CONSUM'ACTORS: WHO ARE THEY AND WHAT DRIVES THEM TO BOYCOTT AND BUYCOTT?

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

With the rise of consumer's consideration for sustainability issues and the increased accessibility and prevalence of digital tools, consumers have more opportunities than ever to voice their concerns. This study will focus on the users of a web platform for boycott campaigns, called i-boycott.org, and a mobile application that supports boycott and buycott, called BuyOrNot. Both of those digital tools were developed by the French organization I-buycott, whose followers and users of its tools are called "consum'actors" because they are empowered consumers, actors of their own consumption.

Firstly, to know more about the consum'actors, this study investigated what the profile of I-buycott's tools users is by examining their socio-demographic characteristics, their value orientation, and their perceived marketplace influence. Secondly, this study explored which factors influence their participation in online boycott campaigns on the i-boycott.org platform.

To that end, a quantitative study was conducted based on the data from a survey shared with the followers of I-buycott on social media. The results of this study showed that consum'actors are mostly younger female adults who have a fairly high level of education and earn an average to decent income. What drives them the most to participate in boycotts is their biospheric value and their concern for the natural environment.

Key words Boycott, buycott, political consumerism, digital tools, sustainable consumption	
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1   INTRODUCTION

As climate warming has switched from a distant issue to something very concrete and impacting people across the world to various degrees, governments to companies as well as citizens have tried tackling and finding solutions to face this crisis. If the COVID-19 pandemic has been feared to have slowed down sustainable development (Héraud, 2020), on the consumers' side, a study by Boston Consulting Group showed that instead of diminishing consumers interest in sustainability issues, it had raised consumers' awareness on the importance of addressing environmental challenges (Kachaner et al., 2020). This survey also highlighted that respondents wanted to see more aggressive action on the environmental front and that they hope environmental issues would be a priority of recovery plans. Another study by the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol (2020) gathered the experience of leaders at textile brands who said that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic their customer's demand for environmentally sustainable practices and products had increased. Nearly half of the leaders who responded said they believed customers would switch brands if they did not meet their sustainability commitments, and 42% said the customers were more vocal about their demand for sustainable products. The European Commission's latest survey on the consumer conditions in 2020 showed that the share of consumers who paid attention to the environmental impact of goods and services had significantly increased between 2018 and 2020, to reach 56% of the European consumers (European Commission, 2021). In comparison, the share of consumers in France that answered that their choice of purchase had been influenced by the environmental impact of products was 55%, slightly below the European average. The annual survey conducted by the French Agency for the Environment and Energy Management (ADEME, 2020) showed that the environment remained the second most important concern of the French, only behind employment. Additionally, more than half of French people (55%) believe that there is a need to reorient the economy by supporting only activities that preserve the environment, health, and social cohesion (ADEME, 2020). In 2020, 86% of French consumers said they would be ready to boycott products with a high climate impact to fight at their level for a livable planet (IFOP, 2020).

   With the rise of concerns on the customers' side, the surge of the digital age has given a platform to be informed, exchange information, and get organized to launch collective movements and turn individual purchasing choices into collective actions (Baek, 2010; Bret Leary et al., 2019). The internet for example has helped boycott organizers reach out to inform millions of consumers in an effective, fast, and inexpensive way (Makarem & Jae, 2016; Sen et al., 2001). The consumer action that is boycotting involves the avoidance of certain products or brands based on social, political, or ethical considerations, in order to influence organizations in changing their practices (Baek, 2010; Pezzullo, 2011). Buycott, on the other hand, is the decision to deliberately purchase products or services from

a company whose practices the consumer agrees with and wants to support (Kam & Deichert, 2020; Pezzullo, 2011). Boycott and buycott are both forms of political consumerism that consist of market-based actions that aim to make consumption more sustainable by reframing its norms and including new concerns and issues (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010). Technological progress and social media have therefore made it possible for boycott and buycott campaigns to be rapidly shared among consumers and even sometimes go viral (Kam & Deichert, 2020).

This Master's Thesis will focus on one organization, called I-buycott, which created a major boycott campaign platform in France called i-boycott.org. I-buycott aims to empower consumers by promoting boycotting and buycotting, to make the economy evolve in an ethical and sustainable direction (I-buycott, n.d.-f). To that end, they have developed two digital tools to help consumers make more informed choices. The first one, and most used with over 100,000 active users, is i-boycott.org, a collaborative platform for boycott campaigns (I-buycott, n.d.-c). The second one is a mobile application called BuyOrNot, which helps consumers scan products to know more about the societal and health impact of a product as well as whether the product or its company is targeted by a boycott (I-buycott, n.d.-a). This study will take a closer look at the users of the i-boycott.org platform and the mobile application BuyOrNot. The followers of I-buycott and users of its tools are called *"consom'acteurs"* in French, translated as "consum'actors", because they are empowered consumers, actors of their own consumption.

The motivation behind the research is that, although political consumerism is one of the most researched forms of alternative political action (Ackermann & Gundelach, 2020), so far there has been little research on app-based and web-platform-based political consumerism. Those modes of digital market-based actions are more accessible than other forms of activism such as protests or blockades, so they could be more widespread among consumers and maybe serve as an entry-point to activism. Looking at what the users of those tools are like could help the I-buycott organization reach out to similar people or strategize to attract different profiles. I-buycott tools have the potential to offer consumers the information they need to better purchase according to their values, by helping them avoid companies whose (mis)conduct they do not want to endorse. The tools have a similar function as labeling schemes and shopping guides because they help consumers make more informed purchases. Because the lack of information about product sustainability can be a barrier to purchasing environmentally friendly products, the potential the mobile app and the web platform have, thanks to being easily accessible digitally, deserves to be studied. To the author's best knowledge, there also has not been any empirical research on the use of mobile apps to perform boycotts and buycotts. For example, Eli et al. (2016) only looked at the Buycott mobile app through discursive analysis but did not study the actual use and users of the app. Past research on similar websites or apps for alternative consumption did not look quantitively at their users and the use, and the apps and websites themselves do not fulfill the same aims as I-buycott's

(Dunford & Neal, 2017; Eli et al., 2016; Lyon, 2014). Studying the users of I-buycott's tools is also the opportunity to explore their egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values as well as their perceived marketplace influence. Those factors had previously been studied in relation to pro-environmental behavior but not necessarily in relation to boycotts and buycotts.

As far as my personal motivation goes, I chose this topic because I had always been interested in I-buycott's work and tools. When considering what I could do on my scale to make a difference for the environment and against polluting companies, boycotts and buycotts seemed like relevant solutions. I then started getting curious about how to engage more consumers in boycott campaigns, and how and why people start participating in boycotts. The question of whether boycott campaigns have any real impacts on companies was also a question that led me to choose this topic. Although this study will not be able to directly measure or assess the impact the platform and mobile app have on sustainable consumption and companies, it will serve as a first step to knowing more about the users and their perception.

This research will therefore aim to better understand the persons who use the platform and the mobile application to boycott and buycott: who they are, and what drives them. Ideally, this research would also help assess whether the tools have changed people's perception or consumption behavior for more sustainable and ethical alternatives. The research questions can then be specified as:

- R1: What are the I-buycott tools users' socio-demographic characteristics, value orientation, and perceived marketplace influence?
- R2: Which factors influence their participation in online boycott campaigns on the i-boycott.org platform?

The data and methodology used include a survey that was shared with I-buycott followers on social media, in order to conduct a quantitative analysis. What has been previously suggested in literature will be tested through the specific case of I-buycott and the use of its tools. After studying the socio-demographic characteristic of the users as well as their egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values, we will assess their perceived marketplace influence.

This Master's Thesis will first introduce the I-buycott organization and its tools, to later explore existing literature on boycotting and buycotting behavior. After setting the theoretical framework on political consumerism and possible factors leading to it, the methodology used will be presented, followed by the findings of the study. The results will be discussed and interpreted and lastly the limitations of this study as well as suggestions for future research will be presented.

2 THE I-BUYCOTT ORGANIZATION AND ITS TOOLS

2.1 The I-buycott organization

Before delving into the concepts of boycott and buycott, this section will first introduce the I-buycott organization and its two tools that are studied in this thesis: the boycott platform i-boycott.org and the mobile application BuyOrNot. This is important to get a better idea of the values they promote.

I-buycott was created in 2015 in France with the aim to promote what they call a "benevolent" boycott and buycott (I-buycott, n.d.-f). The organization is driven by ethical values and cares for the planet. Therefore, they hope to transform the economy towards a more ethical and sustainable one by catalyzing consumer empowerment. It relates to the concept of "voting with your wallet".

I-buycott is based on three pillars: the "boycott" to make things evolve, the "buycott" to show the way, and the "awakening" to help each other. On their website, I-buycott defines boycotting as *the power to deny the values of a firm by not buying its products, thus cutting off its raison d'être*, and buycotting as *the power to buy a good produced by a company that has the same values as us and thus to allow it to develop* (I-buycott, n.d.-e). The "awakening" pillar relates to the sharing of information. The values they adhere to regarding their beliefs and activities are as follow: open and participatory, non-violence and benevolence, dialogue and direct democracy, neutrality and independence, autonomy and responsibility, sustainable development, confidentiality, and finally transparency and donation (I-buycott, n.d.-d).

The I-buycott organization has over 150 volunteers located in France, Belgium, and Switzerland. They also have over 200,000 followers called "consum'actors" because they are actors of their own consumption and gain power from it. In 2017, I-buycott launched their label, the "buycott label", to award companies that have been voted as ethical by consum'actors.

I-buycott has created two main digital tools that give power to consumers: the i-boycott.org platform and the BuyOrNot mobile app. Through their social media profiles, I-buycott shares news of companies' misconduct to inform consumers. Once consumers are informed, they can decide to boycott the company by participating in a campaign on the online platform i-boycott.org. To help them boycott, the mobile application BuyOrNot can tell consumers whether a product or brand belongs to the company boycotted. Therefore, I-buycott provides access to information while at the same time giving the tools to act on it and empower consumers.

2.2   The i-boycott.org platform

The tool that is the most used by consum'actors is the i-boycott.org online platform. Launched in July 2016, there have been since then around 50 boycott campaigns published on the platform. The campaigns cover a variety of issues and topics: food, health, animal well-being, human rights, women's rights, children's rights, labor law, justice, finance, and the environment (I-buycott, n.d.-b).

I-boycott.org is an open and free participatory citizen platform for boycott campaigns, where anyone can start their own campaigns. Campaigns must be well documented and objective before they can go to the incubation phase in which they will be evaluated by other consum'actors and modified. It will then have to collect 1000 boycotters' participations within a month to be officially published on the platform. Once a certain number of boycotters threshold is reached, the company targeted by the campaign is informed. The company can then write an answer that will be shared with all the participants. Depending on whether the boycotters are satisfied by the company's answer, they can vote to pursue the boycott or not. During that voting phase, boycotters cannot see the decision of other participants. If most boycotters accept to stop their boycott, the campaign is closed. If not, the campaign will go on as long as the participants are not satisfied with the company's answer, and the company will have another opportunity to answer the boycott.

On the page of a boycott campaign, users can find, add, and vote for alternative products to the product boycotted. This allows boycotters to favor more ethical brands, and thus, buycott. In some cases, the i-boycott.org platform attempted to calculate the annual revenue shortfall for a boycotted company by asking boycotters how much they used to buy from that company. In doing so, they estimate an annual loss in euros that is shown on the platform.

Examples of boycott campaigns include the campaign against Petit Navire, a fish cannery company, which was targeted because of its use of fish aggregating devices that killed endangered species (I-buycott, 2016b). After the second answer of the company, 86% of the 18,475 participants were satisfied with the brand engagement to reduce their use of fish aggregating devices, and the campaign, therefore, proved victorious.

Another example of a campaign could be the one that gathers the most boycotters on the platform, against Coca-Cola. This campaign has 54,017 boycotters against Coca-Cola's plastic pollution and their use of groundwater, which deprives the populations of the poorest countries of drinking water (I-buycott, 2016a). In this case, the company has yet to provide a satisfactory answer to the participants.

2.3   The BuyOrNot mobile application

In September 2018, I-buycott launched the BuyOrNot mobile application. This application allows consumers to scan barcodes or QR codes of labeled products to inform of the health and societal impacts of the product, as seen in Figure 1 (I-buycott, n.d.-a). On the screenshot in Figure 1 for example, the health impact and the social impact of the Innocent orange juice are displayed. The mobile app presents the product and brand as belonging to Coca-Cola and informs consumers that they are targeted by a boycott.

Concerning nutritional information, BuyOrNot uses the Open Food Facts database which is participatory, free, and open source. The mobile app first displays the nutritional quality of the product based on the French Nutri-Score, which is on a 5-level scale ranging from the most nutritionally favorable product (classified A) to the least favorable product from a nutritional point of view (classified E). It shows the number of additives as well added to the product. Finally, the app also provides the Nova score of the product to show how processed the food has been, starting from "1" for minimally processed food to "4" for ultra-processed food and beverages.

