



Boycotting and buycotting food: New forms of political activism in Spain

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Abstract

Purpose- The actions of the political consumer of food may be manifested either through boycotting or through deliberate purchase of certain products based on ethical, environmental, or political values (buycotting). This article has several objectives: to analyse which factors predict the behaviour of political consumers of food; to examine how they perceive that their actions can contribute to social or political change and that the political system will respond to their interests and to people's needs; and to discover whether, for the political consumer of food, good citizen behaviour comes closer to the norms of the socially 'engaged' or 'dutiful'.

Design/Methodology- A national survey of 1,000 people was conducted in Spain. For the analysis of the data, logistic regression models were developed to determine the factors that most influenced the boycott or deliberate purchase. To address the relationship between food consumption in the political arena and political effectiveness and citizenship standards, we have conducted factor analyses of the main components.

Findings- The main results show political food consumers to be people who are interested in politics, distrust government and big business, are confident in their ability to influence these groups to change practices that are not in line with their values, and have a high degree of social engagement.

Social implications- Consumers are demanding a fairer and more supportive agri-food production system, a healthier and more environmentally friendly diet, and accountability from both the private sector and policy makers.

Originality- These data represent progress in the study of this form of political action in Spain, as there are no precedents.

Introduction

During the week of 3–9 June 2019, the Facebook group 'Zero Waste España'¹ called on consumers not to buy food products packaged in single-use plastic, as a way of reducing pollution of the seas and the environment. This initiative called on citizens to boycott products as a means of putting pressure on governments and food companies. In contrast and in the context of the Covid-19 crisis, various media outlets were encouraging the purchase of local, seasonal produce, 'buycotts', to benefit both the local economy and the sustainability of agri-food systems. Both forms of behaviour, the boycott and the buycott, are political consumer actions.

Political consumerism is a form of activism in which, through the market, consumers select the producers and products they buy based on the ethical, political, and environmental assessments they make of the companies' and governments'

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/ZERO-WASTE-España-797262323711879/>, accessed 16 April 2020.

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3 practices (Micheletti, 2003; Micheletti, Follesdal, and Stolle, 2004). Buying a
4 commodity (buycott) or refusing to (boycott) is a justified personal decision that
5 underlines the importance and political significance of consumer behaviour and habits
6 in choosing everyday products; this 'individualized collective action' in the form of
7 'political consumerism represents actions by people who make choices among
8 producers and products with the goal of changing objectionable institutional or market
9 practices' (Micheletti, 2003, 2).

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11 The demands of consumers in the food sector are not only directed towards the
12 healthiness of products, but they also include a strong commitment to the environment,
13 to guarantees concerning working conditions for workers in the agri-food system, to
14 animal welfare, to equal opportunities, and to recognising the most vulnerable groups'
15 right to food. Regular decision-making about what to eat based on ethical,
16 environmental, or political values becomes an individual lifestyle choice, that aims to
17 achieve social change, and this has global implications (Giddens, 1991; Bennet, 1998;
18 Stolle, et al 2005; Copeland, 2014a).

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20 Most studies have analysed the political consumption of products or companies as a
21 generic category without specifying the type of goods involved (Neilson, 2010; García-
22 Espejo and Novo, 2017). But there has been little work analysing political consumerism
23 in the area of food (Boström and Klintman, 2008; McCarthy and Murphy, 2013; Gjerris
24 *et al.*, 2016; Sasson, 2016; Eli *et al.*, 2016; Niva and Jallinoja, 2018; Rivaroli *et al.*,
25 2019; Muhamad *et al.*, 2019).

26
27 Given the relative lack of data and research carried out to this effect, the aim of this
28 article is to address precisely this issue and to analyse political food consumption. To
29 this end, we are interested in what factors predict the behaviour of consumers who
30 consciously buy and consumers who boycott food products. In addition to socio-
31 demographic factors, we also investigate the importance of attitudinal factors in this
32 behaviour, including how far these consumers perceive that their actions can influence
33 social or political change (internal political efficacy) and that the political system will
34 respond to their interests and people's needs (external political efficacy). We also try to
35 discover whether these forms of alternative political engagement are more aligned with
36 the norms of the traditional role of 'dutiful' citizen who follows the norms of social
37 behaviour, such as always voting in election or not avoiding tax or with those attributed
38 to the role of the 'engaged' citizen, whose civic values are oriented towards seeking a
39 better quality of life, such as supporting people who are in a worse situation than
40 oneself or participating in groups with a social or political character (Dalton, 2008;
41 Copeland, 2014b).

