

Online Social Network Users' View of Political Consumerism: A Case of Facebook

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Abstract

With the diffusion of the Internet, Web 2.0 and online social network usage, consumers' power has increased against to companies which were seen inaccessible in the past. The Internet that enables consumers to be producers has an important place in the development and diffusion of political consumerism. Via the Internet and especially online social networks, people can easily access information about consumer activism and join the related networks.

So, the purpose of this research is to explore overall perception of political consumerism among Turkish Facebook users. In this context, the research particularly investigates tendency of Facebook users to be a political consumer. This empirical paper also examines the relationship between political consumerism and demographic variables and the effects of the political consumerism on consumers' political boycotting and boycotting behaviors.

The study has followed a quantitative approach. For attaining the above aims, an online survey was conducted in Facebook. The data was collected by a structured questionnaire from a sample of Turkish Facebook users. The study revealed that there was not a meaningful relationship between Facebook usage and political consumerism. However, some significant relationship between gender and political consumerism has founded. The results also suggested that political consumerism in the cognitive phase has a positive effect on buying behavior.

Key Words: Political consumerism, political consumers, online social networks, Facebook

1. Introduction and Objectives

In the past, marketing was more controllable and it was seen secure that communication was provided unilaterally via advertising and press releases (Özgür, 2008). Relationship between brands and consumers was one-way communication. However as time went by marketing rules had to change and web had an important role to show and increase these changes. Today even though television has still a non-negligible impact on communication process, social media will play a critical part in driving purchase intent as well as delivering brand engagement in the digital networked society (Meadows-Klue, 2008). Consumers have also changed; they want to reach true information easily, socialize, belong to somewhere, and be regarded by brands and companies and share this information. All these changes are suitable to Web 2.0 (Kutsal, 2006). “Prosumer” concept propounded by Alvin Toffler in his book named “The Third Wave” which he foresees that the boundaries between producer and consumer are becoming indistinct and these two concepts will gradually merge is a reality of today (Özata, 2007). For all the reason stated so far, Web 2.0 has become one of the most important platforms that consumers express themselves and brands reach consumers. Besides the blogs, wikis, video-sharing sites, hosted services and web applications, one of the best examples of Web 2.0 is social networking sites.

Social networks have emerged with people living together. The concept of social networks is explained as the network that is constituted by the personal and professional relationships between individuals. Social networks represent the connections among people and the power of these connections. In recent years, widespread usage of the Internet makes social networks stronger and increases people’s interest to social networks (Alikılıç and Onat, 2008). There are many social networks on the Internet such as Facebook.com, Webkinz.com, Famster.com, Ecademy.com, Mspace.com, Friendster, Orkut, Hi5 and Ning. Social network sites or online social networks are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, present a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and scrutinize their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). As a platform which creates opportunities to meet new people and make friends, social network sites have become a new mass communication tool (Onat and Alikılıç, 2008). As we have seen Facebook is one of the best examples of online social networks.

With all these developments like Web 2.0 and online social network sites, the Internet has an important place in the development and diffusion of political consumerism which is defined by Micheletti (2003) as *the actions of people that make choices among producers and products with the goal of changing either institutional or market practices which they find questionable*. Some researches show that most of political consumers have the Internet access (Brooks, 2007). Via the Internet and especially online social networks, people can easily access information about consumer activism and join the related networks.

So, the purpose of the paper is to explore overall perception of political consumerism among Turkish Facebook users. In this context, the research particularly investigates tendency of Facebook users to be a political consumer. This empirical research also examines the relationship between political consumerism and demographic variables and the effects of the political consumerism on consumers' political boycotting and boycotting behaviors.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Political Consumerism

Political consumerism is generally expressed as a concept which is a result of post materialist values of welfare societies (Terragni, 2007). Political consumerism which can be used as a means of environmental and social policy development is the action of people who make choices between producers and products to change the institutional or market activities which are found questionable by them (Persson, 2008). This concept is related to non-economic attitudes and values including justice, honesty, individual and family welfare, environmental protection, animal rights, etc. towards business and government activities (Pellizzoni, 2007). According to Odabaşı (2008), political consumerism is a way of doing politics via market.