On the societal side, it is directly connected to the I-boycott.org platform to receive information on current boycott campaigns that may concern the scanned products. This application aims to help consumers make more informed consumption choices and buy more ethical and sustainable products. The "delegation process" consumers use to choose products goes further than the usual trademarks, logos, labels, or certification. Consumers can now also rely on this mobile application to directly compare different products' nutritional scores. One of its features is that it tells the user which company owns the brand of the product because sometimes it is not so obvious. An example would be the multiple brands owned by the dairy products company Lactalis, which was recently targeted by a boycott campaign for allegedly polluting rivers (see Figure 2). It helps consumers be aware of whether the product scanned belongs to a company targeted by a boycott campaign, and if so, learn more about the company's misconduct.

As of November 2020, BuyOrNot has been downloaded over 100,000 times on Google Play Store and has a rating of 4.3 out of 5 based on 1,429 ratings.
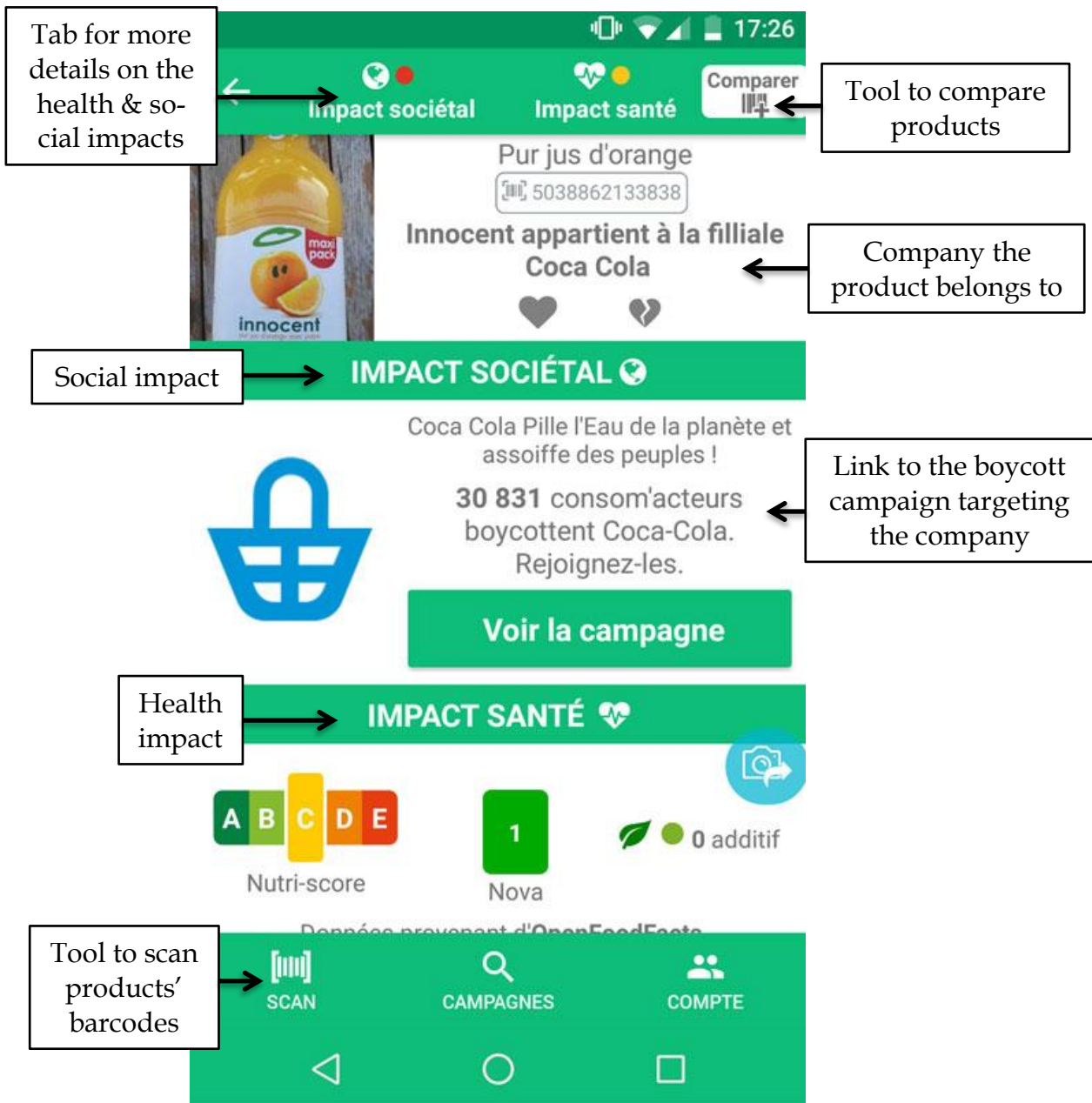
FIGURE 1 Screenshot of the BuyOrNot app, as shared on https://buyornot.org/.
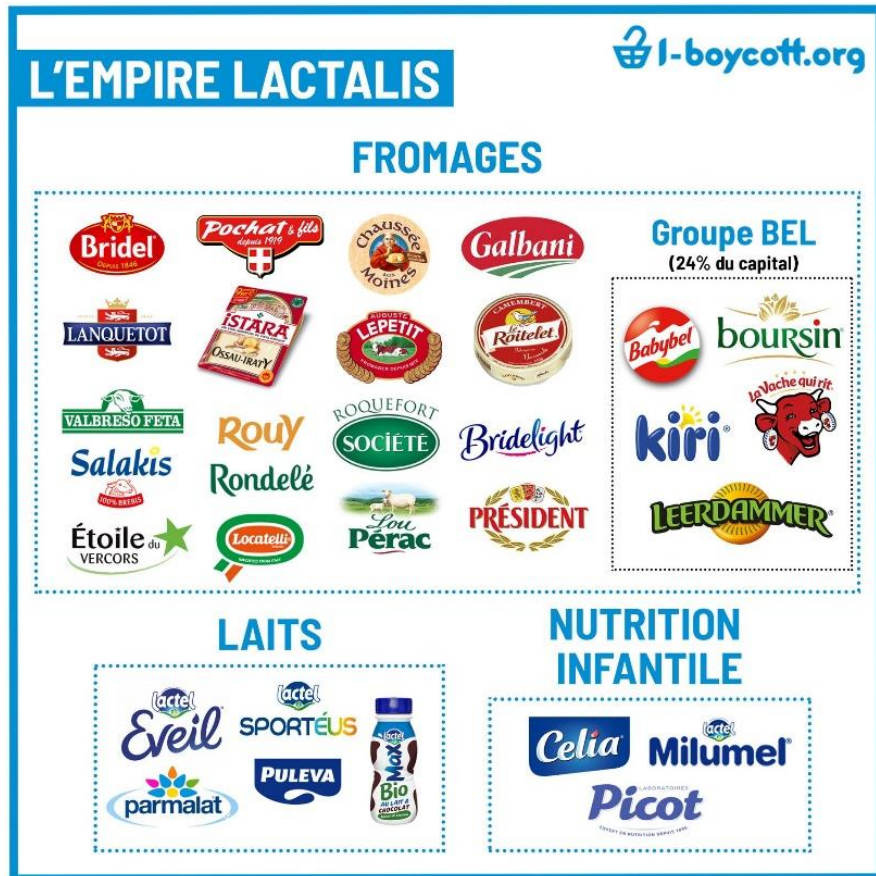
FIGURE 2 Example of brands owned by Lactalis, as shared by I-buycott. "The Lactalis Empire"

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

After discussing how I-Buycott's tools function and how they can help consumers boycott and buycott, the focus will be now on the theoretical concepts linked to boycotting and buycotting. Through their platform for boycott campaigns and their mobile app, I-Buycott features pro-social and/or pro-environmental boycotts. Choosing to purchase products and services that are deemed sustainable and ethical is a means to influence companies to improve their practices, socially and environmentally, so companies can attract those consumers. This topic belongs to the field of political consumerism, which can be defined as deliberately avoiding or purchasing certain products, goods, or services for political reasons (Copeland & Boulianne, 2020). Political consumerism considers consumption as a tool for change as well as a target of protest and criticism (Bossy, 2014).

The term "sustainability" can be understood under the broader sense of sustainable development, as defined in the Brundtland Report (1987), which is *"the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*. In this thesis, a more flexible and holistic framing of sustainability will be used, as used by Geissdoerfer et al. (2017), based on the balance and systemic integration of intra but also intergenerational economic, social, and environmental performance. Sustainable development generally invokes feelings of desirability as well as a sense of shared responsibility (Stirling, 2009, as cited in Geissdoerfer et al., 2017), which can also put the responsibility on the individual, leading him or her to act a certain way, striving for a sustainable lifestyle.

This theoretical framework will start by exploring what political consumerism is and what the characteristics of boycotts and buycotts are. Secondly, the drivers and commonalities behind boycotting and buycotting will be investigated.

3.1 Boycott and buycott as a form of political consumerism

3.1.1 Political consumerism

In scientific literature, boycotts and buycotts are often identified as forms of political consumerism, which is why it is relevant to first explore what political consumerism is, its aims, and its different shapes. While traditional forms of political participation such as voting and being a member of a political party have been on the decline, market-based actions have expanded and gained interest (Bossy, 2014; Gundelach, 2020). Stolle and Micheletti (2013, p39) define political consumerism as *"the consumer's use of the market as an arena for politics in order to change institutional or market practices found to be ethically, environmentally, or politically ob-*

jectionable". It relies on individualized responsibility-taking and incorporates political concerns in everyday life activities (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010; Stolle & Micheletti, 2013). The aim of political consumerism is to reframe the norms of consumption to make it more sustainable and include new concerns (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010). Bossy (2014) considers political consumerism as a social movement that can be studied through the utopian discourse, where consumers try to align their ideals, dreams, and hope with their practices. She presents political consumerism as one of the many labels used to define similar market-based actions, such as anti-consumerism, green consumption, ethical consumption, engaged or responsible consumption, but also voluntary simplicity and down-shifting, with the term political consumerism appearing the most often. Actors of political consumerism can vary from individual to collective entities, with beliefs ranging from alter-consumerism, where the "consum'actor" tries to change society through green or ethical consumption, to anti-consumerism, a more radical view that rejects capitalism and the consumer society (Bossy, 2014).

Concerns of political consumers include environmental issues, which makes political consumerism part of another social movement, the ecological movement (Bossy, 2014). Similarly, social issues raised by the Global Justice Movement (GJM), such as the defense of workers in the South through fair trade, can also be found within political consumerism (Bossy, 2014). These three spheres, the ecological movement, the Global Justice Movement, and political consumerism, can then overlap (see Figure 3).
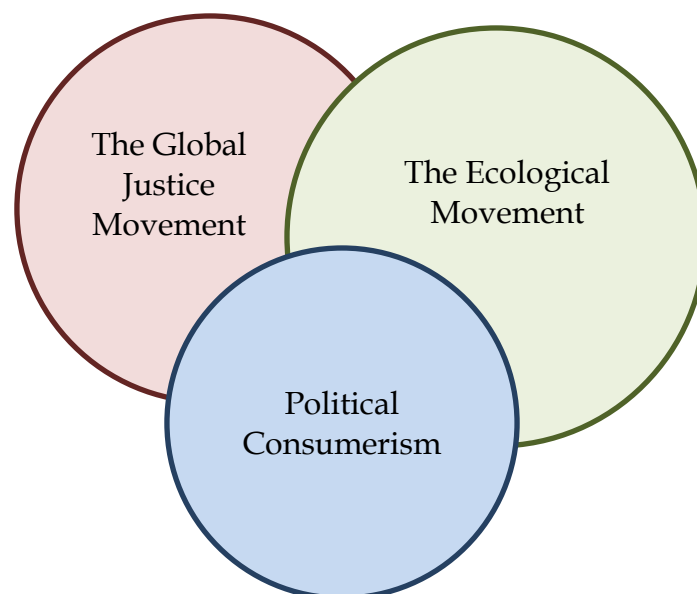

FIGURE 3 "Networks that compose different social movement and partially overlap: The global justice movement, the ecological movement and political consumerism." (Bossy, 2014)

Concerning what political consumerism can be like, Boström, Micheletti, and Oosterveer (2019) present four major forms, which are boycotting, buycotting,

lifestyle politics (such as veganism), and discursive actions (such as culture jamming). When discussing consumer-oriented movements in France, Dubuisson-Quellier (2010) introduces different forms of political consumerism, that can either emphasize the individual and its purchasing power, such as fair trade organizations targeting the consumer's responsibility, or emphasize the collective power, through protests actions or local contract schemes between producers and consumers or consumer cooperatives. Indeed, other than boycotts and buycotts, there are other collective initiatives around political consumerism, such as living in eco-villages (Bossy, 2014). Examples also include sustainable community movement organizations promoting localized consumption-based strategies or change of lifestyle, with sometimes organizations going further than influencing citizens by also pressuring politicians or companies (De Moor & Balsiger, 2019). Interestingly, some of these organizations participating in political consumerism do not present themselves as "political" and instead of criticizing political systems, claim they prefer to give concrete solutions (De Moor & Balsiger, 2019).

When looking at political consumerism in France, where I-buycott is located, data from the Eurobarometer 62.2 from 2004 help assessing how prevalent boycott and buycott used to be. It could be expected that because of its relatively contentious political culture, French citizens lean more towards boycotts and have a strong involvement in political consumerism. However, France has an average rate of participation in boycotts and/or buycotts (21.7%) compared to other North-western European countries, such as Sweden with 37% participation, Finland with 22.4%, the United Kingdom with 20.3%, and Germany with 16.3% (De Moor & Balsiger, 2019). Additional research is said to be needed to attempt to explain the differences in participation between countries (De Moor & Balsiger, 2019). On the overall regional level, data from the International Social Survey Programme in 2004 and 2014 shows that participation in boycott and buycott in North-western Europe has risen to 32.9% in 2014 compared to 27.3% in 2004 (De Moor & Balsiger, 2019). Similarly, Copeland and Boulianne (2020) state that *"in a globalized world in which citizens are increasingly frustrated by traditional institutions, we expect the prevalence of political consumerism to increase"*.

