2005, p.3). The following presents a summary of the various micro-boycotting motives discussed in the literature, with the assumption that a number of these may be significant in the conceptualization of the different drives behind consumers’ participation in macro-boycotts (see Appendix 1, p.32).

Boycott participation is theorized not only as a collective effort for corporate behavior change, but also as a complex expression of each participant's individuality. On a personal level, boycott participation can be motivated by one's need for outrage expression, for self-esteem maintenance or even enhancement (Brewer & Brown 1998). Participating in a boycott called for by a group with which one identifies helps to preserve one’s sense of belonging (Sen et al. 2001). Accordingly, the effectiveness of the boycott depends on the expectations of the group members with whom the individual identifies. In addition to perceived social pressures, one’s personal feeling of moral obligation to participate in the boycott can be significant. In fact, according to Blasi and Oresick’s (1985) analysis of self-consistency, morally responsible action occurs as an expression of this sense of identity. Hence, when a person has made a personal commitment to a set of values, that person's identity becomes at stake if the behavior is inconsistent with such values.

Furthermore, an individual’s perception that his or her influence may be non-negligible could lead them to presume a strong link between boycott participation and the potential outcomes. In this case, there may be a false evaluation of the exact relationship between one's boycott participation and the target’s actual behavior (Klein & John 2003). This attitude can be due to an exaggerated assessment of one's impact, i.e. perceived effectiveness. It may also be a belief that one's actions will cause others to behave in a similar way, i.e. illusion of control.

Several noteworthy factors have been cited in the literature as restraining one's incentive to boycott. These are mainly the costs associated with the consumer’s dependence, preference and/or loyalty to the boycotted product (Smith et al. 2003), as well as the availability in the marketplace of affordable direct substitutes (Sen et al. 2001). It is worth noting that the small-agent and free-rider effects (Hardin 1968; Olson 1965) can also be significant in limiting one’s incentive to participate. Some people may consider that they would reap the benefits of a successful boycott whether or not they participate, and thus may be motivated to free ride upon the boycott actions of others. A number of consumers may also think that they are relatively small compared to the market, and hence that their actions are likely to have a

negligible impact. Nevertheless, led by the thrill of victory, some people may like to be part of a successful boycott in which case both the free rider and the small-agent effects disappear. Last but not least, the perception that such campaigns may have negative outcomes, such as increased unemployment (Klein et al. 2004) may deter one's participation.

5. Gaps in Previous Literature

The gaps in the literature on boycott participation can be summarized in four main points.

First, the majority of the existing research was related to the impact of boycotting behavior on the revenues and profits of targeted companies, with only a few studies focusing on the conceptualization of the motives behind it (e.g. Klein & John 2003; Klein et al. 2002, 2004; Smith 1985; Smith et al. 2003). Only in recent years have researchers paid attention to understanding the drives behind such participation, yet empirical studies have been very rare.

Second, much of the existing research, both at the individual and consumer group levels, has been driven by narrow theoretical frameworks. Most of the studies undertaken were developed around financial frameworks (Friedman 1985; Diermeier & Van Mieghem 2005). Studies where a socio-cognitive theoretical framework is developed and empirically tested are still largely underdeveloped. Accordingly, the researcher aims through this paper to achieve a better understanding of consumers' participation in boycotts using an extension of such frameworks.

Thirdly, although there are some indications that many boycott campaigns are actually taking place in non-western markets, most of the existing studies have been conducted in western contexts (e.g. Klein et al 2002). In view of the differences between cultures and their possible implications on social and religious beliefs, it is important to conduct such studies in different contexts. For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided to analyze the differences between the two main religious groups in the Middle East, and more particularly in the Lebanese society, namely between Muslims and Christians. Notably, religion has traditionally been of overriding importance in defining the Lebanese population, the political views and the adherence of its citizens to the numerous local political groups, as well as their recognition of their Arab identity. This fact can be of particular significance for understanding the intentions to participate in the boycott in some local subgroups. In fact, based on her familiarity with the social, religious and political distribution of the local

community, the researcher implicitly expected significant differences in the participation intention rate between these two religious sub-groups based not only on the religious, but also on the social beliefs of these two communities. It is important to notify that the regions that have been the most severely affected by the recurrent Lebano-Israeli conflict have been the ones in the southern part of the country, mostly inhabited by Muslim citizens; a fact that cannot be overlooked for the purpose of the participation comparison between these two religious communities.

Fourthly, the few studies on boycott motives conducted to date can be methodologically criticized, except for a few (e.g., Klein, Smith & John 2004), for their reliance on convenience samples, most of the time university students. This paper hence aims to develop theory based on a large sample of consumers selected in the most feasible random way given Lebanese demographics and the local infrastructure.

Accordingly, this research set out to evaluate the usefulness of the TPB model in understanding and predicting consumer boycotting intentions. The Arab Boycott, and more specifically the Lebanese consumer participation in this particular campaign, is used as a context to validate the model. However, two facts are to be borne in mind: (1) first of all, boycott participation is considered as an emotional expression of one's attitude, hence, one's learned reasoning and beliefs concerning the U.S. policy in the Middle East translated into a cognitive action, that of participating in the boycott; (2) second, this research was undertaken prior to the latest conflict and cessation of violence in Lebanon in the summer of 2006.

In response to the gaps in the literature identified earlier, and in effort to base the study of consumer boycott motives on a solid socio-psychological model deemed to be helpful for the understanding and the future development of this research field, the following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

H₁: There will be a positive relationship between attitudes towards and the intention to participate in the boycott.

H₂: There will be a positive relationship between subjective norms and the intention to participate in the boycott.

H₃: There will be a positive relationship between PBC and the intentions to participate in the boycott.

H₄: Attitude has a similar weight/effect on the prediction of boycott participation intention for the Muslim and Christian respondents.

H₅: Subjective norm has a similar weight/effect on the prediction of boycott participation intention for the Muslim and Christian respondents.