Products represent the tangible relationship (tie) between consumers and unreachable producers. Because it is impossible to reach Mr.Nike, consumers express their opinions about child labor by boycotting Nike products (Micheletti et al. 2007). Besides traditional political and societal actions such as voting, political consumerism is an alternative way to participate in social matters as a choice among producers and products based on social, political and ethical sensitivities (Odabaşı, 2008). Political consumerism does not politicize the economy, it enriches the economic role of consumers with political and ethical elements instead (Holzer, 2006).

Similarly to the classical liberal theories, consumers are perceived as voters who can reward or punish particular products or producers via their buying power (Micheletti et al., 2007). Political consumer either buys or refuses to buy products based on various political, ethical or social motives, so he/she combines his/her life style with political participation (Persson, 2008;48). *Political consumer refers to politically sensitive citizens who use the market as an arena for several reasons* (Micheletti et al., 2007).

Political consumerism consists of three forms including boycotts, buycotts and discursive actions (Micheletti et al, 2007). It is assumed that political consumerism contains both individual behavior (critical buying) and organized collective action (participation in groups and associations). But it can not be ignored that the effects of individual actions depend on collective results (Pelizzoni, 2007).

Boycott, negative form of political consumerism, can be defined as *one or more groups' attempt to motivate individual buyers about avoidance of buying products to reach a set of goals* (Torlak, 2007). Boycotts encourage consumers to break with institutional actors by refusing to buy their products. The aim of the boycotts is to force businesses to change their institutional policies by motivating consumers against products or producers (Micheletti, 2004).

Buycott, positive form of political consumerism, is the usage of labeling schemes which direct consumer preferences. In this case consumers prefer particular products instead refusing to buy. The examples of buycotts are eco-labels, fair trade labels, and organic food labels.

Discursive political consumerism, the newest and the least researched form of political consumerism, does not include monetary transactions unlike other forms. The main purpose of this form is to represent opinions about institutional policy and actions by communication efforts which are directed to businesses, public opinion, and various political institutions rather than rewarding or punishing the institutional actors. We did not dwell on this form of political consumerism in this study.

There are various researches about political consumerism. Some of them followed qualitative approach (Linden, 2004; Shaw, Newholm, and Dickinson, 2006; Zwick, Denegri-Knott and

Schroeder, 2007; Halkier, et al. 2007). Others that were referenced in this study have followed quantitative approach.

Micheletti and Stolle (2004) found that Swedish political consumers are disproportionately women, highly educated, come from wealthy households and are more politically interested and active than non-political consumers. They also give more consideration to other-regarding values (animal rights, the general working conditions in countries that manufacture our consumer goods, and child labor) when purchasing products.

Stolle and Micheletti (2003) in their another research examined how and why women engage in political consumerism, exploring historical examples, the act of shopping as well as motivations behind this activity. Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti (2005) built a “political consumerism index” incorporating attitudinal, behavioral, and frequency measurements.

Tobiasen (2004) examined political consumerism in Denmark on the basis of a survey data from 2004 and found that political consumerism appears to have found a steady level and fluctuates in relation to concrete boycotts and depending on media attention. Tobiasen (2004) concluded that about 40 % of those who engage in political consumption do so on a regular basis, in comparison with collective modes of political consumerism, political consumption via the market is much more widespread and political concerns do not contradict other concerns but are interwoven with them, e.g. health concerns.

Strømsnes (2004) showed in the study that political consumption is a form of participation that appeals to an urban, radical, well educated and political interested elite, but do not support the impression of political consumption as an income dependent kind of political participation.

Internet which enables consumers to be producers has a critical role in the development and expansion of political consumerism. Internet, a media preferred by citizen-consumer, facilitates information sharing and reaching to networks which are required for consumer activism (Brooks, 2007). WWW facilitates consumer involvement to production process by accelerating the process of transferring control to consumers (Meadows-Klue, 2008). Most of the political consumers have internet access (Brooks, 2007). Consumers share their comments

and messages, and negative situations about any purchases via many websites. Nowadays, an unsatisfied consumer can affect thousands of people in just seconds via WWW.

2.2. Most Popular Online Social Network Site of Turkey: Facebook

Although the Internet and especially new social media sites are used very much as a political consumerism communication tool today, there is a lack of literature emphasizing this relationship and its effects. The reason for choosing Facebook as an online social network in our study is the popularity of Facebook in Turkey.