To conclude, what makes political consumerism different from normal consumption is that there is a specific intent to bring out change behind the decision to purchase or avoid a product or service. Indeed, as explained by Gundelach (2020), consumption, to begin with, is a non-political activity that becomes political when political motives and objectives drive the consumption behavior. It could be as simple as buying fair-trade coffee to support producers, and then the action takes its strength from the aggregating effect of individual purchases (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010). Accordingly, Micheletti (2003) describes political consumerism as an individualized collective action (as cited in Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010). Bossy (2014) on the other hand prefers to refer to them as collectivized individual actions because they are mainly individual actions that acquire meaning when many people perform them and when organizations promote them.

3.1.2 Boycott & Buycott

Although political consumerism can encompass actions that are more centered on the collective aspect than individual purchase choices in the supermarket, in this thesis, the focus will be on the act of boycott and buycott, both promoted by I-buycott. Starting with the definition of boycotts and then buycotts, their differences will finally be presented.

A consumer boycott was defined by Friedman (1985) as *"an attempt by one or more parties to achieve certain objectives by urging individual consumers to refrain from making selected purchases in the marketplace"* (as cited in Klein et al., 2004). This definition reminds us that consumers can only boycott if a company's misconduct or wrongdoing has been brought to light to begin with. Most of the time, NGOs are the ones alerting and calling for boycotts (Klein et al., 2004). A boycott campaign can then be referred to as a concerted refusal to spend money on a product or service, with also the aim to convince other people not to spend their money on said product, in order to influence an institution in changing its practices or conditions (Pezzullo, 2011).

Consumer boycotts have a long history and have been traced back to as far as the 14th century (Klein et al., 2004). Major influential boycotts include American revolutionaries boycotting British goods in the 18th century, or the boycott of British salt and cloth during Gandhi's strive for India's independence (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010; Klein et al., 2004). While boycotts in the past used to be about broad socio-political goals like civil rights, boycotts nowadays tend to target more corporate practices. Klein et al. (2004) argue this can be explained by the fact that multinational companies have gained power while at the same time potentially having a more vulnerable brand image and reputation since their power put them under increased scrutiny.

Boycotts can also be divided into different categories, depending on their motives and aims, as well as who or what they target. Firstly, boycotts can be expressive or instrumental (Cissé-Depardon & N'Goala, 2009; Ettenson & Klein, 2005). An instrumental boycott has the aim to make its target change a specific practice or policy, while an expressive boycott comes from the expression of discontent or anger towards corporate misconducts (Cissé-Depardon & N'Goala, 2009). Examples of instrumental boycotts, as given by Cissé-Depardon and N'Goala (2009), include a boycott aiming at lowering the price of products that are deemed excessively expensive. The goals of the instrumental boycotts are stated precisely and can be measured (Ettenson & Klein, 2005). Examples of expressive boycotts, on the other hand, include boycotts that aim to defend animal rights by boycotting companies that sell fur products, or boycotts that aim to protest unfair layoffs (Cissé-Depardon & N'Goala, 2009). Expressive boycotts are more generalized and are also a way for the protesting groups to vent their frustrations. Other than emotions, an expressive boycott can also be a means for consumers to express their values, attitudes, and individuality (Hong & Li, 2020). Their goals are stated more vaguely than for instrumental boycotts (Ettenson &

Klein, 2005). Boycott campaigns can be both instrumental and expressive depending on the motives of the individuals engaging in boycotts, and one person can boycott for both expressive and instrumental reasons, in order to express their anger towards the target and in the hope to change the target practices (Ettenson & Klein, 2005). In their study, Hong and Li (2020) argue that boycotts and buycotts are expressive in nature, especially considering the context of digital media that allows consumers to express their stance and opinions on the targeted companies.

Boycotts can also be direct or indirect depending on whether the company targeted is directly related to the offending party or not (Ettenson & Klein, 2005). The boycott of French products by Australian consumers protesting against France's nuclear testing in the South Pacific in 1996 is an example of an indirect boycott (Ettenson & Klein, 2005). Because boycotters could not directly reach the French government, they targeted French firms (and even firms that seemed French) instead. A direct boycott is more straightforward and consists of the boycott of products and services of a company whose practices are objectionable (Ettenson & Klein, 2005).

Since boycotts have consistently, if not increasingly, been used as tools for consumers to exert power on companies and make them change their practices, boycotts can be expected to have an impact on companies. However, the impact boycotts have on companies is not so clear in the existing literature, and oftentimes studies are outdated. Indeed, although there are few quantitative studies of boycott success, an example of them is Wolman's study on boycotts in American trade unions, which reports in 1914 that 72% of labor-sponsored boycotts had successfully attained their objective (as cited in Diermeier & Van Mieghem, 2008). Likewise, concerning the economic and financial impacts of boycotts, studies are not very recent and seem to have conflicting results (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010; Koku et al., 1997). In Koku, Akhigbe, and Springer's study (1997), they found that boycotts and threats of boycotts on average did not cause any financial loss for the targeted company. However, they also mentioned that despite the lack of proof of a financial impact, they could not conclude that boycotts are ineffective negotiating tools. Indeed, the negative publicity and public relations caused by the boycotts could be incentive enough for companies to answer to them (Koku et al., 1997). In Dubuisson-Quellier's (2010) article on consumer empowerment, she recalls an example of a successful boycott launched in 1965 by the National Farm Workers Association in the United States. Consumers boycotted table grapes to support the farm workers that were demanding access to labor rights. The boycott had a big economic impact with prices collapsing, which led farm owners to enter negotiations with the workers union (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010).

Although research studies can bring up instances where boycotts were successful, there are few quantitative studies on boycott campaigns' impact, influence, and successes (Diermeier & Van Mieghem, 2008). As mentioned by Bossy (2014), the counter-power that is political consumerism and boycott have had successful "fights", but the economic system has not been radically changed by them. More quantitative studies could help better explain that.

After looking at what boycotts entail, the focus will now be on buycotts. While boycotts stem from a consumer's decision to "punish" a company by avoiding its products, buycotts, on the other hand, intend to reward companies by purchasing their products (Baek, 2010). These deliberate decisions to either purchase or avoid specific products or services are based on social, political, ethical, or environmental considerations (Baek, 2010; Stolle et al., 2005). Friedman (1996) explains that buycotts function in a similar way than fund-raisers supporting non-profits, except in this case they reward deserving for-profit firms through products purchase. Examples of buycott campaigns include promoting local products and shopping local or supporting companies who follow fair trade standards, use sustainable resources or support animal rights (Kam & Deichert, 2020).

Since boycott and buycott can be considered as two different sides of political consumerism, researchers have disagreed with whether they should be regarded as different concepts or not (Hong & Li, 2020). Most authors in their study of political consumerism did not distinguish between boycotting and buycotting (Copeland & Boulianne, 2020; Nonomura, 2017), and sometimes even overlooked the act of buycotting itself (Newman & Bartels, 2011; Shah et al., 2007). However, when researchers differentiated the concepts in studies, they found differences in the predictors of engaging in boycott and buycotts and in the profile of consumers engaging in such acts (Baek, 2010; Copeland, 2013; Hoffman et al., 2018; Kam & Deichert, 2020; Neilson, 2010; Zorell, 2016). An example of how boycotts and buycotts can be different according to Neilson (2010), is that boycott is more accessible than buycott because it is easier to not buy something rather than seeking specific products, which requires more thought and efforts than boycotting. In the following chapter 3.2, other examples of how boycotting and buycotting differ will be presented, based on the consumer profiles and what drive them.

3.2   Drivers behind boycotting and buycotting behaviors

In their meta-analysis of political consumerism, Copeland and Boulianne (2020) attempted to explain why some people are more likely to engage in boycotting and buycotting. To do so, they compared how a resource-based model of political participation, in this case, the Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM), and how theories of lifestyle politics explain which factors influence participation. The CVM is one of the most prevalent explanations of participation in politics by highlighting the role of resources, psychological engagement, and recruitment. Lifestyle politics on the other hand refers to the politicization of everyday life choices, where the boundaries of the private and public sphere blur with each other (Copeland & Boulianne, 2020; De Moor, 2017). It stems from the realization that everyday decisions have global implications (De Moor, 2017). Lifestyle politics are spontaneous and rely a lot on the use of digital media (Copeland & Boulianne, 2020).

Through Copeland and Boulianne's (2020) findings as well as other scientific literature on boycott and buycott, or even on pro-social or environmentally friendly behavior, we will first investigate the profile of boy/buycotters, look at the values that drive them, and finally how they perceive their influence.

3.2.1 The profile of boycotters and buycotters

One of the first attempts to profile boycotters and buycotters on a broad scale was based on the results of the 2002/2003 European Social Survey (ESS), which is also the first time this survey included questions on the boycott and buycott participation (Gundelach, 2020). Neilson (2010) and Yates (2011) in their studies both used the European Social Survey data to differentiate boycott and buycott, also called critical consumption by Yates. While the European Social Survey data might be considered outdated and not sufficiently in-depth (Neilson, 2010), the findings of Baek (2010), Copeland and Boulianne (2020), as mentioned earlier, Dubuisson-Quellier (2010), and finally Nonomura (2017) will be used to understand which socio-demographic criteria can be linked to increased boycott and buycott participation.

Gender
Results from the 2002/2003 ESS showed that for Europe as a whole, Yates (2011) found women were 1.4 times more likely to boycott or buycott than men, while Neilson (2010) highlighted that women were 53% more likely to buycott than men, but gender did not affect the likelihood to boycott. Neilson explained this might be due to women being more engaged in marketplace and consumption activities than men, by endorsing the traditional role of shoppers. Contrarily to these results, the data from two National Civic Engagement Surveys (NCEV) conducted in 2002 in the US showed that men's engagement in boycotting was slightly higher than women's, but there was no gender difference between the people who buycotted (Baek, 2010).

Age
Concerning the age of people involved in boycotting or buycotting, the European Social Survey showed that older individuals were more involved in critical consumption (Yates, 2011). Similarly, Baek (2010) results demonstrated middle-aged generations practiced political consumption more frequently than younger generations. In his study on youth participation in political consumerism Nonomura (2017) used the 2008 Statistics Canada GSS on Social Networks data to investigate the relationship between age and politically motivated consumer behavior. The data showed that middle-aged individuals were more likely to engage in political consumption than younger and older groups. Copeland and Boulianne's (2020) meta-analysis also showed that studies suggested middle-aged people were more likely to participate, while most studies found a positive and significant linear relationship between age and political consumerism.

Education

Yates (2011) found that the longer individual had benefitted from education, the more likely they were to engage in critical consumption. Respondents who had attended university were twice more likely to boycott and buycott than individuals who had an average of 11 years of schooling. Education also seemed to affect buycotting behavior to a greater extent than boycotting. Baek (2010) found that while highly educated people engaged more in political consumerism, people who had at least a BA degree were more likely to boycott than buycott, and people who had not graduated from high school favored more buycotting. Nonomura (2017) and Copeland and Boulianne (2020) also found that education was a strong predictor of political consumerism, even more so than age.

Income

Concerning the income and financial resources, Dubuisson-Quellier's (2010) study on consumer-oriented movements in France argued that high-income consumers cared more about purchasing products for ethical reasons than low-income consumers. Baek's (2010) results based on the 2002 NCEV showed that people engaging in political consumerism were relatively wealthier than those who did not. This also correlates with Nonomura's (2017) findings that individuals with higher annual household incomes have higher odds of participation in political consumerism. However, Copeland and Boulianne's (2020) meta-analysis showed the relationship between income and participation in political consumerism is nuanced, with a positive but not statistically significant effect. Income did not appear to matter for political consumerism, in contrast with the level of education that seemed to be a significant predictor.

Urban or rural resident

Another interesting finding from Nonomura's (2017) study was the differentiation between respondents from rural or urban regions. Individuals from urban regions were much more likely to engage in political consumerism than those from rural regions.

In conclusion, while some studies had slightly diverging findings on characteristics like gender or income, education consistently proved to be a strong predictor of participation in boycotts or buycotts. About education, age, and income, Copeland and Boulianne (2020) meta-analysis results supported as much the expectations of the Civic Voluntarism Model (CVM), where higher education and middle-aged individuals were more likely to participate in political consumerism, as the expectations of lifestyle politics theories, where in this case higher education mattered as well, but so did a higher income. To go a bit further, they concluded that political consumers tended to be *"middle-aged, well-educated individuals who are interested in politics but skeptical of traditional institutions"*.