H₆: Perceived behavioral control has a similar weight/effect on the prediction of boycott

6. Research Methodology

Construction of the instrument – The design of the questionnaire allowed for the measurement of the constructs included in the TPB framework. In fact, the use of the TPB model determined the methodological directions and orientation of the study. In previous research (e.g., Ajzen & Fishbein 1980), the predictor variables in the TPB (attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC) have been measured in two different ways. Both types of measures, namely the direct and indirect ones, were used in this study; yet this paper presents only the findings related to the direct measures.

“Attitudes toward participating in the boycott” were directly assessed by asking the respondents to evaluate this behavior on the following form of stems: “My participation in the boycott against American companies would be/is...”. The items were rated on a set of six 7-point semantic differential scales with the following endpoints: “useless-useful, bad-good, unreasonable-reasonable, not beneficial-beneficial, undesirable-desirable, and unfair-fair”. Ajzen (2000) proposed counterbalancing positive and negative endpoints to control for the tendency of respondents, particularly those with very positive or negative attitudes, to mark the right- or left-hand sides without reading the labels. This procedure is designed to minimize the risk of response set. However, a number of scholars argue that this approach could be counter productive (McColl, Jacoby Thomas, & Soutter 2001). Accordingly, and after piloting the questionnaire, the various adjectives were balanced coherently across the questions. Internal consistency for this measure was .93.

For the direct assessment of subjective norms, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with two 7-point rating scales items: “Most people who are important to me think that I should boycott American companies” and “most people who are important to me, did/do actually participate in the boycott”. Responses were scored 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), and a single direct measure was obtained by averaging the responses to the two scales. The first scale has an injunctive quality, which often cause responses to have low variability because important others are generally perceived to approve of desirable behaviors and disapprove of undesirable ones (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). Accordingly, the second item was included to capture descriptive norms in the measure of subjective norm, i.e. whether important others do themselves perform the behavior. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for these two items was 0.92.

For the “direct assessment of perceived behavioral control” (PBC), whereby the items should reflect respondents’ confidence that they are capable of performing the target behavior, respondents rated their capacity to refrain from buying the products, and the likelihood of their having total control over the decision. The two 7-point rating scales (strongly disagree-strongly agree) appeared at different points in the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha coefficient score for these two items was 0.90.

Additionally, the questionnaire was designed to obtain demographic information, including age, gender, religious affiliation, educational qualifications, and conglomerate of residence.

Instrument Translation – Failure to administer the questionnaire to respondents who were not fluent in English would have drastically biased the results, as a significant fraction of the population would have been excluded based on language issues rather than on their attitude toward boycott participation. This would have been translated into a sampling error, and would have led to spurious results. Accordingly, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic, and administered either in Arabic or in English, depending on the fluency of the respondents.

The translation was, as suggested by Brislin (1986), a five step process, which began with a forward translation into Arabic, followed by a blind back-translation into English. There followed an examination of the original, the translations and the blind-back translation versions of the questionnaire, as well as a pilot-testing of the Arabic version. Finally, there was an examination of the pilot study data and subjects.

First, two professional translators translated independently the questionnaire into Arabic. The English and the translated versions were revised by the researcher for content and contextual validity purposes (Fowler, 1993). This stage allowed for the evaluation of the translated versions’ comprehensibility, acceptability, relevance and completeness (Brislin, 1986).

Next, in order to check for the congruity of meanings between the original and the translated versions, the Arabic translation was blind-translated back into English without reference to the original English version (Douglas & Craig, 1983).

The comparison between the English translation and the original questionnaire was performed by the researcher to check whether the back translation compared satisfactorily

with the original text. The researcher was to determine whether the differences between the two represented a real semantic shift. Since there was an acceptable level of agreement between the two English versions, the provisional forward Arabic translation was deemed ready for pilot testing.

The Arabic questionnaire was then administered to seven Lebanese people for pilot testing. The sample was considered to be sufficiently representative of those for whom the questionnaire was designed. Each respondent was first asked to fill out the questionnaire. A structured interview was then conducted with each individually, asking them to evaluate each question separately and determine whether the wording used made the item “*difficult to answer, confusing, difficult to understand, upsetting/offensive, or whether the respondent would have asked the question in a different way.*”

When participants reported finding an item problematic, a comparison was made to check whether this same item was considered problematic by other interviewees. A summary record of each interview was kept, listing the problem items with the comments evoked and the respondent’s suggestions for improved wording. Some of the respondents in fact revealed a concern that some items did not make sense to them. Consequently, additional minor adaptations were necessary to reach the final “interpretively valid” instrument for this study.

Participants and Procedures – A multi-stage sampling technique proved the most suitable method for this study. First, the country was stratified along the five local conglomerates, namely: Southern Lebanon, Beqaa, Greater Beirut, Mount-Lebanon and Northern Lebanon. The adoption of conglomerate stratification was based on the knowledge that people of a same religion typically cluster by geographic zones. A systematic sampling based on the fixed-lines telephone directory was used to compile contact numbers. The number of lines in each conglomerate was computed in proportion to the corresponding number of residents, with one respondent from each household sampled based on the age criteria.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted from July to September 2005, and provided information regarding respondents’ demographics, beliefs, attitudes, subjective norms, PBC, past behavior and behavioral intentions. To speed the data collection process and allow for a fuller coverage of the various regions of the country, four young graduate marketing students were recruited. The team grouped two males and two females for local social and religious

reasons, whereby some women tend to limit their contact to people of similar gender. This selection was meant to maximize access authorization. The investigators were short-listed based on their prior fieldwork experience. Each of the investigators was required an average of 4 appointments per day, and was informed that many of the interviews would be followed up by the researcher. A daily individual meeting was carried out with each of the investigators as a way to thoroughly supervise the progress of the data collection. The researcher paid particular importance to the careful selection, training, and quality control of interviewers' performance. In fact, the researcher accompanied the investigators at random instances to control for possible deviant behavior on the behalf of the latter.