42 43 44 45 46 **Literature review**

47 Since the 1950s, research on political participation has been changing (Lazarsfeld *et al.*,
48 1948; Berelson, *et al.*, 1954). Citizens' political involvement used to be shown through
49 voting in elections or participating in various activities related to campaigns. Over the
50 decades, paths for action have expanded to include activities beyond those promoted by
51 democratic institutions and related to social and community engagement (Verba *et al.*,
52 1995; Putnam, 2000). In this context, the emergence and rise of political consumerism
53 since the 1970s have made it part of the taxonomy of activism, as the public has begun
54 to use the market as a space for politics (Stolle, Hooghe, and Micheletti, 2005, 247). An
55 example of this is the classification by Torcal *et al.* (2006: 22) of five forms of
56 participation: (1) voting, (2) contact, (3) party activities, (4) protest activities, and (5)
57 consumer participation. Ekman and Amnå (2012) also include political consumption
58 (boycott and buycott) as a form of individual legal extra-parliamentary political
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3 engagement. Likewise, Theocharis and Van Deth (2018) show that ‘old and new forms
4 are systematically integrated into a multi-dimensional taxonomy covering (1) voting, (2)
5 digitally networked participation, (3) institutionalized participation, (4) protest, (5) civic
6 participation, and (6) consumerist participation’.

7
8 The study of political consumption is important given its expansion as a form of
9 political participation in most democracies. Two types of action can be distinguished
10 (Micheletti, 2003; Holzer, 2006): first, boycott or the refusal to buy particular products
11 or brands as a protest against a company or the practices of a particular country; second,
12 buycott or the deliberate purchasing of products that meet the consumer’s ethical,
13 political, and environmental preferences. Both forms of action are taken at an individual
14 level but have social repercussions. According to the European Social Survey (2016)
15 more than 40% of the population in Sweden and Iceland have boycotted in the last 12
16 months. Recently, the results of the comparative study ‘Mobilizing Global Citizens:
17 Political Consumption in Comparative Perspective’, carried out in Canada, France, the
18 United Kingdom, and the United States, indicate that the majority of French
19 respondents (57%), followed by Americans (55%), Canadians (53%), and the British
20 (51%) have boycotted products for ethical, political, or environmental reasons in the last
21 year. As for buycotting, 59% of respondents from France, 54% from Canada, 53% from
22 the United States, and 52% from Britain have bought for ethical, political, or
23 environmental reasons in the last twelve months (Copeland, Boulianne, and Koc-
24 Michalska, 2020). In Spain, according to data from the Centre for Sociological Research
25 (*Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas*), we find behaviour patterns that have shown
26 an upwards trend in recent years. Thus, in 2002, 12% of Spaniards had engaged in
27 buycotting, and 6% stated that they had been involved in boycotting (Study 2450, CIS).
28 In 2018, the percentage of people participating in a buycott had risen to 26.3%, and
29 23.2% had participated in boycott action (Study 3210, CIS). Finally, according to the
30 study ‘Political food consumption: Citizens, activists and institutions’, in the last 12
31 months 34.3% of Spanish people have engaged in buycotting and 31.7% in boycotting
32 (Consumocracy, 2019).