The latest data explained by Mark Zuckerberg in the official Facebook Blog page revealed that 500 million people all around the world are actively using Facebook to stay connected with their friends and the people around them (Zuckerberg, 21.07.2010). We have taken the Facebook statistics for Turkey from Facebakers.com¹. In reference to numbers updated on a daily basis given by the Facebook Statistics (Advertising) platform, Turkey is the fourth country all around the world with regard to Facebook users number (Facebakers.com, 28.08.2010).² Turkey's Facebook user numbers have increased 551% by last two years and 82% by last one year.³ On the other hand, Turkey is the twenty seventh country on the list according to the penetration rates to the population (regarding that Turkey's population 72 561 312).

In accordance with the Table 1, top user age group of Turkey is 18 to 24 age segment and while 36% of Turkish Facebook users are woman, 64% are man. We have seen in the distribution that the 45 and above age users group has the fewest member number with the 5.35% which is compatible with the sample of our study.

¹ Facebakers.com is a portal run by Candytech to deliver up-to-date data and statistics about Facebook - including Facebook statistics of users by countries, top Facebook Page data, and top Facebook Applications data.

² You can find "The Place of Turkey in Facebook According to Users Number" in the appendix.

³ You can find "Top 30 Countries with Highest Number of Facebook Users" in the appendix.

Table 1. Age Distribution of Facebook Users in Turkey

20.10. 2008						
Age Distribution of Facebook Users in Turkey						
Age distribution	Woman	Man	Total	Woman%	Man%	Total%
Below 18	2,343,000	3,225,260	5,568,260	9.91%	13.65%	23.56%
18-24	2,885,340	4,869,800	7,755,140	12.21%	20.61%	32.82%
25-34	2,158,600	4,384,840	6,543,440	9.13%	18.55%	27.69%
35-44	748,440	1,754,840	2,503,280	3.17%	7.43%	10.59%
45-54	247,840	578,440	826,280	1.05%	2.45%	3.50%
Above 55	122,260	313,860	436,120	0.52%	1.33%	1.85%
General total	8.505,480	15,127,040	23,632,520	35.99%	64.01%	100.00%

Resource: <http://www.socialmediatr.com/blog/facebook-uye-sayilari-agustos-2010/> (accessed 30 August 2010).

Even though Turkey is the fourth country on the top list of Facebook users with nearly 23.5 million users, in regard to Facebook.com visitor number, Turkey is the ninth country on Facebook by monthly 16 million visitor number (Royal Pingdom Blog, 2010).⁴ This difference shows us that about one third of member profiles originating from Turkey are not active on monthly basis. This activity ratio may mark that together with Turkey's pushing the limits of user numbers, users who are generally nonactive (for example users in the old age group) start to join Facebook and this change declines the activity ratio (Sosyal Medya Türkiye, 2010).

3. Method

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The study has followed a quantitative approach. In order to address the research questions, an online survey was conducted in Facebook. Convenient sampling was chosen as sampling method because of the difficulties to make people solve the questionnaire on the Internet. Data were collected from 136 Turkish Facebook users by means of self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire composed of closed-end questions settled in an online survey site and then placed in a private web page with a password. This Web page's link was shared to Facebook users and we request them to share the link and password with their network in order to reach more respondents. Moreover, an event created and publicly shared on Facebook. The data gathering process was carried out in August 2010 and September 2010. The analysis of the data collected, was implemented with the use of SPSS 17 package.

⁴ You can find "Top 10 Countries on Facebook with regard to monthly visitors" in the appendix.

In terms of demographic characteristics, the sample was more or less equally split between males and females. The sample comprised 74 males and 63 females. In terms of age grouping, just one of the respondents was in the age group below 18. While the biggest portion (75.7%) of the sample was in the age group 25-34, just 14.7% of the sample was aged between 18-24. The age group 35-44 made up 5.9% of the respondents, while the remainder (2.9%) was in the age group 45-74. In terms of education, just 4.4% of the participants in the survey had received mainly high school education; half of the participants (50.0%) had graduated from university (bachelor), while the remaining 45.6% had graduated from a master or PhD program. With regard to monthly average household income, just 3.7% of the respondents earned less than 1000TL (1TL≈0.5Euro), another 29.4 % was in the range of 1001TL to 2000TL. Nearly half of the respondents (48.5%) had an income between 2001TL and 4000 TL while the remainder (18.4%) had an income exceeding 4001TL.