In all, 500 randomly selected Lebanese consumers, aged 16 years and above, completed the survey instrument. Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. Similarly to the procedure followed in a large number of studies based on the TPB (e.g., Brenes, Strube, & Stornadt 1998; Corby, Jamner, & Wolitsky 1996; Raats, Shepherd, & Sparks 1995), participants received a \$2 cash incentive to increase response rate. Monetary incentives have frequently been used to increase survey response rates, and their efficacy has drawn the attention of numerous studies (Houston & Ford 1976; Yu & Cooper 1983). It is assumed that the use of incentives may increase the willingness of people to cooperate (James & Bolstein 1990; Willimack, Schuman, Pennell, & Lepkowski 1995). Also, several studies have proved positive incentive effects on questionnaire completeness, with no response bias, and less response errors in the presence of a measure of instrument validity (Berck, Mathiowetz, Ward, & White 1987; Goetz, Tyler, & Cook 1984; Mizes, Fleece, & Roos 1984).

Yet a number of studies have argued the adverse effects of incentives on response quality (Hansen 1980; Schneider & Johnson 1994), claiming that their use may alter the composition of the responding sample (Willimack et al. 1995), with less financially-favored or educated individuals being more prompted by the incentive than others. Nevertheless, research on incentives is inconclusive, with no tangible proof that their use negatively affects the quality of the results. Also, it was outside the scope of this work to study the effects of incentives on either the respondents' likelihood to cooperate or the quality of the responses obtained.

Of the 750 contacts selected through landline phone numbers, 721 qualified as eligible housing units. The non-qualifying 29 were considered as non-samples for either of the following reasons: unoccupied flats/houses, seasonal housing, non-residential flats, and

invalid or out-of service landline number. The final sample consisted of 258 males and 242 females. Forty-six percent (n=23) were Muslims and fifty-four were Christians (n=269). The data collection process revealed significant differences in response rates among the conglomerates which can, according to the researcher, be explained based on two essentials. First, people living in areas that were under Israeli forces' occupation prior to the year 2000, chiefly Southern Lebanon, showed particular enthusiasm in expressing their beliefs and explaining their behaviors, and therefore keener to complete the questionnaire. Secondly, the conglomerates, where the population consisted of a large Muslim community, showed significantly higher response rates possibly due to the religious implications of the boycott.

7. Results and Conclusions

The aim of this research was to investigate whether the direct measures of attitude, subjective norm and PBC can help predict consumers' boycott participation intention. A series of hierarchical regression analyses were first used to test the contributions of attitude and social norm to behavioral intentions. In essence, the researcher wished to test the usefulness of the Theory of Reasoned Action in this context. In a second stage, the researcher examined whether the inclusion of the PBC component and past behavior to the first model enhanced its predictive ability.

Descriptive Analyses

Descriptive analyses, including means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations between all of the TPB variables are presented in Table 1. The sample was first treated as one and then analyzed separately for Muslim and Christian participants, counting respectively 231 and 269 respondents. As expected, intentions to participate in the boycott showed to be, for the overall sample, positively related to all independent variables. All the relationships between the three direct measures of the TPB, namely attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control, and intentions proved to be high and statistically significant ($r \geq 0.85$, $p < .001$), thus demonstrating very strong relationships.

(Place Table 1 about here)

Analysis revealed that some consumers do bring ethical concerns, and in this particular case, US policy matters in the Middle East, into their boycott intentions and product choices. Interestingly, and particularly relevant for strategic marketing, analysis of the means reflect

an overall more positive attitude towards participating in the boycott among the Muslim participants (Mean $_{ATT-Muslims} = 5.61$, and Mean $_{ATT-Christians} = 3.79$, $p < .001$).

The mean of the subjective norms measure was also higher for Muslim than for Christian participants (Mean $_{SN-Muslims} = 4.73$, and Mean $_{SN-Christians} = 2.6$, $p < .01$). In fact, there appeared to be a greater perception among Muslim groups that important people around participants were keen for them to participate, thus strengthening their resolve and confidence to join the boycott. This can be explained first by the fact that the Lebanese areas that faced most of the past confrontations on the Lebanese-Israeli borders were inhabited by Muslim communities; second by a stronger feeling of sympathy with the Palestinian cause within this Muslim subgroup; and last but not least, by the presence of the strongest activists advocating boycott participation in the guise of the Muslim religious figures. This account is made even more plausible given the frequency analysis demonstrating that 76.6% of the Muslim segment of the sample have at some time, or is currently, boycotting US products. Just half that amount displayed similar tendencies among the Christian segment.

Moreover, Muslim and Christian participants differed in terms of PBC, with the first group having a statistically significantly higher mean on this aspect (Mean $_{PBC-Muslims} = 5.72$, and Mean $_{PBC-Christians} = 4.07$, $p < .001$). This result reflects a higher perceived control over this participation decision among Muslim respondents measured through an averaging of the two following items: “*if I want I can refrain from buying American products*” (PBC₁) and “*I have total control over whether I do or do not boycott American products*” (PBC₂). All in all, the finding that Muslim and Christian participants differed significantly in terms of their intention to participate or continue doing so appears to derive logically from the above explanations. In fact, mean figures presented in Table 1 show that Muslims were significantly more positive than Christians on their behavioral intentions (Mean $_{INT-Muslims} = 5.27$, and Mean $_{INT-Christians} = 3.18$, $p < .001$).

Comparisons of the measures between subgroups revealed higher standard deviations for all of the 4 measures (attitudes, subjective norms, PBC and intentions) applied to the Christian subgroup. Smaller standard deviations for the Muslim members of the population suggest that this group is more accurately described by the data, with lower variability between answers on each of the variables. One interpretation that may explain this is the possibility that Christian respondents were more inclined to respond at the extreme end of the scales with

their evaluations. To illustrate this correlations between intentions and each of the TPB direct variables appear to be slightly higher for Christians. In general, however, all the relationships produced particularly high values ($r \geq 0.82$).