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34 As has already been pointed out, the number of research studies devoted to food
35 consumption is rather low, but there are some worth highlighting, because they address
36 factors that contribute to understanding this form of action and its spread. Examples
37 include Boström and Klintman’s study (2008), which examined sustainable food
38 consumption to present the dilemmas that political and ethical consumers face with
39 ecological and fair trade labels. In Australia, McCarthy and Murphy (2013) analysed the
40 political consumption of organic food, the socio-demographic profile of consumers, the
41 reasons that determine consumption decisions, and the consequences of marketing,
42 education campaigns, and food labelling. The question of how to solve problems related
43 to sustainability and food production through political, critical, and ethical consumption
44 is the focus of the research conducted by Gjerris *et al.* (2016: 72). Sasson’s study of the
45 boycott of Nestlé in the 1970s (2016: 1223–1224) revealed a campaign strategy that
46 sought to engage private companies and commercial experts in aid, creating an ethical
47 form of capitalism. This proved effective as new ethical businesses emerged, as well as
48 mobilising a new citizen who took on the role of political consumer by contributing to
49 the world hunger-relief programme. On the side of buycotting, new technologies have
50 been important, for instance with the creation of the free app ‘Buycott’, which has
51 managed to spread food activism campaigns and popularise the alternative food network
52 (Eli *et al.*, 2016). Rivaroli *et al.* (2019) have analysed the pro-social behaviour of
53 buying food produced on land confiscated from Mafia-type organisations, an example
54 of ethical buying behaviour to contribute to social change. Few studies have been
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3 conducted on the role of religion in political food consumerism, but those that there are
4 note a direct relationship between religion and political activism in purchasing food
5 products. Thus the work of Muhamad *et al.* (2019) reveals the origin of consumer
6 motivation to boycott an American food brand to have been driven by Islam. Finally, the
7 research carried out by Niva and Jallinoja (2018) on political food consumption in
8 Finland is also significant: in addition to other findings, such as consumer profiles, they
9 found that the main reasons for buying food products are the fact that they come from
10 local farmers, more than being organic or fair trade.
11

12 Otherwise, however, the phenomenon of political consumption in general has been
13 analysed from various perspectives. First, many studies consider political consumption
14 as a single category of analysis, without distinguishing between forms of action
15 (Micheletti *et al.*, 2012; Newman and Bartels, 2011); others, the minority, analyse
16 buying and boycotting separately (Neilson, 2010; Koos, 2012; Copeland, 2014b; Kelm
17 and Dhole, 2018). If we take the data of people who participate in either form of action
18 as a point of reference, more people direct their behaviour towards positive support than
19 opt for boycotting. The scarcity of studies differentiating between the two types of
20 action has led to our interest in what factors influence participation in one form of
21 action or another.
22

23 The various studies that have looked at political consumption highlight certain
24 socio-demographic and attitudinal factors as identifying the citizens who engage in this
25 type of action. A large majority of them are women (Stolle *et al.*, 2005; Ferrer-Fons and
26 Fraile, 2006; Acik, 2013; Gundelach and Kalte, 2021), young (Stolle, *et al.*, 2005; Acik,
27 2013), and with a high level of education (Neilson and Paxton, 2010; Newman and
28 Bartels, 2011). In contrast, income appears to be of little or no importance in being a
29 political consumer, according to some studies (Tobiasen, 2005; Copeland, 2014);
30 however, other research concludes that income level correlates with the probability of
31 boycotting and that the probability of boycotting also correlates positively with
32 education level (Koos, 2012, 47; Stolle and Micheletti, 2005, 46).
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34 Besides the socio-demographic factors that help to explain political consumption,
35 the literature points out the importance of attitudes, such as psychological disposition, in
36 understanding the actions of this type of consumer. Thus, attitudes play a key role in
37 predicting political consumption, and more than socio-demographic variables (Becker
38 and Copeland, 2015). Affective attitudes, such as an interest in politics, are one of the
39 most widely used indicators for measuring political involvement. Many studies indicate
40 that interest in politics is one of the most stable variables for predicting political
41 consumption (Micheletti and Stolle, 2005; Newman and Bartels, 2011; Copeland,
42 2014). Another type of attitude related to political involvement is political efficacy;
43 Copeland and Boulianne (2020) indicate that this is a fruitful area for research. Political
44 efficacy is citizens' perception that they can affect the functioning of the political
45 system by their actions. There are two ways of measuring political efficacy: on the one
46 hand, internal political efficacy is based on the personal feeling of having the capacity
47 to influence politics; on the other, external political efficacy involves the perception that
48 the system serves the interests of citizens and society. Some studies have found a
49 positive relationship between external political efficacy and political consumption
50 (Marien *et al.*, 2010), while others have not (Newman and Bartels, 2011; Copeland,
51 2020).
52

53 The public's mistrust of the capacity of governments to implement and manage
54 policies in an increasingly globalized world motivates people to assume greater political
55 responsibility in the area of consumption (Gundelach, 2019, 2). Studies in North and
56 South America and Europe relate political disaffection and distrust of politicians as a
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3 variable that correlates positively with political consumption (Stolle and Micheletti,
4 2005; Newman and Bartels, 2011; Ropaul, 2018). In this respect, theories of subpolitics
5 consider this attitude to be a spur to non-traditional political action.