Table 2. Sample Characteristics

Demographic variables	Frequency	%
<i>Age</i>		
Below 18	1	0,7
18-24	20	14,7
25-34	103	75,7
35-44	8	5,9
45-74	4	2,9
<i>Sex</i>		
Female	63	46,3
Male	73	53,7
<i>Highest level of education</i>		
High school	6	4,4
Bachelor	68	50,0
Master and PhD degrees	62	45,6
<i>Monthly average household income*</i>		
Less than 1000 TL	5	3,7
1001-2000 TL	40	29,4
2001- 4000 TL	66	48,5
More than 4001 TL	25	18,4
<i>Marital status</i>		
Single	95	69,9
Married	41	30,1

* At the time of the study 1 Euro was approximately equal to 2 Turkish L

3.2. Measures

The questionnaire consisted of four major parts; in the first part, a political consumerism scale which contains 11 items with 5 point likert scale adapted from the studies of Stolle and Micheletti (2003), Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti (2005) and Tobiasen (2004) was used. The second part of the questionnaire was designed to learn boycotting and buying (buycotting) frequencies of respondents. Next part included questions aimed to reveal the motives for political consumerism, knowledge about boycott-actions and information sources about products to boycott or buycott of respondents. Finally in the last part of the questionnaire, there are demographic variables such as gender, age, household income, education, marital status and also the Internet and Facebook usage information.

4. Findings

Data analysis took the following forms; first of all, reliability analysis was employed to the main scale. Two sub-dimensions were resulted from the factor analysis. Values were within reasonable bounds. The reliability value for the first factor was counted as Croanbach Alpha= 0.88 and for the other factor, it was 0.77. KMO value of this scale is 0.89.

Table 3. Results of Reliability Analysis

Items	Means	Factor Loadings	% of Variance	Cronbach's Alpha
Ethical considerations				
I consider ethical considerations in purchasing soaps and detergent	2.54	0.846	37.38	0.88
I consider ethical considerations in purchasing groceries	2.23	0.776		
I consider ethical considerations in choosing paper for school	2.52	0.775		
I consider ethical considerations in purchasing clothes	2.37	0.772		
I consider ethical considerations in choosing restaurants	2.29	0.683		
I consider ethical considerations in choosing banks	2.14	0.623		
Responsibility				
The welfare of future generations depends on whether contemporary consumers consider political, ethical or environmental concerns when they are shopping	2.32	0.781	26.71	0.77
I think that we as ordinary people have a personal responsibility to buy products for political, ethical and environmental reasons	2.28	0.755		
When I boycott or buy certain products because of political, ethical or environmental concerns, I feel part of a larger popular community that share some of the same values	2.57	0.749		
I believe in the personal responsibility to chose "right" company	1.97	0.600		
KMO=0.89 Scale 1 was eliminated based on reliability analysis because its item total correlation score was 0.34 (lower than 0.40) (1- strongly agree, 2 -agree, 3 - neither agree nor disagree, 4 -disagree, 5 - strongly disagree)				

Second, in order to examine the effects of the demographic variables on the political consumerism, analysis of variance and t-test were employed. According to variance and t-test analysis, the study did not find significant role of the consumer demographics except gender on the political consumerism. This result showed that respondents with different ages, education level, household income and marital status generally think on the same directions. Scores of scale answers had same means. Even though any variables had a significant difference, there was a meaningful difference between the perceptions of women and men in the second factor (responsibility). Results revealed that female respondents rated the statements in the factor named “responsibility” higher than male respondents.

Table 4. The Results of Variance Analysis and t Test

	F1		F2		
	F	P	F	p	
Use of Internet frequency	0.190	0.903	1.404	0.244	3,113
Use of Facebook frequency	1.035	0.380	0.105	0.957	3,132
Daily Facebook usage	1.851	0.123	0.212	0.932	4,131
Age	0.166	0.955	0.925	0.452	4,131
Education	1.435	0.242	0.426	0.654	2,133
Household income	0.945	0.421	1.198	0.313	3,132
Marital status	0.703	0.497	0.220	0.803	2,133
Gender	t=-1.401	p=0.16	t=-2.12	P=0.036	

Examining the information sources about products to boycott or buycott of respondents, the Internet appeared to represent the primary source of information when respondents were asked where they get information about what products to choose. 72.8% of respondents reported that they obtain information from the Internet, 70.6% get it from media, and more than half of the respondents obtain information from friends and acquaintances. The least used information source appeared to be politicians followed by description of content on product. There were also 11% of other resources as seen in the Table 5.