Furthermore, the data collected helped to reveal particular characteristics common to boycotting intenders and some others specific to non-intenders. The analysis of the relationship between the respondents' conglomerate of residence, in other words area of residence and boycotting status brought up interesting results. Table 2 shows that the highest percentage of respondents who were still participating in the boycott at the time of data collection was among those living in Nabatieh (36.4%). Although, Nabatieh is located in South Lebanon, it became in the past decade considered as a conglomerate on its own given its geographical size and population density. This high percentage of boycott participation is followed by the rate observed in the Bekaa area (34.5%), then by the one in the Southern area of the country (30.4%). This latter rate was similar in Beirut, with 30.6% of the respondents claiming still to participate in the boycott. It is worth mentioning that these areas count the largest percentages of Muslim citizens, and regroup not only those who were the most affected by the Israeli Invasion from 1975-80s, but also those who live, or used to live before migrating to the capital (Beirut), on the borders with Israel. This last aspect may be of valuable insight for the explanation of consumer boycott participation in these areas.

(Place Table 2 about here)

The actual participation in the boycott seems to differ notably between the two religious sub-groups studied (see Table 3). While 23.38% of the 231 surveyed Muslim respondents had never participated in the Arab boycott of American products, 61.71% of the Christian respondents declared as such.

These figures can be explained by the fact that religious calls for boycott participation have been significantly more recurrent and decisive among the various Muslim communities than among Christian ones, as such calls from priests appear to be quasi-inexistent. Sporadic sermons in Sunday masses in the local Orthodox Church, calling for boycott participation, are considered as exceptions, and can be explained by the deep sense of Arab identity and nationalism of this community. Such views can be ruled out of existence in the local western

church, to which the majority of the Lebanese Christian community adheres given an equivocal view of the Arab identity of this group.

Yet the religious orientations of consumers are not the only factors shaping their decision to participate in the boycott of American products. In fact, the political inclinations of the Lebanese consumers affected their individual views on the participation in this campaign, mainly promoted by the Arab Nationalist Party and its various affiliations, as well as by the Lebanese Communist Party, due to their historical contempt for the American foreign policies. In this context, it is also crucial to note that, since the creation of the republic in 1943, the Lebanese have disagreed over the identity of the state. Muslims were inclined towards a close association with Greater Syria and the Arab world; whereas, Christians, particularly the Maronites (Catholics of the East), opted to link Lebanon culturally and politically to the Western world. This division in identity beliefs between the different Lebanese citizens has not only shaped the structure of the Arab Nationalist Party, but has also affected the composition of the groups participating in the boycott of American products, as a support of the Arab cause and a refusal of American interventions.

(Place Table 3 about here)

Interestingly, responses to the questionnaire and the short conversations that took place during the face-to-face survey illustrated that many respondents, especially among those in the Muslim subgroup, considered the interventions of the US government in the region and its stance towards the Arab-Israeli conflict unethical. Surprisingly, however, a number of respondents, mostly Christians, showed little intention, if any, to participate in the product boycott *per se*. The reasons given tended to gravitate towards the global nature of the problems within the Arab world, which they considered to be of no interest or consequence for them. Motives varied, but just 38.3% of the Christian respondents reported either to who boycott currently or to have done so in the past. Notably, most of the latter group of Christians reported affiliation with one of the local political parties known for their Arab nationalistic stances.

Based on previous knowledge of the social and political distribution of the local community, the researcher implicitly identified five different categories of respondents among the two religious sub-groups studied.

The Christians seemed to be divided into a majority not boycotting, either since not necessarily opposing the American policy on the contrary, or not caring about the whole campaign and not willing to give their favorite products or brands. Another group among the Christians, 38.28% of the 269 Christian respondents, claimed to have at some point participated in the boycott, some even recognizing that they still do. The researcher assumed that these could have had either communist or nationalistic orientations, given that these latter political groups did repeatedly promote this boycott campaign based on their political agenda.

The Muslim sub-sample seemed to regroup three categories of respondents. A first group not enthusiastic or willing to boycott, perhaps due to its lack of religious commitment obvious in the answers provided on questions related to religion; a second one, which similar to the above described Christian group, can be assumed to have either communist or nationalistic orientations encouraging boycott participation; and a third final group whose previous, and most of the cases actual, boycott participation could be associated to its strong religious beliefs.

Regression Analyses

The cornerstone of Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) work was the idea that the influence of attitude on behavior is mediated through behavioral intentions. The theory of reasoned action went further than the inclusion of intention as a mediator of the attitude-behavior relationship, arguing that attitude and the perceived social pressure from significant others jointly shape people's behavioral intentions (Armitage & Christian 2003). In the meta-analysis, they conducted on past research using the TRA, Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw (1988) found the mean correlation between intentions and the attitudes and subjective norm components to be 0.66.

Furthermore, several meta-analytic reviews of the TPB have showed that the augmentation of the TRA with measures of perceived behavioral control has contributed significantly to the prediction of behavioral intentions and behavior (Ajzen 1991; Armitage & Conner 2001). Based on these findings, the researcher decided to test whether the addition of this last component to the TRA model in this present application enhanced its predictive power.

Testing the Predictive Validity of the TPB for the Overall Sample

In the present study, the conducted hierarchical regression analyses allowed for assessing the sufficiency of the models through the adding of potential predictors in each stage (Table 4). This stepped approach took in the TRA components, in other words attitudes and subjective norms at the first step and perceived behavioral control (PBC) in the second. Theoretically, if the TRA was sufficient, the addition of PBC would not lead to a significant increase in the amount of explained variance.

(Place Table 4 about here)

As shown in Table 4, although attitude and subjective norms, combined together to represent the theory of reasoned action, were able to explain 86.7% of the variance in intention to participate in the boycott, the addition of the PBC in step 2 allowed the TPB model to explain 89.5% of the variance in intention to participate ($R^2 = .895$, $p < .001$). All the three components of the model, namely attitude, subjective norms, and PBC emerged as significant independent predictors for the sample as a whole.