6 Furthermore, to understand the attitudes and behaviour of political consumers it is
7 essential to know what they think about what being a good citizen is. Dalton defines
8 citizenship as ‘a set of norms of what people think people should do as good citizens’
9 (Dalton, 2008: 78). Dalton (2006) outlines two models of citizenship, with people
10 identifying themselves as being closer to one or the other. The first is more linked to
11 duty (voting in an election, paying taxes, etc.) and the second to engagement or active
12 participation in civic and political life (supporting those worse off than oneself,
13 participating in social or political associations, etc.). Much of the research shows that
14 there is a greater relationship between political consumption and norms of engagement
15 than with those of duty (Dalton, 2008, 88; Micheletti, 2012; Copeland, 2014b)

16 Everything, therefore, indicates that, in studying food boycotting and buycotting,
17 both socio-demographic and affective factors must be taken into account. Specifically,
18 it is vital to know what perception these consumers have of how their actions might
19 influence social or political change, or how the political system will respond to the
20 people’s interests and needs. At the same time, it is important to know what those who
21 boycott and buycott foods think about the way that a ‘good citizen’ should behave,
22 whether they value obeying social norms more or value the civic values related to the
23 search for a better quality of life more highly.

30 **Data and methods**

31 In order to analyse political consumerism, a national survey of 1,000 people over the
32 age of 18 was carried out in Spain. We did multistage sampling, stratified by Spain’s
33 regions (autonomous communities) and municipalities, according to quotas for age and
34 gender. For an infinite population, the sampling error is $\pm 3.16\%$, with a 95.5%
35 confidence level. In order to validate the suitability of the questions, a pretest was
36 conducted before carrying out the definitive survey. The survey by computer-assisted
37 telephone interview (CATI) took place between 4 and 10 June 2019.

38 It is worth noting that the Consumocracy survey on political food consumption was
39 the first to be conducted in Spain on this specific subject and it analyses not only
40 political consumerism in general but also specific behaviour towards food.

41 With respect to the methodology for data analysis, logistic regression models have
42 been developed to determine the most influential factors when boycotting or buycotting
43 (buying certain food products for ethical, political, or environmental reasons) in the last
44 12 months. Boycotting and buycotting are dependent variables that respectively take the
45 value 1 if the action has been engaged in and 0 if it has not. As independent variables,
46 the socio-demographic variables of gender, age, marital status, nationality, level of
47 education, subjective social class, occupation, and income have been incorporated into
48 the models. The individual’s expressed interest in politics, ideological positioning, and
49 degree of trust in certain institutions have also been considered on a scale of 0 to 10,
50 covering political parties, trade unions, town councils, the central government, NGOs,
51 the media, big business, and consumer organisations.

52 To address the relationship of political food consumption to political efficacy and
53 citizenship norms, which are objectives of this study, we have carried out factor
54 analyses of major components. Political efficacy is the personal feeling of the ability to
55 influence the political system through actions. As noted above, political efficacy has
56 two components: internal political efficacy and external political efficacy. Internal
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3 political efficacy refers to the personal sense of the ability to influence policy. On the
4 other hand, external political efficacy is the belief in the government's inability to
5 respond to the citizens' demands. The survey includes several indicators that measure
6 both forms of efficacy. Statements are made, and respondents must answer about how
7 far they agree or disagree (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree,
8 and strongly disagree). The model of citizenship norms distinguishes between two
9 groups, where the first is more duty-based and the second more oriented to engagement
10 and participation in civic and political life. Respondents were also asked to assess the
11 degree of importance of a series of indicators.
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14 Results