Table 5. Information Sources about Products to Boycott or Buycott

Information Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Media	96	70.6%
Experts (via media)	37	27.2%
Friends and acquaintances	69	50.7%
Description of content on product	27	19.9%
Politicians (via media)	18	13.2%
Associations and organizations	37	27.2%
Internet	99	72.8%
Other	15	11%

Note: Respondents could choose more than one answer.

Information sources question was taken from the study of Tobiasen (2004).

We have asked the respondents how often they purchase products because of different concerns such as the environment, supporting small producers etc. Table 6 leaves no doubt that “price” and “health” are the most important concerns. About 49.3% responded that they often think about price and 22.8% responded that they always think about price. For the health motive 20.6% of the respondents always think about the motive and 32.4% respond that they often think about health. This result is compatible with Tobiasen’s research results (2004). Following concerns were respectively “support Turkish workplaces”, “environment”, “support certain firms that do a good job at taking ethical, political or environmental concerns” and “support small producers”. The least considered concerns when purchasing products and services were “animal protection” and “support products from developing countries”.

Table 6. Motives for political consumerism (percentages)

Boycott	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Price	22,8	49,3	22,1	4,4	1,5
Health	20,6	32,4	30,9	11,8	4,4
The environment	11,0	25,0	43,4	16,2	4,4
Support Turkish workplaces	14,7	27,2	30,9	22,1	5,1
Animal protection	7,4	19,9	29,4	25,7	17,6
Support small producers	6,6	23,5	43,4	21,3	5,1
Support certain firms that do a good job at taking ethical, political or environmental concerns	8,8	25,0	37,5	21,3	7,4
Support products from developing countries	2,9	9,6	27,9	33,8	25,7

Note: Motives for political consumerism was taken from the study of Tobiasen (2004).

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Motives

Motives	Mean
Price	2,13
Health	2,47
Support Turkish workplaces	2,76
The environment	2,78
Support certain firms that do a good job at taking ethical, political or environmental concerns	2,93
Support small producers	2,95
Animal protection	3,26
Support products from developing countries	3,70

(1 – Always, 2 – Often, 3 – Sometimes, 4 – Rarely, 5 – Never)

In another measurement, we have asked respondents whether they have heard about different campaigns to boycott certain firms or countries which were used by Tobiasen (2004) as an indicator of political consumerism. Table 8 shows the percentage of respondents who have heard about different campaigns. Even though respondents were reasonably well-informed about Turkey related boycotts (last 4) and the world wide known one (boycott against USA because of war in Iraq), they were not much informed about “boycott against French products because of nuclear bomb explosions in the Pacific Ocean in 1996” and “boycott against NIKE”. “Boycott against Nestle” and “Boycott against Shell because of dumping of the Brent Spar oil rig in 1995” were also seemed quite known.

Table 8. Knowledge about Boycott-actions

	N	Frequency
Boycott against French products because of nuclear bomb explosions in the Pacific Ocean in 1996	19	14
Boycott against USA because of war in Iraq	99	72,8
Boycott against NIKE	17	12,5
Boycott against Shell because of dumping of the Brent Spar oil rig in 1995	56	41,2
Boycott against Nestle	69	50,7
Boycott against Italian products because of hosting Abdullah Öcalan as refugee to Italy in 1999	115	84,6
Boycott against French products because of the law draft concerning the so-called Armenian genocide in 2006	112	82,4
Boycott against Danish products because of the comics about The Prophet Mohammed published in the Jyllands-Posten Newspaper	112	82,4
Boycott against Israel products because of invasion to Turkish ship “Mavi Marmara”	117	86

Finally, we have employed regression analysis in order to determine the effect of political consumerism on consumers' buying behaviors. It has found that political consumerism had a positive effect on boycotting and boycotting frequency with political reasons. In other words, as political consumerism sensibility of people increases, political reasons stands out in buying behaviors and boycotting product with political reasons also increase. It can be concluded that political consumerism has a positive effect on the consumers' buying product with political reasons. Results can be seen in the Table 9 and Table 10.