The beta weights of these variables showed however that although attitude ($\beta = .411$, $p < 0.001$) and PBC ($\beta = .362$; $p < 0.001$) considerably influenced intention, subjective norm seemed to affect behavioral intentions only to a limited extent ($\beta = .222$; $p < 0.001$). The finding that attitude was a stronger predictor of behavioral intention than has subjective norm was similar to the results found in most TPB researches (e.g., Bentler & Speckarts 1979; Boyd & Wandersman 1991; Randall & Gibson 1991). This last aspect may be related to the fact that attitudes tap one's own attitude toward the act, whereas the subjective norm deals with the more remote concept of one's perceptions of what significant others think and do (Vallerand, pelletier, Deshaies, Cuerrier, & Mongeau 1992).

Moreover, similarly to Randall and Gibson's research findings (1991) in the field of ethical decision-making in the medical profession, the results show that the addition of PBC to the variables of the TRA did slightly improve the prediction of intentions, adding only 2.8% to the amount of variance explained in intention. The researcher suggests that this result can be explained by the following two facts: The initial model had in itself explained the variance in intentions to a great extent and, secondly, respondents may have considered participating in the boycott as being somehow under their personal control, in which case PBC may have

only a limited effect on the level of explained variance in intention. Still, the results indicated that the TPB allowed more prediction of intentions than the original TRA, and hence that the decision of boycott participation was not under full volitional control.

All in all, the above results of the regression analyses conducted for the entire sample (n=500), together with the positive Pearson coefficients between the model direct variables, presented in Table 1, provided general support for the fact that attitudes, subjective norms and PBC all held significant positive relationships with intentions to participate in the boycott respectively, hence confirming hypotheses **H₁**, **H₂**, and **H₃**.

Testing the Predictive Validity of the TPB: Muslim versus Christian sub-samples

In an absolutely innovative application of the theory of planned behavior, hierarchical regression analyses were performed for each of the two religious subgroups present in the sample. In fact, past researches based on the TPB commonly based their comparative analysis on a more conventional division of the sample, namely between intenders and non-intenders. Accordingly the stepped regression analyses conducted and presented above were repeated separately for Muslim and Christian participants. The results indicated that while the TPB was able to explain 85.8% of the variance in boycott intention for the Muslim sub-sample, ($p < 0.001$), it explained a greater amount of the variance for the Christian one ($R^2 = 0.882$, $p < 0.001$). In both cases, attitudes, subjective norms and PBC all appeared to be significant independent predictors of intentions.

(Place Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 about here)

Moreover, the comparisons of the TPB components unstandardized regression coefficients for the two subgroups revealed no significant differences in the contributions to the prediction of intentions except for subjective norms. The respective regression coefficients for the Muslim sub-sample were .40, .33 and .35 ($p < .001$), showing that in addition to the strong effect of attitudes, the perceived expectations of others and the perceived control over that choice strongly affected consumers' decision to boycott. Also, for the Christian subgroup, the respective regression coefficients of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control were .41, .25, and .33 ($p < .001$).

The literature implies that the relative contributions of attitudes, subjective norms, and PBC to the prediction of intentions usually differ among various groups of people. In their study, Trafimow and Finlay (1996) conducted within-subjects analyses across 30 different behaviors, and concluded that people differ in the relative weights they place on attitudes and subjective norms. In line with this observation, Conner and Heywood-Everett (1998) showed that the intentions of medical practitioners to refer Asian patients to mental health services were more under control of subjective norms. This observation was related to the fact that, due to their collectivist orientation to life, Asians are more likely to be affected by their social surroundings than others. Similarly, Abrams, Ando and Hinkle (1998) proved that subjective norms play a more important role in shaping ones' intentions in collectivist cultures than in individualistic ones.

These findings established through a number of studies are helpful in explaining the higher contribution of subjective norms in the prediction of the respondents' intention to participate in the boycott among the Muslim respondents. In fact, the results reflect that there appears to be a greater perception among Muslim respondents than among Christians that important people around them are keen for them to participate in the boycott and that these people do or did themselves boycott American products. Such a perception appears to strengthen the resolve and confidence of a number of Muslim participants to join the boycott. Also, based on their social and cultural beliefs, the local Muslim community in Lebanon is known to maintain closer and stronger relational ties among family members, relatives, and people from the same surrounding than other religious groups in the country.

In this perspective, Terry and Hogg (1996) assert that the strength of identification with a reference group moderates the impact of norms on intentions, with those strongly identifying with the group having stronger intentions aligned with group normative behavior. In other words, it is assumed that the better organized a community is from which the respondent belongs, the more likely the latter will internalize the general norms of this particular community. This assumption is supported to some extent by the results of this study on boycott intentions, where the standardized betas for the subjective norm variable were slightly lower for Christian than for Muslim respondents ($\beta_{SN \text{ CHRISTIANS}} = .213$, $\beta_{SN \text{ MUSLIMS}} = .282$, both significant at $p < .001$). These results reflect the higher degree of social organization and the more cohesive structure of the Lebanese Muslim community.

The Dickinson and Carsky's (2005) research found that respondents who boycott express a belief that they held sovereignty in the marketplace. Similarly, the present research demonstrated that although the sample group acted individually, they considered themselves to be part of a much larger collective group of consumers all voting in the same way. Hence, their actions were likely to apply pressure on US companies, and perhaps ultimately on the US government itself. Importantly, the respondents in this study, and especially those Muslim consumers, believed that the need to act was important as many felt a sense of responsibility for their consumption choices. By and large, these respondents wished not only to express their anger, but also to apply their religious values and have an impact on other peoples' lives through what they consume. Participation in the boycott embraced for many of these individuals the notion of sovereignty. However, the sample group appeared aware that in reality they possess only a limited degree of control. In accordance with Smith's (1990) findings, the latter is all too often governed by available choices and information. Nevertheless, many participants reported feeling compelled to act for what they perceive to be the "general good" of the Arab and Muslim community.