3.2.2 Values

Political consumerism as a form of individualized political action can help reduce cognitive dissonance between individual dispositions and behaviors (Ackermann & Gundelach, 2020). It is therefore important to investigate a person's values since they could be a reason or a driver behind engaging in boycotts or buycotts. Indeed, because boycotting is a planned and rational decision, the values might help reveal the hidden aspect of boycotting in the consumer's mind (Delistavrou et al., 2020). As explained by de Groot and Steg (2008), values reflect a belief in the desirability of a certain end-state, they remain rather abstract and can transcend specific situations, and finally, they can be used to evaluate people behaviors by assessing which values they prioritize. Schwartz (1992, 1994, as cited in de Groot & Steg, 2008), developed a classification of 56 different values that respondents can grade on a 9 points-scale to explain to which extent each value is considered as *"a guiding principle in one's life"*. Those values range from openness to change versus conservatism to self-transcendent versus self-enhancement dimensions.

One of the self-transcendent values, altruism, has often been used as an explanation behind pro-social and pro-environmental behavior, such as in Neilson's (2010) study on political consumerism based on the 2002/2003 European Social Survey (ESS) for example, where she analyzed the effect of altruism on boycotting and buycotting behavior. She presents altruism as a behavior that intends to benefit others, and which stems from the degree to which an individual weighs the welfare of others relative to his or her own benefit (Sawyer, 1966, as cited by Neilson, 2010). Neilson (2010) further found that the more altruistic people were more likely to buycott than boycott, presumably because of the reward orientation of buycotting versus the protest orientation of boycotting. When comparing altruism levels with levels of competitiveness, boycotters and buycotters were more altruistic and less competitive than people that did not engage in political consumerism (Neilson, 2010). She concluded that this probably meant that boycotting behaviors are not only motivated by the desire to damage a company that misconducts but instead are also motivated by the desire to bring positive change to society.

The value-belief-norm (VBN) theory developed by Stern (2000) to explain environmentally significant behavior draws on the influence of the altruistic value, as well as the biospheric value, and egoistic value. The altruistic value is linked to self-transcendent values and was chosen for this theory because it is assumed that people need altruistic motives to care for the public good that is environmental quality (Heberlein, 1972, as cited in Stern, 2000). The egoistic value, on the other hand, is based on self-enhancement and traditional values such as obedience, self-discipline, and family security, which are values that have usually been negatively associated with pro-environmental behavior in studies (Stern, 2000). The third value, the biospheric value, relates to when people focus on the interests of nonhuman species and the natural environment, meaning the biosphere (Steg et al., 2011). Altruism and the biospheric value in past literature

have generally been positively related to pro-environmental belief, norms, intentions, and actions, because acting favorably for the environment also benefits others (Steg et al., 2011). Although altruistic and biospheric values are correlated, they still differ because, in certain situations for example, where there needs to be a choice between people's immediate well-being or the well-being of animals, their goals might conflict (de Groot & Steg, 2008).

In their study of factors influencing the acceptability of energy policies, Steg et al. (2005) tested the value-belief-norm theory of Stern (2000). Their results suggested that the VBN theory could successfully explain the judgment of acceptability of energy policies and that the biospheric value especially was significantly related to the feeling of obligation to reduce the energy consumption of the household. Additionally, egoistic values were negatively related to beliefs about human-environment relations, while the correlation between altruism and those beliefs was not significant (Steg et al., 2005). This implied that biospheric values are more relevant to encourage pro-environmental behavior than altruistic values, which also illustrates the differences between altruistic and biospheric values.

Going further with values that could be linked to boycotts and buycotts with pro-environmental aims, Steg, Perlaviciute, van der Werff, and Lurvink (2014) found that on top of the egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values, the hedonic values could also be included in studies because it is significantly and negatively related to environmentally relevant attitudes. Hedonic values embody the notions of pleasure and comfort, to reduce one's effort, which are not covered by egoistic values. As expected, Steg et al. (2014) found that hedonic values were correlated positively with various polluting behaviors: from increased meat consumption and longer shower times to owning more motor vehicles and leaving appliances on standby.

In relation to consumer's readiness to boycott or buycott, Hoffman et al.'s (2018) study provides an interesting insight on the link between hedonism and buycotting. Indeed, their results indicated that hedonic consumers considered buycotting as *"an action that helps to harmonize their interests at the societal level and at the personal level"*(Hoffman et al., 2018, p.7). This meant that if an individual felt close to universal values and environmental concerns, hedonism would amplify the likelihood of buycotting because buycotting offers hedonic consumers an excuse to indulge in shopping.

To attempt to explain boycotting intentions, Delistavrou et al. (2020) incorporated the materialism and post-materialism values into the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The definition of materialism and post-materialism is based on Inglehart (1977) interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where materialism is a focus on "lower-order" needs, such as material comfort and physical safety, while post-materialism is a focus on the "higher-order" needs that are self-expression, affiliation, aesthetic satisfaction and quality of life (as cited in Delistavrou et al., 2020). The results of this study showed that post-materialists had stronger intent to boycott unethical products than materialists.

3.2.3 The perception of one's influence and effectiveness

If boycotting is an act of political consumerism, it could even be compared to voting. Indeed, Klein et al. (2004) claim that boycotting is a prosocial behavior similar to voting because it is a collective act that has a collective benefit and a relatively small individual benefit. Besides, if someone perceives that other electors will not vote for the same candidate, this person will feel like their vote does not count and might not even vote at all. Thus, it is relevant to look at instances in the literature where a person's belief that their action as a consumer can have a positive impact influences them in turn to take action.

When Vermeir and Verbeke (2006) investigated the gap between a consumer's favorable attitude towards sustainable behavior and his behavioral intention to purchase food products, and perceived consumer effectiveness was found to be one of the drivers, in addition to involvement with sustainability, behind the intention to buy sustainable products. If perceived consumer effectiveness, defined as *"the extent to which the consumer believes that his personal efforts can contribute to the solution of a problem"*, leads to buying ethical and sustainable products, this could also be linked to buycotting. This is in accordance with past research like Roberts' (1996) on green consumers in the 1990s, where perceived consumer effectiveness was the best predictor of ecologically conscious consumer behavior. In that sense, it could be assumed that a high perceived consumer effectiveness would help engage in boycotts as well as buycotts.

In their study on consumers' motivation in engaging in instrumental boycotts, Shin and Yoon (2018) found that consumers' perceived effectiveness of a boycott, meaning their perceived influence in the company targeted, affected positively the decision to boycott. They also found the message credibility of the campaign and the expected overall participation to be motivational factors for consumers' participation.

Likewise, Sen et al. (2001) found that the expected overall participation and efficacy leads to a consumer's perception of a boycott's likelihood of success, which in turn leads to the likelihood of consumers participating in both economic and social-issue boycotts. How consumers perceive their own influence, the expected overall participation in the boycott, and then its likelihood of success can motivate individuals in participating in boycotts. Therefore, it makes sense to take a closer look at the perception consumers have of their influence, since we can expect people who believe they have influence will be more likely to engage in boycotts.

Another concept related to efficacy-based beliefs similar to perceived consumer effectiveness is perceived marketplace influence (PMI) (Bret Leary et al., 2019). PMI is defined as "the belief that one's efforts in the marketplace can influence *the marketplace behavior of other consumers and organizations, and inasmuch serve as a motivation for one's own behavior"* (Bret Leary et al., 2014). While PMI and perceived consumer efficacy might seem similar at first, PMI goes deeper in the perceived effectiveness analysis, by looking at the perceived influence one has on

other consumers as well as organizations and how in return this motivates one's own actions.

Until now, PMI has been studied and presented as a moderator between environmental concern and sustainable consumption behavior or as a predictor for ethical consumption and word-of-mouth (Bret Leary et al., 2014, 2017, 2019). Kim and Yun (2019) in their study on the intention of customers who visit eco-friendly coffee shops in South Korea also integrated perceived marketplace influence in their theoretical framework using the Theory of Planning Behavior (TPB) and Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB). They found that the attitude towards environmental behavior, in parallel with PMI, both had a positive effect on word-of-mouth behavior, but also on the willingness to pay and sacrifice, as well as on the overall image of eco-friendly coffee shops.

4   DATA AND METHODOLOGY

To explore the profile of consum'actors and their use of the boycott platform and the mobile application a quantitative analysis was conducted. It was based on the answers of a survey shared with I-buycott followers on social media. This part will first draw upon the theories discussed previously to discuss which one, and why, were incorporated in the survey, then it will explain how the data was collected and analyzed.

4.1   Theories behind the consum'actors survey

Based on the pro-environmental and pro-social nature of the boycott campaigns on i-boycott.org and because buycotting ethical and sustainable products would be quite similar to sustainable consumption, it was assumed consum'actors boycotts and buycotts could be as well considered as environmentally significant behavior. Therefore, it was decided to explore the value orientation of consum'actors in relation to values that are often used to understand environmental beliefs and intentions: the altruistic value, the egoistic value, and the biospheric value (de Groot & Steg, 2008). Neilson (2010) had already linked altruism to political consumerism behavior, and since no other studies seemed to have looked at boycott and buycott through those three significant value orientations, this study attempted to fill that gap. For a more simple and straightforward approach, as well as to limit the length of the survey, it was decided to use the pro-environmental values independently from the value-belief-norm (VBN) theory.

Doing so allowed the survey to also have a part to assess a respondent's perceived marketplace influence (PMI). Since boycotts and buycotts are acts of political consumerism, it could be expected that people engaging in such acts would also hopefully influence other consumers (to participate in the campaigns or consume ethically) and companies. Additionally, if PMI helps overcome barriers such as increased costs (Kim & Yun, 2019), we could expect PMI to have a positive effect on boycotting and buycotting behaviors as well. PMI is also said to be useful for explaining and predicting what consumers will do when they enact their values (Bret Leary et al., 2017). Therefore, PMI seems like a relevant concept to look at through the prism of boycotting and buycotting, also because it has never been done before.

Concerning the profile of people who engage in boycotts and buycotts, in past literature, the level of education seemed the most significant characteristic to explain this behavior (Baek, 2010; Copeland & Boulianne, 2020; Nonomura, 2017; Yates, 2011). On top of education, gender, age, and income appear to be relevant socio-demographic characteristics to study in consum'actors profiles. Another characteristic that has been less investigated in past literature but that

would be interesting to add to this study is whether users of I-buycott's tools reside in urban or rural areas.

Hence, by studying the values prioritized by consum'actors as well as their level of perceived marketplace influence on top of asking their socio-demographic characteristics, the goal was to provide a holistic picture of how consum'actors are like.

4.2   Data collection

This study relies on a quantitative analysis instead of a qualitative one. Quantitative research can be defined as research that uses numerical data to explain phenomena (Yilmaz, 2013). Qualitative research, on the other hand, relies on inductive reasoning to generate ideas and theories from the data collected (Hair et al., 2015). Qualitative research uses a "causes-of-effects" approach relying on logic to explain certain outcomes and quantitative research uses an "effects-of-causes" approach relying on statistics to estimate average effects (Mahoney & Goerts, 2006). Therefore, while qualitative analysis helps explaining individual cases, quantitative analysis can instead prove useful to explain the average effect of independent variables, through correlations, probability, and statistics (Mahoney & Goerts, 2006). A qualitative analysis could have been conducted through semi-structured interviews with consum'actors to ask them why they boycott or through field observation, to see how they use the BuyOrNot app to scan products while they are in the supermarket and how it influences their consumption. However, a quantitative analysis in this case helps process more data on a larger sample of users, to test theories and draw interpretations on their profile, values, and PMI. Indeed, quantitative analysis is also used by researchers who seek to make generalizations about larger samples (Mahoney & Goerts, 2006) and it is usually used to answer "who?" and "how many?" types of research questions (Lichtman, 2017). In this case, the quantitative data helps to provide descriptive information on consum'actors based on a random sample of consum'actors (Lichtman, 2017). Finally, quantitative analysis allows having a broader as well as efficient investigation of consum'actors profiles and behaviors.

Therefore, an online survey seemed like the obvious choice for collecting a broader scope of data. Because consum'actors either use the website platform or the mobile application, it means they already have internet access and will be able to answer an online survey. The survey was shared on I-buycott's social media profiles, namely Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Facebook and Instagram are the main channels for I-buycott to share information to and engage with their community, where they respectively have 136,000 and 9,300 followers, which is why it is relevant for the survey to be shared on these mediums. The survey was shared twice by I-buycott over the period of three weeks, from the 12th October 2020 until the 2nd of November, and collected a total of 260 responses.

To measure the altruistic, biospheric, and egoistic value orientations of consum'actors, a short version of Schwartz (1992) universal values scale was used, as adapted by Stern et al. (1995), and finally as used by Steg et al. (2005) in their study on the factors influencing the acceptability of energy policies. Respondents were asked in the survey to rate how important 12 values were as a guiding principle in their lives, as shown below in Table 1. The scale ranged from 0 "not at all important" to 7 "supremely important", and respondents were also allowed to rate a value -1 if they were in complete opposition with it.

TABLE 1 Value orientations representing the egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values (based on Steg et al., 2005)

Egoistic value

     Social power: control over others, dominance

     Wealth: material possessions, money

     Authority: the right to lead or command

     Influential: having an impact on people and events

Altruistic value

     Equality: equal opportunity for all

     A world at peace: free of war and conflict

     Social justice: correcting injustice, care for the weak

     Helpful: working for the welfare of others

Biospheric value

     Preventing pollution

     Respecting the earth: live in harmony with other species

     Unity with nature: fitting into nature

     Protecting the environment: preserving nature

Concerning the perceived marketplace influence, Bret Leary et al. (2017) constructs and items of PMI were used for the survey. PMI was then divided into two distinct constructs: PMI consumer and PMI organization. The first one refers to the influence someone perceives having on other consumers, while the second is about the influence someone perceives having on companies. One additional item was added to the one from Bret Leary et al. (2017) to also ask if respondents felt they influenced companies to sell ethical products as well as environmentally-friendly products, which was already in the construct's list of items (see Table 2). Respondents were asked if they agreed with the statements shown below on a 7-point Likert scale.