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16 If we examine the results of the logistic regression model that analyses the boycotting of
17 certain food products, we can see that very few socio-demographic variables are
18 associated with this type of action. In particular, only marital status and wages have
19 statistically significant coefficients. That is to say, single people and married people are
20 more likely to boycott certain products than others. With regard to wages, this type of
21 action is more frequent in people with wages ranging from €1,200 to €1,800. The most
22 significant variable, however, is the degree of interest in politics: the higher the degree
23 of interest, the more frequent this type of action is. At the same time, these citizens also
24 express greater confidence in NGOs and a strong distrust of big business.
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26 If we focus on the positive buying of food products for ethical, political, or
27 environmental reasons, the results obtained in the regression model are quite similar.
28 The only socio-demographic variable that increases the probability of boycotting is age,
29 in particular the group between 45 and 64, although the level of significance is low.
30 Interest in politics is again the most important variable, indicating that those individuals
31 who show the most interest are the most likely to boycott. In addition to distrust of
32 companies, there is also distrust of central government. As for NGOs, they are the
33 institutions that command greatest confidence from these consumers.
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36 Table 1 about here
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39 One of this study's main objectives is to relate the actions of the political food
40 consumer to citizens' perception of their own capacity to influence the political system
41 through action, political efficacy. The following statements are taken to indicate aspects of
42 political efficacy: 'In general, most people can be trusted'; 'Voting is the only way people
43 like me can influence what the government does'; 'Politicians don't care much about what
44 people like me think'; 'Those in power always look after their own personal interests,
45 whoever they are'; 'Generally speaking, I find politics so complicated that people like me
46 cannot understand what is going on'; 'In general, I consider myself someone who
47 understands politics'; 'As a consumer I can influence the behaviour of companies'.
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49 We carried out a factorial analysis of the main components to find homogeneous groups
50 of variables from the larger sets. These homogeneous groups are made up of the variables
51 or factors that correlate highly with each other; in this way, the set of collective actions can
52 be reduced to a smaller number of dimensions.
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54 The structure detection of the factor analysis shows that these values are not
55 independent, but are related to each other. In this respect, Bartlett's sphericity test allows us
56 to reject the hypothesis that the correlation matrix of all the variables is an identity matrix.
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59 Table 2 about here
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3 The factorial analysis shows that the values proposed initially can be grouped and
4 summarized in two dimensions explaining 44.825% of the variance of the original data. As
5 a criterion for deciding the number of factors, Kaiser's rule has been applied, so that we
6 extract those factors whose eigenvalues are greater than 1.
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9 Table 3 about here

10 To make it easier to interpret these dimensions, a rotated component matrix has been
11 used.² The factor scores included in the matrix explain the relationship between each value
12 and the new dimensions. Each block contains the set of variables that reaches maximum
13 saturation in absolute value on the same factor. Within each block the variables are
14 arranged from highest to lowest saturation.
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16 As can be seen, the first dimension is linked above all to external political efficacy:
17 politicians do not care much about what people like me think; whichever people are in
18 power always pursue their own personal interests; generally speaking, politics seems so
19 complicated that people like me cannot understand what is going on (internal efficacy). The
20 second dimension brings together actions that are more related to internal political efficacy:
21 in general, most people can be trusted (social capital); voting is the only way that people
22 like me can influence what the government does; in general, I consider myself someone
23 who understands politics; as a consumer I can influence the behaviour of companies
24 (external efficacy).
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27 Table 4 about here

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29 Once the factor solution was obtained, we found the scores for each interviewee for
30 each of the factors. To evaluate these factorial scores the *regression* method was applied.
31 Subsequently, the scores for each factor were correlated with the variables that measure, on
32 the one hand, the action of boycotting certain foods and, on the other, that of buycotting
33 certain foods. As can be seen, political food consumers correlate more with internal than
34 external political efficacy; in other words, they consider themselves to be agents who are
35 capable of influencing the political system and other relevant groups such as businesses.
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39 Table 5 about here

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41 The third objective of this study has been to relate the actions of the food consumer policy
42 to citizenship norms: 'Always vote in elections'; 'Never try to avoid paying taxes';
43 'Always obey laws and regulations'; 'Keep informed of government actions'; 'Participate
44 in associations of a social or political nature'; 'Try to understand the ideas of people with
45 opinions different from ours'; 'Choose consumer goods that, even if they are more
46 expensive, do not harm the environment or are more in line with our political ideas or
47 ethical sense'; 'Help people in our country who worse off than us'; 'Help people in other
48 parts of the world who are worse off than us'.
49