In sum, the above presented results showed how the various independent variables affecting the prediction of intention in the TPB were relevant both for Muslim and Christian participants, and therefore confirmed the three following hypotheses: **H₄**, **H₅** and **H₆** claiming that attitudes, subjective norms and PBC have respectively a similar weight/effect on the prediction of boycott participation intention for the Muslim and Christian respondents.

7. Research implications

Understanding why consumers choose to participate in boycotts is an important issue both for social scientists and management who formulate strategy that attempts to address such attitudes and behavior. Despite the importance of understanding the antecedents of this behavior, with few exceptions, most of the literature related to this topic has lacked theoretical development. Given the need for further development in the field of boycotting behavior, this research represents a unique and successful application of Ajzen's theory of planned behavior, as no other study using systematically this theoretical framework was identified in the extant literature.

Moreover, in light of how little is known about the motives behind consumer participation in boycotts, especially at a macro-level whereby countries are targeted, the results of the present

paper suggest that the theory of planned behavior can advance the understanding of consumer participation in boycotts. The three major predictor variables in the theory -attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control- contributed each significantly to the prediction of intentions to participate in the boycott.

Furthermore, the introduction of the ethical dimension in this study has helped to build knowledge in this area. While the boycotting of organizations that are perceived to act unethically has been studied, little attention has been given in the literature to the ethical considerations and personal motives behind consumers' boycotting decisions. This area of research is important for a number of reasons, for example, a) the growth in boycott frequency (Friedman 1999); b) the sophistication of boycott organizers who are increasingly adopting high-technology techniques to reach a wider public (Garrett 1987); c) the increasing recognition of boycotts as a legal form of social protest, whereby promoters and participants are not held liable for the financial damage inflicted by their campaign on the targeted organizations (Garrett 1987).

In addition to its theoretical and empirical contributions, this paper was intended to be of particular significance on a practical or managerial level. Indeed, international news abound with examples of targeted companies, which found themselves with no prior anticipation or justified reason at the centre of a geopolitical, religious and commercial turmoil. Research by Ettenson, Smith, Klein and John (2006) establishes that no one company is really protected against such societal boycotts launched by consumers against companies of a country. The potential harm of such campaigns is often of longer term than company-specific boycotts whose consequent drop in sales are usually transitory. The latter fact justifies firmly the need for this study.

Indeed, the findings of this work have implications at the marketing, managerial, as well as the social level. On a marketing level, the paper was concerned with a growing form of ethical purchase behavior, particularly consumer boycotts, which have significant implications on market segmentation (Engel, Blackwell, & Kollat 1973). On a managerial level, this study has implications on how management could respond to consumer boycotting intentions and develop appropriate strategic responses in such a way as to reduce the boycott impacts on the company's operations and revenues. In order to discourage consumers from participating in boycotts, it is important for businesses to understand the mechanisms by

which consumers' behavior is influenced. The TPB provides one of the most influential accounts of behavior in social psychology, and so potentially had much to offer for the development of counteractive measures. On the social dimension, this work investigated the market impacts that the consumer can have, both at the individual and group levels. It tackled in a direct manner the social control of business, which may not only shape the behavior of companies, but also the political stances of governments.

In conclusion, there is clearly a need in future research to validate the predictability strength of the model in different countries, and test its usefulness in other similar situations. In line with Hofstede's (1980) framework for assessing cultures, future research on boycott participation intention could take into the consideration how the following three cultural dimensions affect individual participation of a nation's citizens: (1) **individualism versus collectivism**, where "collectivism pertains to societies in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong and cohesive groups" (Hofstede, 1991, p. 51); (2) **uncertainty avoidance** indicating to what extent a culture programs its members to feel either uncomfortable or comfortable in unstructured situations. Uncertainty avoiding cultures try to minimize the possibility of such situations by strict laws and rules, safety and security measures; (3) **long versus short term orientation** (Hofstede 2001) describing the importance attached to the future. These different factors are likely to shape people's attitude toward boycott participation in different countries of the world. Accordingly, it would be interesting to look at various boycott instances in different countries of the world, and analyze how these three dimensions can affect boycott participation intention.

Future research could also aim at determining which underlying beliefs are most salient for the various religious subgroups; for this purpose, the direct measure of attitude should be regressed on the behavioral beliefs for each of the subgroups independently. These analyses should reflect which beliefs are significantly related to attitudes among both subgroups. At best, these analyses will reveal a number of differences based on religious and socio-cultural backgrounds, the understanding of which can help in the design of business interventions to prevent the threat and outcomes of boycotts.

A further direction that this research can take in the future is related to the measurement of the link between behavioral intention and actual boycott participation. The 2006-war between Lebanon and Israel in July 2006 made it difficult to re-evaluate the findings in this

perspective given the condition of the devastation to infrastructure and the destruction of a large number of buildings and houses in the country; however, the literature abounds with theoretical and empirical evidence to testify that intention and behavior are highly correlated (Ajzen 1991). Hence, in a subsequent stage, the researcher aims to include actual behavior in the model to test whether those individuals who intend to boycott actually do so.

Finally, this study has investigated the intention to boycott American companies selling locally in general, yet has not investigated the effect of the type of products boycotted on the boycotting intentions. It is possible that the boycotting of necessity goods may have a different psychology than the boycotting of luxury items and may carry a different degree of reflection over the decision. As there has been little investigation into the impact of type, price of substitutes and lack of alternative products on consumers' boycotting attitudes, beliefs and intentions, this would appear to be a fruitful area for future research. In addition, boycotting research would benefit from more qualitative studies of the behavior: for example, to examine in greater depth boycotting motives and issues such as the impact of the political and social environment and normative influence on boycotting behavior.