TABLE 2 Items to measure PMI consumer and PMI organization, based on Bret Leary et al. (2017)

PMI consumer

My behavior guides other individuals to act in a similar manner

I feel what I do sways what others around me do

What I choose to do or say impacts what other consumers choose to do

My behavior will not cause other consumers to act similarly (RC)

I know that my behavior motivates others to act similarly

PMI organization

I feel what I buy encourages companies to make and sell environmentally friendly products

I feel what I buy encourages companies to make and sell ethical products

My behavior does not guide organizations to provide similar products (RC)

What I do influences the actions of a company

The choices I make persuade companies to offer specific products to consumers

My behavior causes companies to change their product offerings and corporate practices

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To learn more about consum'actors, the survey asked them about their gender, their age, their approximate monthly income, their education level, and finally, whether they lived in an urban or rural area, as discussed in the previous part. To differentiate urban and rural areas, respondents were asked if they lived in a large city (more than 100,000 inhabitants), a medium-sized city (50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants), a small town (between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants), or in a village/the countryside. According to the population of cities in France in 2017, around 40 of the most populated cities in France had over 100,000 inhabitants, with Paris at the top of the list with 2 million inhabitants (Insee, 2020a). Therefore, cities with over 100,000 inhabitants were considered large in this survey.

A few questions were added by I-buycott request to help them better apprehend what their users' expectations of their organization and their political beliefs were. The results of these questions will also be briefly presented since they can provide useful insights to better interpret other questions' answers, such as the profile of consum'actors or their values orientation. Those questions provided the opportunity to understand the political opinions of consum'actors on sustainability issues.

The survey in total had 45 questions and was divided into 5 broad sections (see APPENDIX 1). The first part was about the use of I-buycott's tools, the second part was on the respondent's concerns and political beliefs questions, the third part was on his/her values orientation, the fourth part was about the perceived marketplace influence (PMI), and then in fifth was the socio-demographic profile of the respondent. Finishing with the socio-demographic questions, which can be considered easier to answer, was a way to ensure respondents would complete answering the survey. Although a 45 questions survey can be considered lengthy, it still collected 260 responses, which is a satisfactory number of answers to conduct a quantitative analysis.

4.3   Data analysis

Once the survey was closed, the data was analyzed with the software IBM SPSS Statistics 26. The data was cleaned, items that needed to be reverse coded were reverse coded, and items were grouped as constructs. For example, the mean of the following four values orientation items of one respondent created the egoistic value orientation: social power, wealth, authority, and influence. The same was done for the altruistic value, the biospheric value as well as PMI consumer and PMI organization.

As a first screening, we asked the respondents whether they had never boycotted (n = 5) or never buycotted (n = 17), as phrased by Baek (2010): *"Have you NOT bought something because of conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it?"*, *"Have you bought a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it?"*. Since it means these 22 respondents, out of 260, either boycott OR buycott but do not engage in both activities, their answers were kept for the analysis. None of the respondents answered negatively to both questions, which meant no answers had to be excluded from the data used for the analysis. However, out of those 260 answers, 74 respondents said they neither used the boycott platform i-boycott.org or the mobile app BuyOrNot. This means that those respondents probably follow I-buycott on social media and might engage in boycotts and buycotts on the side, without using I-buycott's tools. To better assess the profile of the tools' users, these respondents' answers will have to be excluded at times.

The reliability of the perceived marketplace influence and values constructs was checked with Cronbach's Alpha. Table 3 shows that all constructs had ample internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha superior to 0.6 (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006).

TABLE 3 Constructs' reliability statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Egoistic value	0,70	4
Altruistic value	0,67	4
Biospheric value	0,77	4
PMI Consumers	0,65	5
PMI Organizations	0,74	6

A "word-of-mouth" score was developed on a scale of 0 to 3 representing the answers to the question: *"Have you ever shared a boycott campaign you participated in: a) on your social media and public profile (yes/no), b) by private message or mail (yes/no), c) by talking about it orally to a relative/friend/colleague (yes/no)"*. The score will represent how much respondents share boycott campaigns with the people around them.

To assess the engagement of respondents in boycotting, we used the number of boycotting campaigns they reported participating in on the platform. The number of participations in boycott campaigns does not follow a normal distribution, which means one of Pearson's basic assumptions of the correlation is violated (Chao, 2018). Indeed, under the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, the number of boycott campaigns participated in had a p-value of 0.00, which indicated the data is not normally distributed because the p-value is not superior to 0.05. Likewise, the results for the egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values, as well as the perceived marketplace influence on consumers and organizations all had a p-value inferior to 0.05. To be able to investigate a possible correlation between the variables, a non-parametric test, the Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient, was used instead of Pearson's. Although Spearman's test will not help determine a causal relationship, it will help to look for meaning and relations in the data collected (Dellinger, 2018). Depending on Spearman's rho correlation coefficient, the relationship between the two variables can be differently interpreted (see Table 4, as per Prion & Haerling, 2014).

TABLE 4 Interpretation of two variables' relationship strength based on Spearman's coefficient (Prion & Haerling, 2014)

Spearman's rho correlation coefficient	Relationship
±0.81 to ± 1.00	Very strong
±0.61 to ±0.80	Strong
±0.41 to ±0.60	Moderate
±0.21 to ±0.40	Weak

0 to ±0.20	Negligible

Univariate descriptive analysis and graphical representations bar charts were used to present the different socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Scatter plots were also used to visually represent the correlation between two variables.

5 RESEARCH FINDINGS

After the data has been cleaned and the constructs built, it was time to analyze the data to find the answer to the research questions. To do so, this part will first present the consum'actors profile through univariate descriptive analysis, to show what they answered to this survey. Secondly, the relationships between value orientation, perceived marketplace influence (PMI), and participation in boycott campaigns will be studied.

5.1 Consum'actors profile

5.1.1 Their socio-demographic characteristics

To begin with, it is important to note that boycotters versus buycotters' profiles can hardly be compared. Indeed, out of the 260 respondents, only 1.9% (n= 5) answered they had never boycotted and 6.5% (n = 17) said they had never buycotted. However, none of them said they had neither boycotted nor had never buycotted at the same time. This means that 91.5% of the respondents have engaged in boycotts AND buycotts before, while the rest had either boycotted OR buycotted before.

Although the 260 respondents have all either boycotted or buycotted, 186 of them only have ever used one or both of I-buycott's tools. The results section will then focus on the answers of the tool's users, while the answers of all respondents concerning their socio-demographic characteristics can be found in Appendix 2.

Gender
Concerning gender, 71% of the respondents were female (n = 184), with 28% male (n = 73), and Figure 4 below presents the use of I-buycott's tools divided by gender and help see the share women represent in the users. When looking only at the 186 users of the tools, there are still 70% of women and 29% of men.
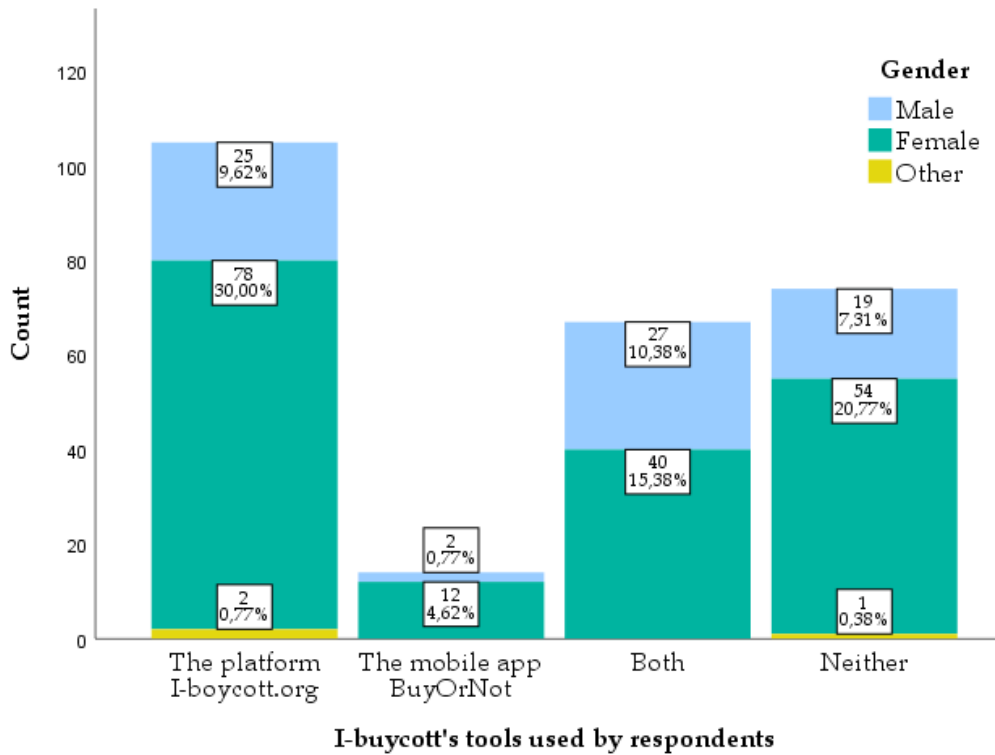
FIGURE 4 I-buycott's tools used by respondents, based on their gender

Age
Regarding age, 60% of the respondents are under 45 years old (n = 156 out of 260 answers). When only looking at the actual users, the results are slightly similar, with 63% of users being less than 45 years old (n = 118). Although there is a slight majority of younger users between 26 to 35 years old, the age is still quite evenly distributed, as can be seen from Figure 5.
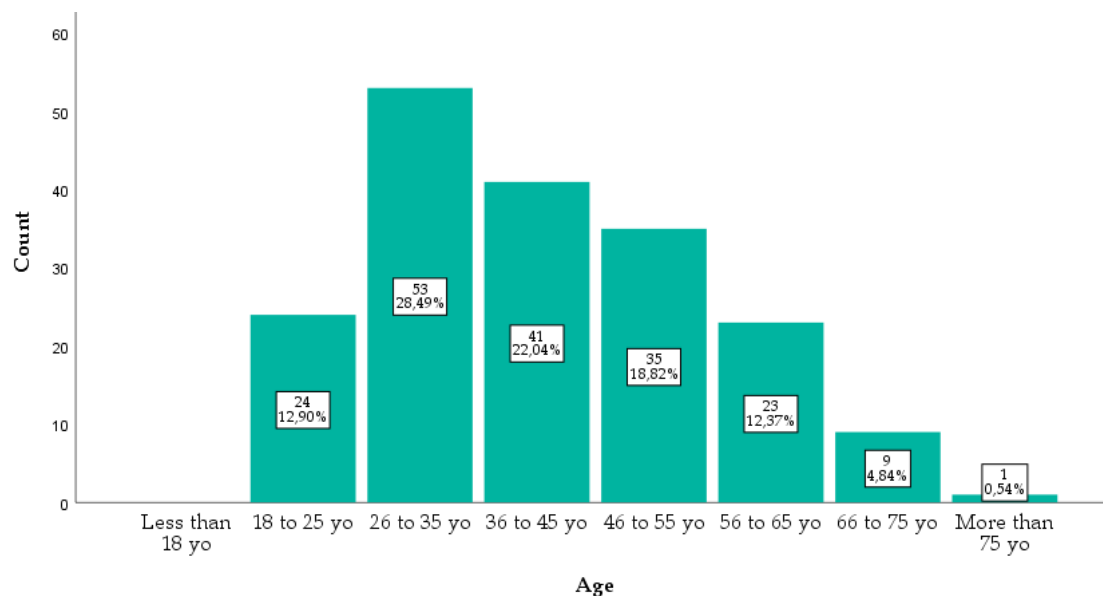
FIGURE 5 Age distribution among I-buycott's tools users

Education

Figure 6 illustrates that the level of education of the respondents is quite high, with 63% of consum'actors having a degree equivalent to at least three years of studies after high school.
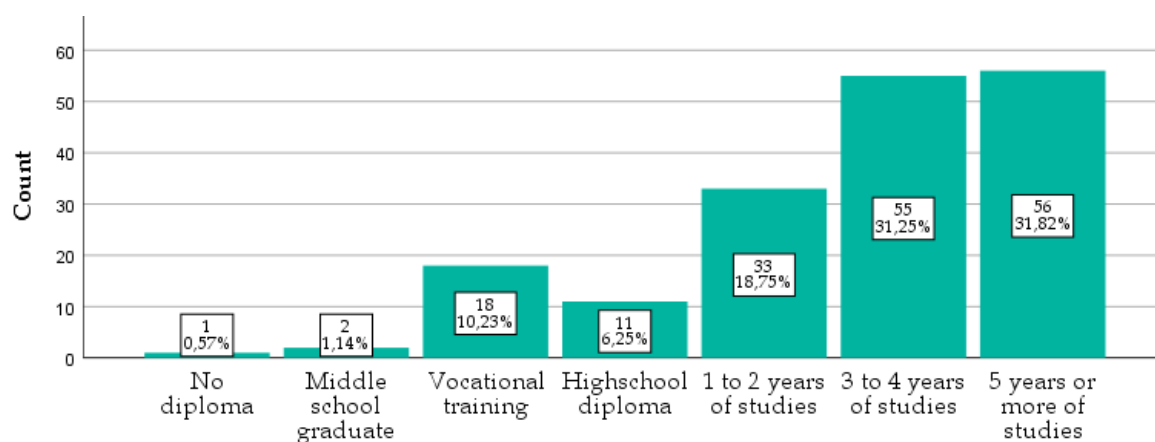
FIGURE 6 Level of education of I-buycott's tools users

Income

Out of the 186 tools' users, 164 accepted to share their average monthly income. To get a better idea of what the level of income represents, in 2016 the median monthly salary in France was 1789€ net while the average monthly salary was 2238€ net and the gross minimum wage amounted to 1539€ per month in 2020 (Insee, 2020b). Half of the consum'actors who responded have an average monthly income between 1500€ and 2500€ net (see Table 5), which means their income is near the median and average net salary in France. However, 37% of the

respondents earn less than the gross minimum wage in 2020, which is three times the number of respondents who earn more than 2500€ net per month.