Table 9. The Results of Regression Analysis (model 1)

Independent variables	B	Std. Error	B	t	p
(Constant)	1.248	0.217		5.752	.000
Factor 1	0.446	0.102	0.383	4.387	.000
Factor 2	0.376	0.107	0.307	3.521	.001
R=0.625 R ² =0.390					
F Change=42.548 p<.001					
Dependant variable: Buying with political reasons(boycotting)					

Table 10. The Results of Regression Analysis (model 2)

Independent variables	B	Std. Error	B	t	p
(Constant)	1.276	0.216		5.911	.000
Factor 1	0.357	0.101	0.321	3.532	.001
Factor 2	0.378	0.106	0.324	3.560	.001
R=0.582 R ² =0.339					
F Change=34.130 p<.001					
Dependant variable: Boycotting behavior with political reasons					

5. Discussion

This paper aimed at exploring overall perception of political consumerism among Turkish Facebook users, especially tendency of Turkish Facebook users to be a political consumer, also examining the relationship between political consumerism and demographic variables and the effects of the political consumerism on consumers' political boycotting and

boycotting behaviors. The study has carried out in Facebook by a structured questionnaire and data were analyzed by SPSS 17.

In this study, we investigated the relationship between respondents' use of Facebook and political consumerism. Even though there were not any significant relationship between Facebook usage and political consumerism, political consumerism index's (Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti, 2005) mean scores were high. According to reliability analysis, scale was very reliable. Regarding the results of factor analysis with high factor loadings two factors extracted which we named "ethical considerations" and "responsibility". The reason why we are not able to find any relationship between Facebook usage and political consumerism may be explained with Facebook usage aims of people. They generally adhere to Facebook for just social reasons rather than other reasons.

We investigated the demographic characteristics included use of Internet frequency, use of Facebook frequency and daily Facebook usage associated to political consumerism. According to variance and t-test analysis, the study did not find significant role of the consumer demographics except gender on the political consumerism. Consistent with prior research (Stolle and Hooghe, 2003; Terragni, 2007), our analysis revealed that female respondents rated the statements in the factor named "responsibility" higher than male respondents. There are many studies that show gender and socio-economic status have impacted on political consumerism. Even though political consumerism differs from country to country, women tend to take part in political consumerism forms more than men (Terragni, 2007). Stolle and Hooghe (2003) indicated that women's tendency to boycotting and boycotting behaviors are higher than men in their study which compares women and men about political consumerism. The reason why political consumerism is more attractive for women is that political consumerism has not boundaries related with traditional political participation such as membership or face to face interaction. Traditional gender roles make women political consumers because women as a wife and mother, interest in consumption goods' effects to their family and humanity (Neilson, 2006, 12).

With respect to other socio-demographic variables and economic factors, our findings were inconsistent with prior research indicated that consumers from high social stratum especially according to education and profession tend to be political consumer more (Pellizzoni, 2007). According to Persson (2008), typical political consumer is old aged, have a high level

education and income. Moreover, there are findings about the positive effect of economic conditions on political consumerism (Verba ve Nie, 1972; Neilson, 2006).

In this study, we also tried to find out respondents' information sources about products to boycott or buycott. Respondents reported that they obtain information mostly from the "Internet", secondly from "media", and more than half of the respondents obtain information from "friends and acquaintances". This finding may indicate that both online and offline social networks are very effective in political consumerism. Another interesting finding is that "politicians" has the lowest preferred item in the list. This result is same with the research of Tobiasen (2004) which was carried out in Denmark. Although it is expected that politicians to be one of the primary information sources in democracies, this finding seems very understandable in the context of Turkey because politicians are not seen as reliable. Moreover, this may be explained that our politicians have low level interest to social concerns which are related to boycotts and buycotts.

In addition, we have asked the respondents how often they purchase products because of different concerns, thus we tried to learn which concerns are most important and where the place of price is. We can conclude that "price" and "health" are the most important concerns and "support products from developing countries" is chosen as the least important motive by respondents. This finding is congruent with the study of Tobiasen (2004). Price as the traditional concern at the market and health as an indispensable part of life seems very understandable choices in the context of this question. Also, we have seen that "support Turkish workplaces" is much more preferred than "support products from developing countries". This finding may be related with ethnocentrism.