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Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations of the direct TPB variables

VARIABLES		SAMPLE (n=500)				MUSLIMS (n=231)				CHRISTIANS (n=269)			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
CORRELATIONS	1- ATT	-				-				-			
	2- SN	0.844	-			0.757	-			0.839	-		
	3- PBC	0.881	0.801	-		0.799	0.729	-		0.883	0.790	-	
	4- INT	0.918	0.859	0.902	-	0.867	0.821	0.859	-	0.914	0.847	0.893	-
MEAN		4.63	3.59	4.83	4.14	5.61	4.73	5.72	5.27	3.79	2.6	4.07	3.18
SD		2.01	1.63	2	2.35	1.43	1.08	1.58	1.84	2.06	1.37	2	2.31

Note: ATT=attitude, SN= subjective norms, PBC= perceived behavioral control, INT=intentions.
All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2: Cross-tabulation between conglomerate of residence and boycotting status

		Mouhafazah					
		Beirut	Mount Lebanon	Northern Lebanon	Bekaa	Southern Lebanon	Nabatieh
Boycotting Status	Never Boycotted	28.6%	65.4%	33.6%	29.3%	28.6%	30.3%
	Boycotted in the past	40.8%	22.0%	40.7%	36.2%	41.1%	33.3%
	Still Boycotting	30.6%	12.6%	25.7%	34.5%	30.4%	36.4%

Table 3: Cross-tabulation between religious affiliation and boycotting status

		Arab Boycotting Status			Total
		Never Boycotted	Boycotted in the past	Still Boycotting	
Religion	Muslim (n _{Muslims} =231)	23.38%	42.42%	34.20%	46.2%
	Christian(n _{Christians} =269)	61.71%	24.16%	14.13%	53.8%
TOTAL (n=500)		220	163	117	23.4%
PERCENTAGE		44%	32.6%	23.4%	100%

Table 4: Multiple Hierarchical Regressions for the whole sample, and for Muslim vs. Christian subcategories

		N=500				MUSLIMS (n=231)				CHRISTIANS (n=269)			
		B	SE	β	R ²	B	SE	β	R ²	B	SE	β	R ²
Step 1	ATT	0.67	0.031	0.670***	0.867	0.631	0.048	0.574***	0.815	0.663	0.041	0.688***	0.857
	SN	0.294	0.031	0.294***		0.458	0.052	0.387***		0.316	0.05	0.269***	
Step 2	ATT	0.411	0.035	0.411***	0.895	0.4	0.051	0.363***	0.858	0.418	0.05	0.435***	0.882
	SN	0.222	0.028	0.222***		0.333	0.048	0.282***		0.25	0.046	0.213***	
	PBC	0.362	0.032	0.362***		0.358	0.043	0.363***		0.335	0.045	0.341***	

Note: *p<0.05, ***p<0.001; ^ap<0.1, ATT=attitude, SN= subjective norms, PBC= perceived behavioral control.

Figure 1: The Application of the TPB Model to the Study of Boycotting Behavior among Muslim Participants (n = 231)

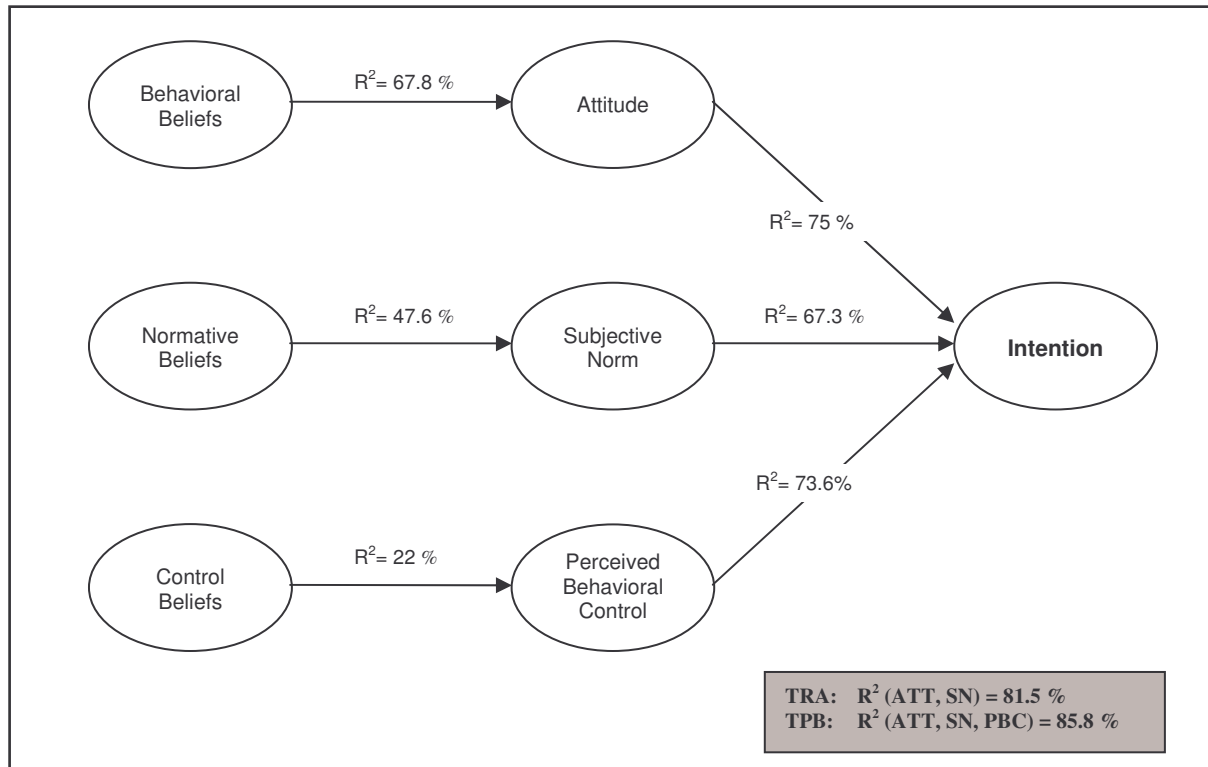
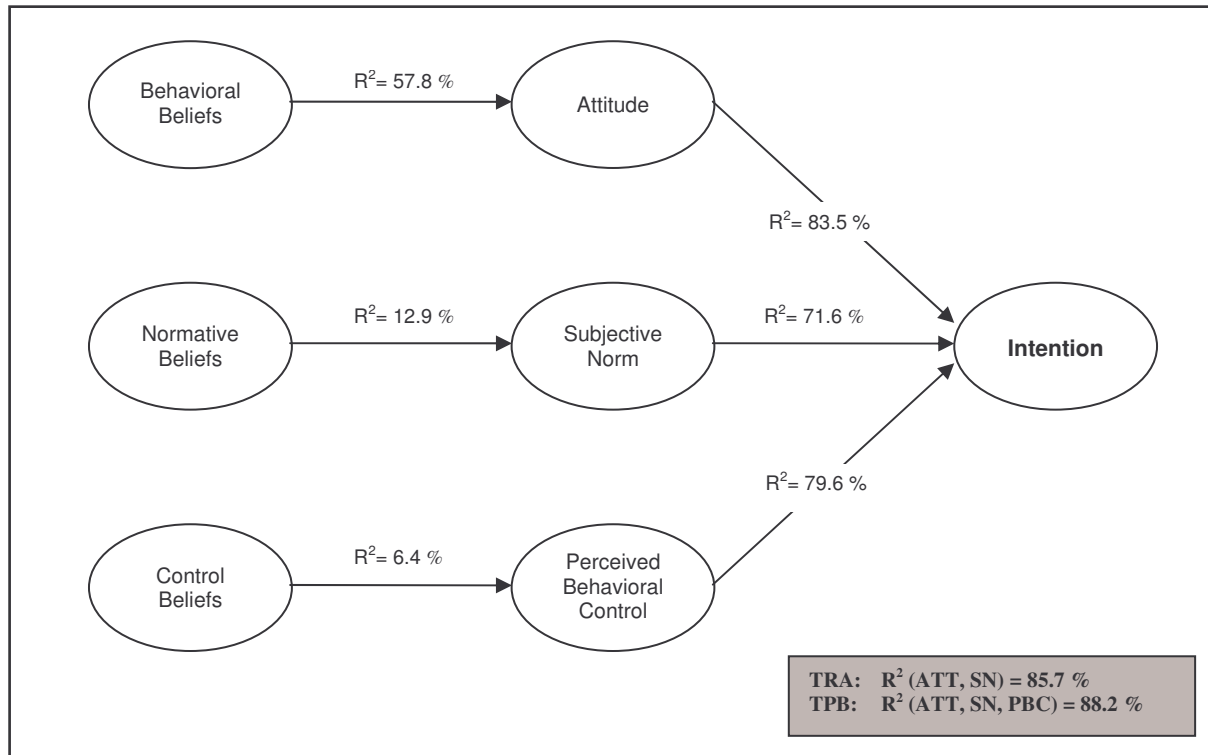