TABLE 5 Average monthly income of I-buycott's tools users

Average monthly income	Count	Percent
Less than 1500€	60	37%
Between 1500€ and 2500€	84	51%
More than 2500€	20	12%
Total	**164**	**100%**

Urban or rural resident

An interesting result of the survey was the answer to whether respondents lived in a rural or urban area. Although most respondents live in urban areas with 69% living in the city, there is still 31% of the respondents living in a village or in the countryside (see Figure 7). Hence, the share of people living in big cities, then in small to medium city, and finally living in the countryside is nearly equally distributed, with 31.72% of respondents from large cities and 31,18% from the countryside.
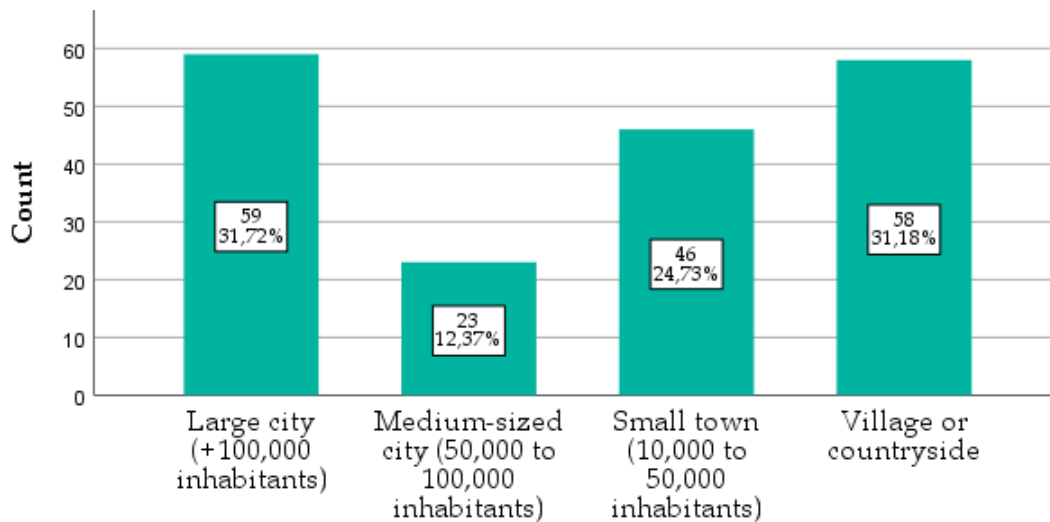
FIGURE 7 Place of residence of I-buycott's tools users

5.1.2 Consum'actors beliefs concerning sustainability issues

Concerning the definition of sustainability, in the context of political consumerism and boycotting or buycotting, we can assume that what is considered sustainable and ethical varies with each individual. That is confirmed by the fact that 14% (n = 26 out of 186 answers) of the tools' users in the survey answered that

they did not believe the concept of sustainable development could solve future ecological challenges, with 11% stating they do not know (n = 21). The definition that had been given for sustainable development in the survey was based on the triple bottom line, meaning the balance of economic, environmental, and social performance (Geissdoerfer et al., 2017). Some of the answers in the open-ended question to justify their stance in believing that sustainable development could not solve future environmental challenges explained that sustainable development was a utopia or so some form of greenwashing, that *the association of the words "sustainable" and "development" is a nonsense to begin with"*, or that the capitalist system would need to be abolished in order to live in a socially and environmentally sustainable society. Another explanation given explained the problem that can be felt with the "economic performance" pillar of the definition:

> *"Sustainable development is an oxymoron, we need to think more in terms of energy transition or even degrowth. It is a whole system that needs to be rethought, including anthropologically speaking."*

Another representation of the difference in beliefs between consum'actors is the entities they believe are responsible for pollution. Half of the respondents answered they believe companies were more responsible while the other half answered consumers and companies were equally responsible for pollution in general (see Figure 8). However, when asked what positive change for the environment should consist of, 76 % (n = 142) answered polluting behaviors and products should be prohibited, against 11% (= 23) answering it should consist of a gentle reform to change behavior little by little.

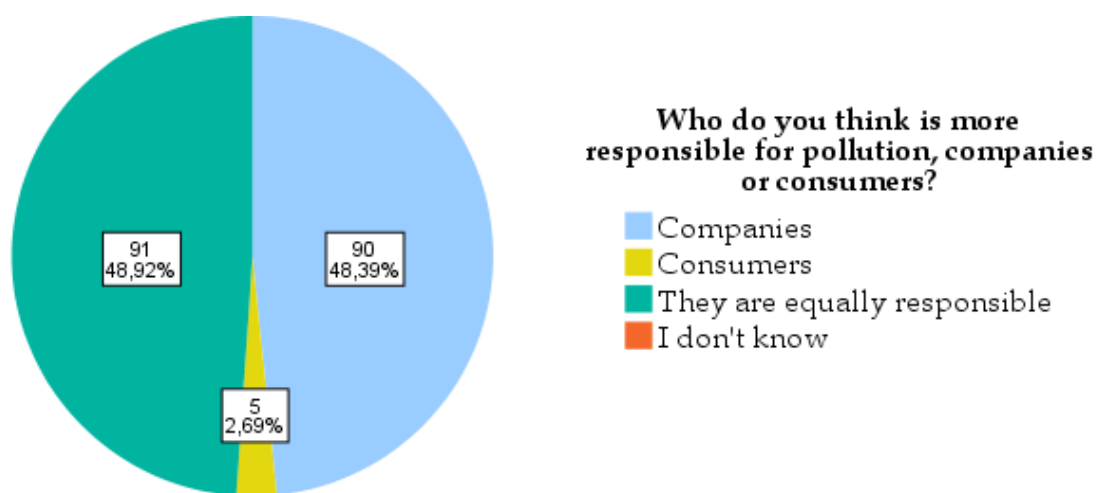FIGURE 8 Consum'actors belief as to who is more responsible for pollution

5.1.3 Users' perception of the i-boycott.org platform and the BuyOrNot mobile app

Concerning the use of the tools, when consum'actors were asked on a scale of 1 to 7 how much they agreed with the fact that the platform or the app have negatively affected their opinion on certain companies, most agreed with an average

answer of 6 out 7. This shows the app and platform have been properly performing their function of informing consumers.

However, most respondents did not seem to feel like the mobile app made them change their shopping behavior or helped them a lot with finding more eco-friendly and ethical products since the average answer to those questions ranged from 4,6 to 5 out of 7. Likewise, the section recommending alternative products on the mobile app and on the boycott platform did not seem to have introduced new more ethical or environmentally friendly companies to the respondents because the average answer was 4,38 out of 7, which is a nearly neutral score.

Despite this, the platform and the mobile app were both deemed useful by their users. Indeed, most users agreed with an average of 5,56 out of 7 (and a median of 6) that the mobile app facilitates the act of boycott and buycott, and an average agreement of 5,72 out of 7 (for a median of 6 also) showed respondents felt the i-boycott.org platform made boycott campaigns more effective against companies.

5.1.4 Values scores and perceived marketplace influence

The values scores reflect on a scale of -1 to 7 how much the respondents who use I-buycott tools believe each value act as a guiding principle in their life. Based on the descriptive statistics of the values constructs' scores, the respondents have much higher biospheric and altruistic scores than egoistic scores. Specifically, the biospheric value score of the respondents who use the tools has a mean of 6,3 and a median of 6,5 out of 7, which can be considered very high (see Table 6). The standard deviation of 0,86 for the biospheric value indicates the data is quite concentrated around the mean and respondents answered relatively similarly as to how strongly they feel guided by the biospheric value.

TABLE 6 Descriptive statistics of the values scores of I-buycott's tools users

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Egoistic	186	-1,00	7	1,97	1,75	1,51
Altruistic	186	1,25	7	5,75	6,00	1,03
Biospheric	**186**	**3,50**	**7**	**6,30**	**6,50**	**0,86**

When looking at the consum'actors perceived marketplace influence, the results are not so extreme. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 representing a high perception of marketplace influence, the mean for PMI consumers and PMI organizations are both 4,51. This means consum'actors are nearly neutral to the statements on their influence on other consumers and organizations and do not feel like they have much influence. When looking in detail at the items that belong to the PMI consumers and PMI organizations constructs, the item that had the lowest score average with 4,1 out of 7 was *"What I do influences the actions of a company."*. On the

other hand, the statement with the highest score average, 4,89 out of 7, was *"My behavior guides other individuals to act in a similar manner"*. Although PMI consumers and PMI organizations both have nearly identical means and standard deviation, it is interesting to note consum'actors perceive they have slightly more influence on other consumers than on companies (see Table 7).

TABLE 7 Descriptive statistics of the perceived marketplace influence (PMI) on consumers and organizations of I-buycott's tools users

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
PMI consumers	186	1,2	7	4,51	4,6	1,14
PMI organizations	186	2	7	4,51	4,5	1,13

5.2 The influence of values and perceived marketplace influence on the participation in boycotts

To analyze the influence that values and PMI have on the consum'actors use of the tools, the number of boycott campaigns participated in was used to assess the respondents' engagement in political consumerism in a quantitative manner. Before checking the correlations between the variables, it is important to note that the number of boycott campaign participated has a median of 10 out of the 49 campaigns (active and finished) presented on the platform at the time of the survey (see Table 8). A quarter of the respondents who use the boycott platform have participated in less than 4 campaigns, while another quarter of respondents participated in more than 20 campaigns (see Figure 9).

As mentioned in the previous section, the number of participations in boycott campaigns is not normally distributed, which means the non-parametric test of Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient will have to be used to determine the correlation between the variables, although no causal relationship will be determined this way.

TABLE 8 Descriptive statistics of the number of boycott campaigns respondents participated in on the i-boycott.org platform

	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Participation in boycott campaigns on the platform	172	13,67	10	12,25

To approximately how many boycott campaigns have you participated in on the i-boycott.org platform?
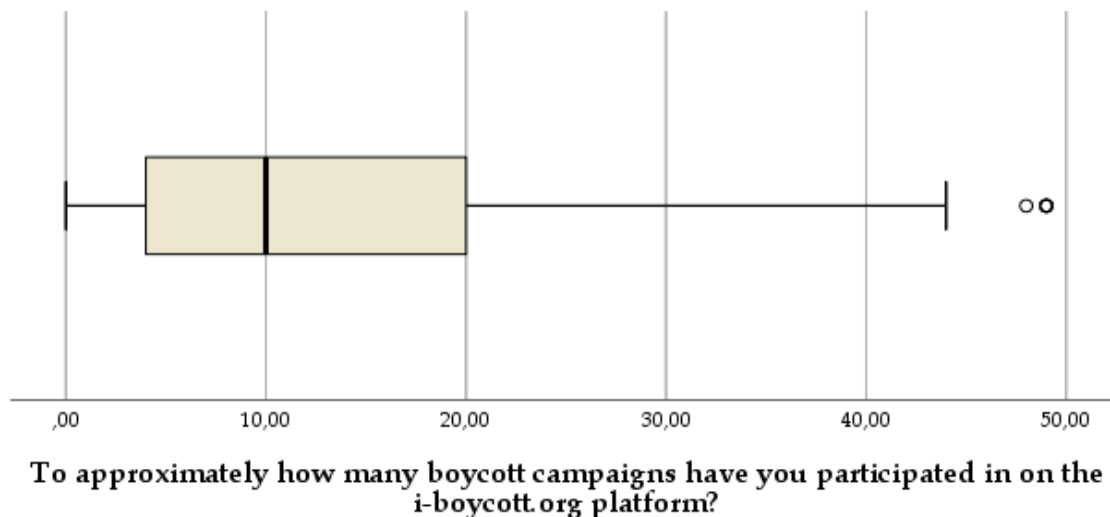
FIGURE 9 Boxplot of the number of boycott campaigns participated in

5.2.1 Values and participation in boycott campaigns

Using SPSS and the Spearmen Rank Correlation Coefficient test, the influence of values on the number of boycott campaigns participated in was analyzed (see Table 9).