50 We did another factor analysis of the main component. The values are not independent,
51 but are related to each other. In this respect, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin index is close to 1 and
52 the Bartlett sphericity test allows us to reject the hypothesis that the correlation matrix of
53 all the variables is an identity matrix.
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56 ² The rotation method used is the Varimax method which is a type of orthogonal factor rotation that tries
57 to minimise the number of variables that have high saturations in each factor. The rotation of the factors
58 aims to obtain a more interpretable solution, in the sense that the variables that are highly correlated with
59 each other present high saturations on the same factor and low saturations on the rest.
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4 Table 6 about here
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6 Carrying out factor analysis shows that the values proposed initially can be grouped and
7 summarised in two dimensions to explain 55.099% of the variation in the original data. As
8 a criterion to decide the number of factors, the Kaiser rule has been applied to extract those
9 which have an eigenvalue of more than 1.
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12 Table 7 about here
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14 The matrix of rotated components was used again, with the Varimax method. The
15 factorial scores in the matrix explain the relationship between each value and the new
16 dimensions. Each block contains the set of the variables that reach maximum saturation in
17 absolute value on the same factor. Within each block the variables are arranged from
18 highest to lowest saturation.
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20 As the results of the rotated component matrix indicate, the first dimension refers to
21 engagement and taking an active part in civic and political life, which includes
22 participating in associations of a social or political nature; trying to understand the ideas of
23 people with different opinions; choosing consumer goods that, even if they are more
24 expensive, do not harm the environment or are more in line with our political ideas or
25 ethical sense; helping people in our country are worse off than us; helping people in other
26 parts of the world who are worse off than us. The second dimension is more about duty:
27 always voting in elections, not avoiding taxes, always obeying laws and regulations,
28 keeping informed about government action.
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31 Table 8 about here
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33 After working out the factor analysis, we correlated the scores for each interviewee with
34 each of the factors. To evaluate these factorial scores the *regression* method was applied,
35 with the scores for each factor being correlated with the variables that measure the food
36 boycott and food buycott. According to our results, boycotting and buycotting correlate
37 more with the first dimension that we can call 'civic and political engagement' than with
38 the second dimension, 'duty'. In this way, being a 'good citizen' is closer to engagement,
39 social participation, environmental responsibility, and the search for equity and social
40 justice.
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44 Table 9 about here
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48 Discussion 49

50 This article has examined food boycotting and buycotting separately from each other in
51 order to discern the differences and similarities that might exist between these different
52 behaviours. Although boycotting refers to a form of behaviour that punishes corporate
53 practices through the companies' products or brands, buycotting is a food-buying choice
54 that comes from the consumer's ethical, political, or environmental preferences. From
55 analysing both practices, we have observed that there are no major differences between
56 them. The results obtained suggest that attitudes play a greater predictive role in both
57 food boycotting and buycotting than socio-demographic variables, as indicated by
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3 Becker and Copeland (2015). Thus, being a woman, having a high level of income or a
4 high level of education—factors that play a role in political consumption, as shown by
5 several studies (Micheletti, 2005; Stolle, *et al.*, 2005; Newman and Bartels, 2011; Koos,
6 2012)—do not influence political food consumption.
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10 In contrast, an interest in politics is one of the most stable predictors of boycotting and
11 boycotting in food shopping, as well as of boycotting and buycoting in general (Stolle
12 and Micheletti, 2013; Quintelier and van Deth, 2014; García-Espejo and Novo, 2017).
13 Consumers who have a high interest in issues related to politics are more likely to
14 engage in practices related to product or brand rejection, as also are those who make
15 food choices driven by ethical or environmental convictions. The results also indicate
16 that these types of consumers express a high level of distrust towards big businesses and
17 government, while they trust NGOs the most, as noted by other researchers (Ropaul,
18 2018; Gundelach, 2019).
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22 The perception that these citizens have of how their actions can influence social or
23 political change—internal political efficacy—is seen to be very significant. These
24 consumers strongly agree with statements such as ‘In general most people can be
25 trusted’, ‘In general I consider myself a citizen who understands politics’, and ‘As a
26 consumer I can influence the behaviour of companies’. On the contrary, external
27 political efficacy, or the perception that the political system will respond to the interests
28 and needs of the population, was not significant. In other words, consumers who
29 boycott and buycott food do not agree with statements such as ‘Politicians don’t care
30 much about what people like me think’ and ‘Whoever is in power always looks out for
31 their own interests’.
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36 Finally, the results show a stronger relationship between political food consumption and
37 norms of engagement than with norms of duty (Dalton, 2008; Copeland, 2014b; Zorell,
38 2019). Thus, the conception of being a good citizen for these consumers is closer to
39 engaged civic action focused on helping people in vulnerable situations or choosing
40 food products that may be more expensive but respect the environment and workers’
41 labour rights. The motivation to understand and protect the well-being of people and the
42 environment relates to ‘universalism’, one of the ten sets of basic values described by
43 Schwartz (2007). In contrast, these citizens totally disagree with phrases that refer to the
44 dimension of ‘duty’ such as ‘Always vote in elections’, ‘Never try to avoid paying
45 taxes’, and ‘Always obey laws and regulations’.
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51 In short, the results presented speak of a political food consumer who is interested in
52 politics, distrustful of government and big business, and confident in their ability to
53 influence matters in order to change practices that do not square with their values, as
54 well as having a high degree of civic and social engagement.
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56 **Conclusions**