Figure 2: The Application of the TPB Model to the Study of Boycotting Behavior among Christian Participants (n = 269)



Appendix 1: Prior Research on Consumer Boycott

Author(s)	Year	Orientation	Methodological Approach	Variables Influencing Boycott Participation
Klein, Smith & John	2003 2004	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Dynamic Modeling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free-riding & small agent issues • False consensus • Expressive & instrumental motivations • Benefits & Costs
Sen, Gürhan-Canli, & Morwitz	2001	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Experiments</i> (laboratory studies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of boycott success likelihood as a function of expectations of overall participation, perceived efficacy of participation, message frame of boycott • Susceptibility to normative social influences: internal & external social pressure from reference group • Costs of boycotting: preference for boycotted product & access to substitutes
Friedman	1985 1991 1995 1999	Consumer Policy /Activism	<u>Multiple Methods:</u> <i>historical research</i> (price increase boycotts, 1900-70), <i>secondary sources</i> (media reports of U.S. boycotts, 1970-80) & <i>survey research with boycott organizers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Valence”: consumers care about the boycott issues & objectives, consumer anger & desire for justice or target punishment • Ease of participation: target easy to identify, few brand names, few competing boycotts • No adverse consequences: extent of sacrifice, substitutes readily available & acceptable • Social pressure
Kozinets & Handelman	1998	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Nethnographic data collection</i> from active boycotters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking widespread social change • Moral self-expression • “Individuation” coming to selfhood & self-realization • Express uniqueness • “Cleansing” - free from guilt

Appendix 1: Prior Research on Consumer Boycott (continued)

Smith	1990	Consumer Policy /Activism	<i>Case studies</i> of ongoing boycotts based on interviews with boycott organizers & targets, and <i>secondary sources</i>	<p>Consumers must be willing and able to boycott.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer characteristics: aware of boycott, “moral outrage” over issue, perceived consumer effectiveness • Issue characteristics: right issue at right time, understanding of & sympathy for cause • Product characteristics: connection with issue, low cost, frequently purchased, visibility of consumption • Product substitutability: availability of alternatives & consumer preferences
Witwoski	1989	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Historical Research</i> (colonial non-importation movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political & moral values • Availability of substitutes • Social pressure • Guilt / Sacrifice
Garrett	1987	Marketing Management	<i>Survey research</i> with boycott targets & organizers, and <i>secondary sources</i> (media reports)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential participants’ awareness of the boycott • Consistency of participant's attitudes with boycott goals • Participant values • Cost of participation • Social pressure / Credibility of boycott leader
Miller & Sturdivant	1977	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Survey research</i> during boycott	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential participants’ awareness of the boycott • Attitudes toward consumers’ social responsibility
Mahoney	1976	Consumer Behaviour	<i>Survey research</i> of full vs. partial boycott supporters in advance of Boycott Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations of success • Participant alienation: less perceived powerlessness • Participant values

(Source: Klein, Smith & John, 2004)