TABLE 9 Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient between values and boycott campaign participation

		Egoistic value	Altruistic value	Biospheric value
Participation in boycott campaigns on the platform	Correlation Coefficient	-0,100	0,138	**,228**[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0,193	0,071	**0,003**
	N	172	172	172

[**]. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

However, only the biospheric value had a statistically significant correlation with participation in boycotts, with a p-value smaller than 0.005. This means that the relation between the biospheric value and boycott participation is valid for the consum'actors population as a whole and not just the sample of consum'actors who responded to the survey (Antonius, 2013). The correlation coefficient of 0.228 represents a weak relationship between the variables, as presented previously in Table 4. Despite the relationship being weak, it is the only one of the three values relationship that is significant, which indicates the biospheric value is the most significant in that case to explore the relation with participation in

boycotts on the i-boycott.org platform. The relationships between the values and the number of boycotts participation were also represented visually to make sure they were interpreted properly. Out of all three values, the biospheric value was the one that showed the clearest positive trend, despite not showing a clear line (see Figure 10).
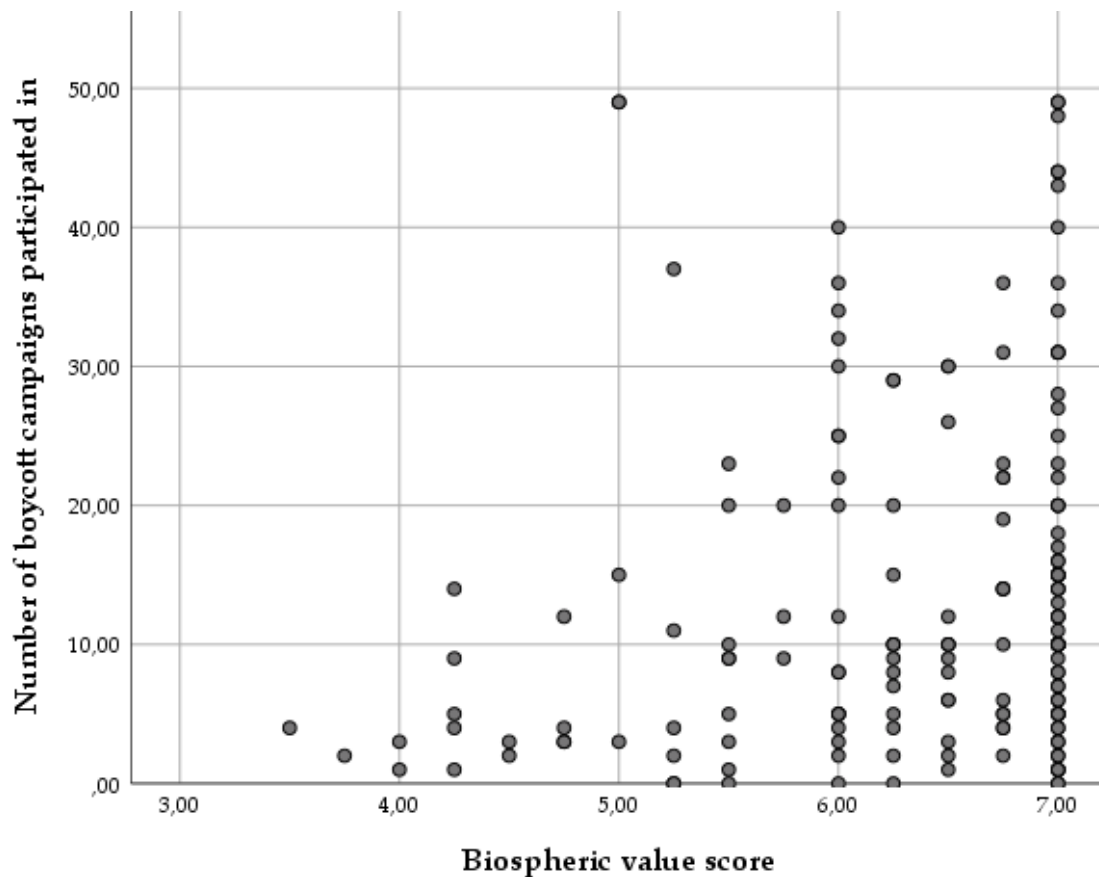
FIGURE 10 Scatterplot of the participation in boycott campaigns based on the biospheric value score

5.2.2 Perceived marketplace influence (PMI) and participation in boycott campaigns

The relation between perceived marketplace influence and the participation in boycotts was investigated in a similar way than the values, using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient. This time, no significant relationship at all was found between PMI Consumers or PMI Organizations and the number of boycott campaigns participated in (see Table 10).

TABLE 10 Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient between perceived marketplace influence (PMI) and participation in boycott campaigns

		PMI Consumers	PMI Organizations
Participation in boycott campaigns on the platform	Correlation Coefficient	0.093	0.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.225	0.288
	N	172	172

5.2.3 PMI and word-of-mouth

As seen in the literature on PMI, PMI is associated with positive or negative word-of-mouth (Bret Leary et al., 2019). In the case of consum'actors, it was assumed that people with a higher PMI would be more likely to share boycott campaigns with others. The "word-of-mouth" score represents how many ways boycott campaigns are shared (orally, by message, and/or by posting on social media). Significant relationships with a p-value inferior to 0.005 were found for PMI consumers and PMI organizations, meaning PMI and sharing boycott campaigns have a weak positive relationship, as shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11 Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient between perceived marketplace influence (PMI) and word-of-mouth

		PMI Consumers	PMI Organizations
Word-of-mouth	Correlation Coefficient	**,254**[**]	**,224**[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	**0,001**	**0,003**
	N	172	172

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this last section of the thesis, the results will first be interpreted to answer the two research questions, and then the limitations of this study as well as suggestions for further research on this topic will be presented.

6.1   Discussion on the findings and their implications

This study's results helped to understand more about a specific population that engages in political consumerism: the users of the i-boycott.org boycott platform and the BuyOrNot mobile application, also called by I-buycott "consum'actors". Out of the 260 answers received for this survey, 186 respondents said they used either of the tools.

Boycotting and buycotting behaviors were not differentiated in this study because a strong majority of consum'actors using the tools (92.5%) had both boycotted AND buycotted in the past. Contrary to what some researches that have been able to compare both behaviors imply (Baek, 2010; Copeland, 2013; Hoffman et al., 2018; Kam & Deichert, 2020; Neilson, 2010; Zorell, 2016), boycotting and buycotting seem quite similar. Indeed, it can be assumed that if someone boycotts, it means they will switch their consumption to a product that is better according to them. Therefore, by favoring one product over another, consumers also engage in buycott. That is why it could be argued that boycotting and buycotting are similar. One would logically come with the other, which might be why most respondents engaged in both. Some past studies implied individuals made a distinction between the "negative", punishment-oriented act of boycott versus the "positive", reward-oriented act of buycott and engage in one or the other (Baek, 2010; Copeland, 2013), but this does not seem to be the case for consum'actors. Interestingly, when asked whether the word "buycott" meant anything to them, 7% of the tools' users answered they did not know (n= 4 out of 186), and 15% answered they were not sure (n= 27). Because the question about whether respondents had boycotted before was phrased without using the term boycott (as used by Baek, 2010), this might imply that some people engage in the act of buycotts, favoring and purchasing deliberately certain products and brands they agree with and want to support, despite not knowing what the term "buycott" means.

In this section, the answers of the respondents who use I-buycott tools and their statistical analysis will be interpreted to answer the two research questions, first presenting their profile, and secondly trying to see what drives boycotting behavior.

6.1.1 I-buycott tools users' socio-demographic characteristics, value orientation, and perceived marketplace influence

Socio-demographic characteristics

Concerning the socio-demographic characteristic of users, some findings were in accordance with the literature on political consumerism or boycotts/buycotts while some were not. For example, concerning the gender of the respondents, there was a majority of women among the consum'actors (70%), contrary to Baek's (2010) findings which implied men participated slightly more in boycotts.

About age also, studies mostly found that middle-aged people were more likely to engage in political consumerism (Baek, 2010; Copeland & Boulianne, 2020; Nonomura, 2017; Yates, 2011), however 63% of the users were under 45 years old and 41% under 35 years old. This age distribution could be explained by the fact that most people discover I-buycott and their tools through the content they share on social media and mainly on Facebook where they have over 136,000 followers. Indeed, in October 2020 people aged 25 to 34 years old were the largest Facebook user group, and 48.6% of the users were 34 years old or younger (NapoleonCat, 2020). Therefore, it makes sense for the I-buycott tools users' age to be relatively younger, similarly to the age of Facebook users, since Facebook is an important channel to engage with consum'actors.

In the case of the level of education, findings seem aligned with past research on political consumerism (Baek, 2010; Copeland & Boulianne, 2020; Nonomura, 2017; Yates, 2011). Out of all the consum'actors who use the boycott platform and mobile app, 81.8% have continued to study after high school and 63% have a degree equivalent to at least three years of studies. Although a link between education and increased boycott participation could not be studied here due to the lack of a control group to compare, descriptive statistics help show that a majority of consum'actors have pursued long studies.

Concerning the income and financial resources, once again past research and the results of this study cannot be accurately compared because this study can only present the income of consum'actors and not the influence it has on boy/buycotting. The income of the users shows that half of them have a monthly income close to the median and average net salary in France, while 37% earn the equivalent or less than the gross minimum wage. Those numbers might imply that it is not necessary to be very wealthy to engage in political consumerism.

The last socio-demographic that was studied is whether respondents lived in urban or rural areas. The assumption was that urban residents were much more likely to boycott or buycott (Nonomura, 2017), especially considering the use of digital tools that usually are more frequently used in urban areas due to the better internet speed and coverage. However, it turned about that the share of consum'actors living in villages or in the countryside was higher than expected and reached 31%, similar to the share of residents from large cities of more than 100,000 inhabitants that was 31% as well. If in the end there was still a higher share of consum'actors from urban areas, the share of respondents from rural

areas is still consequent. This shows that the living situation in either urban or rural areas is probably not significant for engagement in boycotts and buycotts.

Value orientation

In past literature, the egoistic value has been negatively associated with pro-environmental behavior, contrarily to the altruistic and biospheric values that have a positive association. The assumption was then for consum'actors to have a low egoistic value and high altruistic and biospheric values, as those last two are underlying values behind I-buycott social media communications and boycott campaigns shared. As expected, the users of I-buycott tools have a low egoistic value orientation and a much higher altruistic value with an even higher biospheric value orientation. Considering the relatively low standard deviation of the results, respondents seem to all have similar value orientations regarding the egoistic, altruistic, and, especially, biospheric value. Therefore, I-buycott tools seem to mostly attract users that agree with the organization's own ethical values and promotion of sustainability, as seen on their social media accounts. Therefore, it makes sense for the respondents to all have very similar values index, because most boycott campaigns on i-boycott.org call upon participants' altruism and the biospheric values. The biospheric value being higher than the altruistic value implies that consum'actors most important concern is the environment and its protection. However, it is interesting to note as well that despite all having strong biospheric concerns, consum'actors opinions differ a lot on what sustainability should be like and who is responsible for pollution.

Perceived marketplace influence

Concerning perceived marketplace influence, the expectation was that consum'actors would have a quite high PMI driving them to engage in boycotts and buycotts to bring out positive change they wish to see in society despite the efforts they would have to make to avoid or look for certain products. However, the PMI of the users is not high and is even close to neutral, which indicates consum'actors on a whole do not perceive their actions in the marketplace can influence other consumers and companies. This is surprising considering the concept behind boycotting and buycotting is often "voting with your wallet", to bring positive change through more sustainable consumption. A reason for this might be that some people might think large corporations have a lot of power and leverage to begin with and will continue their misconduct regardless of being targeted by a boycott. However, people might still feel compelled to participate in boycotts and to buycott in order to act according to their values and to lessen cognitive dissonance.

6.1.2 Factors influencing the participation in online boycott campaigns on the i-boycott.org platform

When trying to find a relation between values, PMI, and the number of boycott campaign participation on the platform, the results were not so significant. However, a weak yet significant positive relationship was found between the biospheric value and the participation in boycott campaigns on i-boycott.org. This reinforces the findings from the descriptive statistics on value orientations that showed the biospheric value was important to consum'actors. Although it does not concern direct boycott participation, PMI was found to also have a weak positive and significant relationship with sharing boycott campaigns through different mediums.

To finally conclude and answer both research questions, the results of this study seemed to show consum'actors are mostly younger female adults who have a fairly high level of education and earn an average to decent income. What drives them the most to participate in boycotts and buycotts is their biospheric value and their concern for the natural environment. Finally, the tools users' opinion on the i-boycott.org platform and the BuyOrNot mobile app is that they facilitate the act of boycott and buycott and makes boycotting more effective. They also helped consumers change their opinion on some companies, therefore it could be assumed that I-buycott tools help users that are concerned about the environment make more informed and sustainable purchases.

Knowing more about the users of I-buycott's tools can help the organization create communication content more customized to their users' profile, or even create content suited to attract new potential users (such as users who feel more strongly concerned about certain social issues than environmental ones) without losing the interest of their older followers. For example, the fact that the users seem to be already quite concerned and knowledgeable about environmental issues could mean that I-buycott needs to continuously maintain their high-quality informational content to retain their users' interests and participation in boycott campaigns.