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58 This study contributes to the debate on political food consumption in at least three areas.
59 First, we analyse the factors that predict participation in the two forms of food consumer
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3 action, the boycott and the buycott. As outlined, there has been little research on either
4 form of action. Our research shows that an interest in politics and distrust of big
5 business are common attitudes in both boycotters and buycotters. On the other hand,
6 distrust of government is an attribute of those who engage in buycotts. The influence of
7 some variables, such as age on boycotting, or salary and marital status on boycotting, is
8 of low significance. This underlines the importance of attitudinal rather than socio-
9 demographic variables. Secondly, Copeland and Boulianne (2020) have encouraged
10 researchers to explore the role of internal or external efficacy in political consumption.
11 This paper contributes to this discussion by demonstrating the significant role of
12 internal efficacy, in that both boycotting and buycotting consumers are confident in
13 their individual capacity to influence policy and business. And thirdly, in this form of
14 action where the boundaries between the private and public spheres are blurred, political
15 food consumers identify more with the citizenship norms associated with social
16 engagement, human welfare, and environmental responsibility than with those
17 associated with duty and traditional values.

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21 Knowing how the Spanish population engages in the political consumption of food
22 is the first step to changing citizens' habits and certain business practices. On a social
23 level, these consumers demand a fairer and more supportive agri-food production
24 system, as well as respect for working conditions. At the environmental level, the
25 demands are based on the need for a healthier and more environmentally friendly diet,
26 which could benefit public health. And finally, at the political level, these demands
27 challenge theories that speak of a crisis of participation, while demanding accountability
28 from both the private sector and policy makers.

29
30 These data represent progress in the study of this form of political action in Spain,
31 as there are no precedents. It would be interesting to carry out comparative studies with
32 other European countries on this issue.

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Author Biography:

Isabel García-Espejo

41
42
43 Doctor in Sociology and Professor at the University of Oviedo. Since 2009 she has
44 oriented her research towards the Sociology of Food. She has directed international
45 research projects aimed at the analysis of eating habits, the relationship between social
46 inequality and the monitoring of a healthy diet and food policy consumption. Among
47 his latest publications are “Social inequalities in following official guidelines on healthy
48 diet during period of economic crisis in Spain” (Díaz-Méndez y García-Espejo (2019)
49 “New and old forms of poverty in Spain: exploring food consumption during the crisis”
50 (Díaz-Méndez, García-Espejo y Otero-Estévez, 2020).
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52
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Amparo Novo Vázquez

54
55
56 Doctor in Political Science and Administration from the University of Santiago.
57
58 Professor of the Department of Sociology at the University of Oviedo and Director of
59 the Chair of Global Food Governance Studies at the University of Oviedo. Management
60

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2
3 team of the Right to Food Observatory in Spain. Among his latest publications are: The
4 "Right to Food Observatory of Spain: An instrument at the service of food governance"
5 (Novo, Fernández and Silveira, 2019); The emergence of the "conscious consumer": an
6 analysis of political participation through purchasing decisions" (García-Espejo and
7 Novo Vázquez, 2017).
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British Food Journal

Table 1. Factors associated with political food consumption. Logistic regression.