In the last analysis of the second part, we have asked respondents whether they have heard about different campaigns to boycott certain firms or countries. Results can be interpreted with the media coverage (including the Internet). Respondents are more familiar with the boycotts which had more media coverage in Turkish media. This finding is consistent with the results of information sources about products to boycott or buycott mentioned above.

One of the central findings of this study is that political consumerism had a positive effect on buycotting and boycotting frequency with political reasons. This means political consumerism in the cognitive level results in the behavioral level as buycott and buycott.

6. Limitations

The current findings of the research must be considered in the context of the following limitations. First of all, in this study convenience sampling was used, so it is not possible to generalize results to all Facebook users in Turkey. Moreover, we had 136 respondents because of the difficulties of making people join a survey on the Internet. Therefore, a larger sample would permit detailed analysis. People may think that the Internet is insecure and feel uncomfortable and worried about privacy of their answers. Also the rate of return was low because Internet questionnaire is not as encouraging as face to face questionnaire. Another limitation is the time. Even though process was so slow, we had not enough time to compensate this slowness. Lastly, this small-scale study is related to a single country.

8. Further Research

Future studies may be carried out in a wider sample. In order to make a comparison, research with more than one country may be done. Especially, whether Facebook is a more effective and significant tool of political consumerism in the countries with higher Internet and social network usage penetration and countries with more sensible and prone to political consumerism such as Nordic countries, may be examined. Finally, consumers' view of actions on Facebook who actively participate in boycotts and buycotts and whether they use Facebook as a tool may be studied in future research.

9. Managerial Implications

In this study, we did not find a significant relationship between use of Facebook and political consumerism. This may show that in Turkey example, using Facebook as a single source for political consumerism communication by civil society organizations and not for profit organizations which are related to social concerns such boycotts and buycotts seems not enough. It can be said that use of Facebook for this purpose may play a supportive role along with offline public relations and other tools. Moreover, our analysis revealed that political consumerism is not limited with cognitive process; it becomes behavior by boycotting and buycotting. These findings may support that companies should place emphasis on consumers' political power. In their business schedules, companies should consider, never underestimate and make provision against boycotts and buycotts. Since internet and media are the most important information sources for products to be boycotted or buycotted, companies ought to monitor these information sources both thoroughly and continuously.

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APPENDIX

A1. The Place of Turkey in Facebook According to Users Number

Country	Users	User grow	%		Penetration
1. United States (US)	132 810 940	+6 929 720	+5.22 %		43.68 %
2. United Kingdom (GB)	27 806 860	+1 263 260	+4.54 %		45.5 %
3. Indonesia (ID)	27 338 560	+1 425 600	+5.21 %		11.38 %
4. Turkey (TR)	23 516 140	+591 360	+2.51 %		30.62 %
5. France (FR)	19 444 660	+502 440	+2.58 %		31.29 %

Resource: <http://www.facebakers.com/countries-with-facebook/> (accessed 21 August 2010)