6.2   Limitations and suggestions for further research

This analysis has a few limitations that should be considered. The first limitations are due to the type of data collection that could not be accurately representing consum'actors or their behavior. Indeed, based on the length of the survey and the number of respondents, we can assume people who answered the survey were the most engaged followers of I-buycott on social media. This also means there is a risk their answer might not represent the consum'actors group as a whole but only the most motivated and active one. Concerning the survey, self-reported questionnaires also have a risk of not representing people's actual consumption behavior, or in this case a risk of not representing respondents actual

participation in boycott campaigns since their answer might be influenced by the social desirability bias (Chen, 2020). Another similar limitation is the fact that sometimes, despite joining and signing a boycott campaign, consumers go on buying the targeted company's products (Shin & Yoon, 2018). To counter those limitations and to investigate the actual boycotting and buycotting behaviors, studies could observe people's use of the BuyOrNot mobile app during grocery shopping, and see whether the information provided by the app influences the consumers' decision to purchase or not a product. A similar study had been done to assess the effect different nutrition labels had on consumers. It used an app that allowed them to scan products and send data for the study, while they also had to attach a picture of their receipt to see the relation between the nutritional information given and the actual purchase or not of the products (Ni Mhurchu et al., 2018). Data on how boycott campaigns' information is considered and influence the consumer when shopping could also provide useful insights for brands and sustainable marketing (Cerri et al., 2018)

The second type of limitation stems from the data collected. The reason only one significant relationship was found might be that on one hand, consum'actors have similar values and PMI. On the other hand, this could also be because no control group was studied to be able to compare the participation in boycotts for consum'actors with other individuals, thus comparing the strength of predictions of the variables more reliably. The data for the number of boycott campaign participated in was not normally distributed which also caused some issues to find a relation with the other variables.

Another reason values and PMI did not seem to have a lot of influence on boycott participation might also be that depending on how often and how much boycott campaigns are shared, people might be more likely to participate in them. If users of i-boycott.org engage in boycotts campaigns that are shared on social media by I-buycott only and if they do not actively go through the different campaigns available on the website platform, this might influence the number of campaigns they participate in. Indeed, boycott campaign visibility and accessibility could be an important factor for participation and is something that should be addressed by future research.

One important aspect to consider is also that the profile of consum'actors is probably not an accurate representation of other individuals participating in political consumerism. In this case, although the i-boycott.org platform hosted campaigns on various topics, they all had similar underlying values. Hence, other types of boycotts and buycotts platform with interests that are for example more self-centered or based on different values and opinions might show very different profile and value orientation results, especially in regard to the high biospheric value that was prevalent in this study. Political consumerism has mostly been shown through the prism of sustainable and ethical consumption, but it can sometimes be far from it, with for example boycott campaigns with motives like nationalistic protectionism or discrimination towards certain societal groups (Boström et al., 2019).

Additionally, the cultural context that is French consumers needs also to be taken into account. As mentioned by De Moor and Balsiger (2019) in their chapter on political consumerism in Northwestern Europe, different political and cultural contexts can lead to different political consumerism behaviors. Other research could for example focus on the differences in engagement in boycott and buycott in countries as well as on the prevalence and use of boycott platforms.

This leads to another topic suggestion that may have been very briefly covered in this thesis but that would deserve a study in itself: the influence of digital tools on engagement in political consumerism. If in this study consum'actors have deemed the tools helpful and effective for engaging in political consumerism, it did not study whether the participation in boycott and buycott would increase thanks to those tools.

Other drivers could also have been studied as a predictor of participation in boycott campaigns. Indeed, studying the influence of emotions like anger could be very relevant to understand why people participate in boycotts. It would help explore whether the information shared about companies' misconducts can induce the proper emotion that will lead to participating in the campaign and maintaining participation in the boycott.

Finally, even if the act of boycott and buycott were proven and indeed pursued, there is still a lack of proof to be able to determine whether political consumerism can be valuable and effective in solving societal issues (Boström et al., 2019). Going further, it can even be questioned whether consumption patterns can only be changed through the market (Dubuisson-Quellier, 2010), and hence, following the logic of capitalism that the market regulates itself. On that matter Dubuisson-Quellier (2010) argued that critiques of mass-consumption are eventually integrated as some new sub-cultures of consumption, thus becoming new market segments because as she said "*Capitalism is founded on an immense capacity to integrate its own critique*".

To conclude with the suggestions for future research, I-Buycott's web platform for boycotts and the mobile app could provide useful data to better understand the influence of digital media and consumers' motives for engaging in boycotts or buycotts. Following a boycott campaign from the beginning to the end could also help gain insight as to how companies can be influenced. On a bigger scale, following the patterns of boycott campaigns and their success rate could help make up for the lack of recent quantitative research on the impact of boycott campaigns. Numerous possibilities of research are available to better understand how consumers can stand up against the impunity of multinationals and influence organizations to behave more sustainably.

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APPENDIX 1 Survey questions

Survey - Consum'actors and the use of I-boycott.org & BuyOrNot

1. Have you NOT bought something because of conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company that produces it? *YES / NO*

2. Have you bought a certain product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it? *YES / NO*

3. Does the term "buycott" mean anything to you? (not to be confused with BOYcott)
   a. Yes, absolutely
   b. Yes, rather
   c. I'm not sure
   d. No, not really
   e. No, not at all

Use of the I-buycott tools

4. You have been using...
   a. The platform I-boycott
   b. The mobile app BuyOrNot
   c. Both of them
   d. Neither

5. Would you say the mobile app and/or the platform have negatively affected your opinions on certain companies? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

6. Would you say the mobile app and/or the platform have introduced you to more ethical or environmentally friendly companies through their recommendations of alternative products? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

I-boycott Platform

7. To approximately how many boycott campaigns have you participated in on the i-boycott.org platform? *From 0 to 49 (total number of campaigns on the platform at that time)*

8. Have you ever contributed to the platform…?
    a. to propose a new boycott campaign *YES/NO*
    b. to add alternative products to the one boycotted *YES/NO*

9. Have you ever shared a boycott campaign you participated in…?
    c. on your social media and public profile *YES/NO*
    d. By private message or mail) *YES/NO*
    e. by talking about it orally to a relative/friend/colleague *YES/NO*

10. Would you say the I-boycott platform makes boycotting campaigns more effective against companies? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

BuyOrNot App

11. How long have you been using the mobile app BuyOrNot?
    a. I don't use it
    b. For over a year
    c. More than 6 months
    d. Between 6 to 3 months
    e. Between 3 to one month
    f. Only recently

12. How often do you use the app when you go grocery shopping?
    a. Never
    b. Rarely
    c. Sometimes
    d. Often
    e. All the time

13. Why do you use the BuyOrNot mobile application? (multiple choice)
    a. I am curious about the product
    b. I am concerned about how healthy the product is
    c. I want to check whether the company is targeted by a boycott campaign

  d. I want to see alternatives to product one scanned.

  e. I want to avoid certain ingredients in the composition.

  f. I want to check if the product is environmentally friendly.

  g. Other (please specify)

14. Would you say this app has helped you purchase more ethical products or products from ethical companies? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

15. Would you say this app has helped you purchase more sustainable products? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

16. Would you say this app has changed the way you do your grocery shopping? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

17. Would you say this application is practical and easy to use? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

18. Do you think the application facilitates the act of boycott and buycott? *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

Users' concerns and political beliefs

19. Which political side do you think you're on?
  a. Far-left
  b. Left
  c. Center
  d. Right
  e. Far-right
  f. None
  g. Prefer not to say

20. In your opinion, are the topics below a priority, not a priority, or not a problem at all?
  a. Discriminations - *priority, not a priority, not a problem at all*
  b. Racism
  c. Food
  d. Health
  e. Conflict
  f. Education

g. Environment

h. Tax avoidance and optimization

i. Justice

j. Poverty

k. Women's rights

l. Children's rights

m. Labor Law

n. Human Rights

o. Animal Welfare

p. Other

21. In your opinion, does the concept of sustainable development help solve the environmental challenges of the future? *Sustainable development is defined as: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. A development that is economically efficient, socially equitable and ecologically sustainable".*

a. Yes, absolutely

b. Yes, rather

c. I don't know

d. No, not really

e. No, not at all

22. If not, why not? (optional answer)

23. Concerning the environment, in your opinion, what are the solutions to preserve our planet? (multiple choice)

a. State intervention: it is up to the State to implement laws that oblige companies and citizens to pollute less.

b. Individual action: it's everyone's responsibility to pollute less (recycle, ride a bike, eat less meat...).

c. Collective action (such as boycotts, petitions, demonstrations, blockades, etc.).

d. I don't know

24. In your opinion, which of the companies and consumers is most responsible for pollution?

a. The companies

b. Consumers

c. They are equally responsible for pollution

d. I don't know

25. According to you, positive change for the environment should consist of...
    a. The prohibition of polluting behaviors and products
    b. Gentle reform to change behaviors little by little
    c. Other (please specify)
    d. I don't know

26. Do you expect I-buycott to remain neutral in its positions, like a mediator, or on the contrary do you prefer I-buycott to defend ideas as an association?
    a. I prefer I-buycott to remain neutral
    b. I prefer I-buycott to defend ideas
    c. It doesn't matter to me

Values (based on Steg et al., 2005)

27. Please rate how important the following 12 values are in your life (-1 represents an opposition to the value, 0 "not at all important" and 7 "supremely important")
    a. Social power: control over others, dominance
    b. Wealth: material possessions, money
    c. Authority: the right to lead or command
    d. Influential: having an impact on people and events
    e. Equality: equal opportunity for all
    f. A world at peace: free of war and conflict
    g. Social justice: correcting injustice, care for the weak
    h. Helpful: working for the welfare of others
    i. Preventing pollution
    j. Respecting the earth: live in harmony with other species
    k. Unity with nature: fitting into nature
    l. Protecting the environment: preserving nature

Perceived Marketplace Influence (based on Bret Leary et al., 2017)

28. My behavior guides other individuals to act in a similar manner.
    Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree

29. My behavior causes companies to change their product offerings and corporate practices. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

30. I feel what I do sways what others around me do. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

31. What I choose to do or say impacts what other consumers choose to do. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

32. I feel what I buy encourages companies to make and sell environmentally friendly products. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

33. My behavior will not cause other consumers to act similarly (RC). *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

34. I feel what I buy encourages companies to make and sell ethical products. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

35. I know that my behavior motivates others to act similarly. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

36. My behavior does not guide organizations to provide similar products (RC). *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

37. What I do influences the actions of a company. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

38. The choices I make persuade companies to offer specific products to consumers. *Strongly Disagree 1 ---- 7 Strongly Agree*

Socio-demographic profile

39. You are…
    a. Male
    b. Female
    c. Other

40. Your age…
    a. Under 18 years old
    b. From 18 to 25 years old

    c. From 26 to 35 years old

    d. From 36 to 45 years old

    e. From 46 to 55 years old

    f. From 56 to 65 years old

    g. From 66 to 75 years old

    h. More than 75 years old

41. What is approximately your personal monthly income? (optional answer)

    a. Less than 500€ net

    b. Between 501€ and 1500€ net

    c. Between 1501€ and 2500€ net

    d. Between 2501€ and 3500€ net

    e. Between 3501€ and 4500€ net

    f. More than 4501€ net

42. What is your education level?

    a. *No diploma*

    b. Middle school graduate

    c. CAP or BEP *(vocational training)*

    d. Graduate of the Baccalaureate (high school diploma)

    e. Diploma of level Bac + 1 or Bac + 2

    f. Diploma of level Bac + 3 or Bac + 4

    g. Diploma of level Bac + 5 or more *(meaning 5 years of education after high school)*

43. Which sentence best describes your situation?

    h. I live in a large city (more than 100,000 inhabitants).

    i. I live in a medium-sized city (50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants).

    j. I live in a small town (between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants).

    k. I live in a village or in the countryside.

44. Do you support I-Buycott financially?

    a. Yes, every month

    b. Yes, on an ad hoc basis

    c. No, I do not support this association

45. In general, why do you decide to NOT support financially organizations? (optional answer)

APPENDIX 2 Socio-demographic profile answers of all respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	73	28%
Female	184	71%
Other	3	1%
Total	**260**	**100%**
Age		
From 18 to 25 years old	29	11%
26 to 35 years old	69	27%
36 to 45 years old	58	22%
46 to 55 years old	52	20%
56 to 65 years old	36	14%
66 to 75 years old	15	6%
More than 75 years old	1	0%
Total	**260**	**100%**
Average monthly income		
Less than 500€ net	17	7%
Between 501€ and 1500€ net	70	27%
Between 1501€ and 2500€ net	112	43%
Between 2501€ and 3500€ net	20	8%
Between 3501€ and 4500€ net	8	3%
More than 4501€ net	2	1%
Prefers not to answer	31	12%
Total	**260**	**100%**
Education level		
No diploma	2	1%
Middle school graduate	3	1%
CAP or BEP (vocational training)	26	10%
High school diploma	16	6%

A diploma equivalent to 1 to 2 years of studies after high school	48	18%
Equivalent to 3 to 4 years of studies after high school	73	28%
Equivalent to 5 years or more of studies after high school (Master studies and more)	77	30%
Prefers not to answer	15	6%
Total	**260**	**100%**
Urban or rural resident		
I live in a large city (more than 100,000 inhabitants).	84	32%
I live in a medium-sized city (50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants).	39	15%
I live in a small town (between 10,000 and 50,000 inhabitants).	56	22%
I live in a village or in the countryside.	81	31%
Total	**260**	**100%**