	Boycott	Buycott
Sex (ref: woman)	-0.063	-0.184
Age (ref. cat.: over 64)		
18 to 29	0.336	0.237
30 to 44	0.456	0.413
45 to 64	0.498	0.666*
Marital status (ref. cat.: unmarried couple)		
Single	0.933*	-0.316
Married	1.083**	-0.648
Separated	0.844	-0.666
Widowed	1.087	-0.913
Nationality (ref. cat.: not Spanish)		
Spanish	0.520	0.385
Educational level (ref. cat.: none)		
Unfinished primary	0.807	-0.423
Primary or education to 16 (general basic education; compulsory secondary education)	0.948	0.439
Secondary, to age 18	1.394	0.244
Vocational training	1.500	0.151
Short university degree (<i>diplomado</i>)	1.127	0.430
Long university degree (<i>licenciado</i>)	1.506	0.338
Social class (self-reported) (ref. cat.: lower)		
Upper	-1.023	-0.724
Upper middle	0.142	0.648
Middle	-0.008	0.580
Lower middle	-0.059	0.548
Occupation (ref. cat.: homemaker)		
In paid employment	0.482	-0.073
Unemployed	-0.141	-0.407
Student	-0.013	-1.077
Retired	0.411	-0.043
Monthly income (ref. cat.: over €3,000)		
Less than €600	1.090*	0.599
€600 to €1,200	0.890*	0.464
€1,201 to €1,800	1.061**	0.165
€1,801 to €2,400	0.795	0.330
€2,401 to €3,000	0.470	-0.092
Interest in politics (ref. cat.: uninterested)		
Very interested	1.002***	1.032***
Fairly interested	0.712**	1.047***
Some interest	0.625*	0.555
Little interest	0.680*	0.356
Political stance from right to left (on a scale of 0–10)	0.023	-0.025
Confidence in political parties (on a scale of 0–10)	0.037	0.032
Confidence in trade unions (on a scale of 0–10)	-0.005	0.015
Confidence in local authorities (on a scale of 0–10)	0.031	0.048
Confidence in central government (on a scale of 0–10)	-0.059	-0.112**
Confidence in NGOs (on a scale of 0–10)	0.073*	0.087**
Confidence in the media (on a scale of 0–10)	-0.054	0.086*
Confidence in large businesses (on a scale of 0–10)	-0.108**	-0.108**
Confidence in consumer organisations (on a scale of 0–10)	-0.065	0.033
Constant	-5.023	-2.683

-2LL	798.329	805.129
N	1000	1000

Significance levels: * $p < 0.1000$ ** $p < 0.0500$ *** $p < 0.0100$

Source: authors' own data

Table 2. Factor analysis goodness of fit indices

Kayser Meyer Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	0.553
Bartlett's test of sphericity	
-Chi-squared	523.594
-Level of significance	0.000

Source: prepared by authors

Table 3. Results of factor analysis

Dimension	% variance	% cumulative
1	22.838	22.838
2	21.987	44.825

Source: prepared by authors

Table 4. Rotated component matrix

DEGREE OF AGREEMENT	1	2
Politicians do not care much about what people like me think.	0.706	0.208
Whichever people are in power always pursue their own personal interests	0.782	0.031
Generally speaking, politics seems so complicated that people like me cannot understand what is going on.	0.577	-0.308
In general, most people can be trusted.	-0.034	0.553
Voting is the only way that people like me can influence what the government does.	0.250	0.541
In general, I consider myself someone who understands politics.	-0.298	0.714
As a consumer I can influence the behaviour of companies.	0.052	0.540

Source: prepared by authors

Table 5. Political food consumption and political efficacy

	Pearson correlation coefficient	
	BOYCOTT	BUYCOTT
FACTOR 1	0.044	0.037
FACTOR 2	0.199**	0.212**

Source: prepared by authors

Table 6. Factor analysis goodness of fit indices

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin	0.849
Bartlett sphericity test	
-Chi-squared	2765.981
-Level of significance	0.000

Source: prepared by authors

Table 7. Results of factor analysis

Dimension	% of variation	% cumulative
1	28.395	28.395
2	26.704	55.099

Source: prepared by authors

Table 8. *Rotated component matrix*

IMPORTANCE	1	2
Participating in associations of a social or political nature	0.505	0.179
Trying to understand the ideas of people with different opinions	0.567	0.382
Choosing consumer goods that, even if they are more expensive, do not harm the environment or are more in line with our political ideas or ethical sense.	0.674	0.175
Helping people in our country who are worse off than us.	0.795	0.212
Helping people in other parts of the world who are worse off than us.	0.787	0.153
Always voting in elections.	0.290	0.694
Not avoiding tax.	0.229	0.783
Always obeying laws and regulations.	0.081	0.815
Keeping informed about government measures.	0.360	0.606

Source: prepared by authors

Table 9. *Political food consumption and citizenship norms*

	Pearson correlation coefficient	
	BOYCOTT	BUYCOTT
FACTOR 1	0.168**	0.214**
FACTOR 2	0.083**	0.087**

Source: prepared by authors