Number of users on Facebook in Turkey: **23 516 140**

Number of male users on Facebook in Turkey: **14 432 520**

Number of female users on Facebook in Turkey: **8 054 980**

Penetration of Facebook in Turkey to population: **30.62 %**

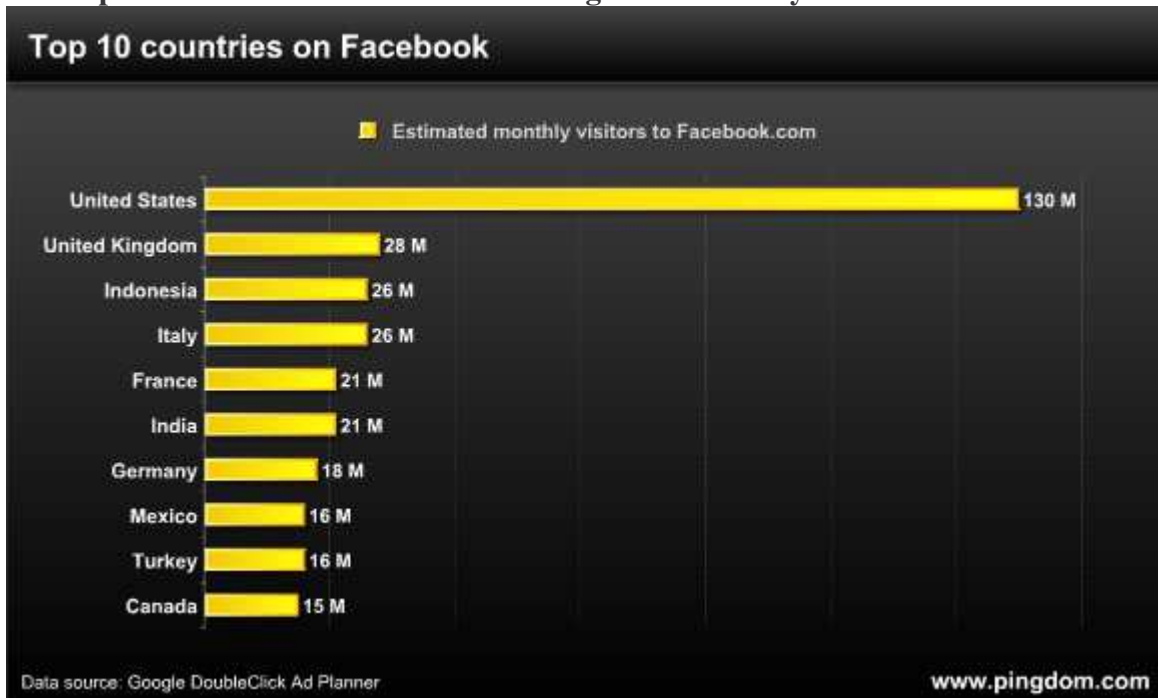
Penetration of Facebook in Turkey to online population: **88.74 %**

A2. Top 30 Countries with Highest Number of Facebook Users

Rank	Country	Number of Facebook users 1st July 2008	Number of Facebook users 1st July 2009	Number of Facebook users 1st July 2010	12 month growth %	24 month growth %
1	USA	27,811,560	69,378,980	125,881,220	81.4%	352.6%
2	UK	11,171,540	18,711,160	26,543,600	41.9%	137.6%
3	Indonesia	209,760	6,496,960	25,912,960	298.9%	12253.6%
4	Turkey	3,464,640	12,382,320	22,552,540	82.1%	550.9%
5	France	2,461,140	10,781,480	18,942,220	75.7%	669.7%
6	Italy	491,100	10,218,400	16,647,260	62.9%	3289.8%
7	Canada	9,621,820	11,961,020	15,497,900	29.6%	61.1%
8	Philippines	162,640	2,719,560	14,600,300	436.8%	8877.1%
9	Mexico	1,042,820	3,644,400	12,978,440	256.1%	1144.6%
10	Spain	695,900	5,773,200	10,610,080	83.8%	1424.7%
11	India	711,520	3,236,140	10,547,240	225.9%	1382.4%
12	Argentina	417,980	4,906,220	10,542,040	114.9%	2422.1%
13	Colombia	2,412,000	5,760,300	10,226,820	77.5%	324%
14	Germany	618,080	3,136,680	9,949,760	217.2%	1509.8%
15	Australia	3,217,380	6,053,560	9,009,660	48.8%	180.0%
16	Malaysia	450,580	1,995,040	7,317,520	266.8%	1524.0%
17	Chile	2,105,820	4,830,680	6,944,540	43.8%	229.8%
18	Taiwan	71,340	685,460	6,745,160	884.0%	9355%
19	Venezuela	966,700	3,578,740	6,686,300	86.8%	591.7%
20	Brazil	119,080	1,015,400	4,757,200	368.5%	3895%
21	Thailand	114,180	697,340	4,216,760	504.7%	3593.1%
22	Sweden	1,141,700	2,287,240	3,798,020	66.1%	232.7%
23	Egypt	783,440	1,618,040	3,581,460	121.4%	357.2%
24	Belgium	531,740	2,372,460	3,505,920	47.8%	559.3%
25	Hong Kong	837,900	2,087,580	3,408,240	63.3%	306.7%

Resource: <http://www.nickburcher.com/2010/07/facebook-usage-statistics-by-country.html> (accessed 6 September 2010)

A3. Top 10 Countries on Facebook with regard to monthly visitors



Resource: <http://royal.pingdom.com/2010/08/12/the-top-countries-on-facebook-chart/> (accessed 2 September 2010).