

# Two Decades of Research on Consumer Boycott Using Bibliometric

**Husain Tariki**

*Faculty of Economics-Khoms  
Elmergib University*

**Syadiyah Abdul Shukor\***

*Faculty of Economics and Muamalat  
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia  
Email: syadiyahas@usim.edu.my*

*\* Corresponding Author*

**Highlights:** This paper provides published research literature on consumer boycott through a bibliometric analysis using Bibliometrix package in RStudio and Biblioshiny web apps. The current study identified articles from Scopus database and analyzed the annual publication trends, most productive institutions and authors, most cited articles, and frequent keywords. Publications and citations in relation to consumer boycott have grown consistently over the past 20 years especially in the last 5 years. Paper on consumer boycott that examined individual consumer's motivation to boycott has been mostly cited. This study reviewed publications related to consumer boycott in the past two decades. The results offer insight into consumer boycotts and show the scholarly development of the topic.

**Key words:** Bibliometric analysis, Consumer boycott, Biblioshiny

## Introduction

Consumer boycott refers to the consumers' decision not to buy a particular product (or from a particular company). Boycotts come in different forms such as labor boycotts, minority group boycotts, boycotts by religious groups, and ecological boycotts (Friese, 2000). According to Sen et al. (2001), boycotts are organized and collective social actions but are non-mandatory (i.e., boycotts cannot mandate consumers participation). Boycotts have become even more powerful than ever because of the advancements in technology, especially with the birth of the Internet where one clicks of a button can communicate consumer dissatisfaction all over the world.

Boycotting can result in financial losses for the target companies, such as drops in sales, cash flow, and stock prices (Farah & Newman, 2009; Pruitt et al., 1988). Additionally, it can be bad for businesses' reputations or perceptions (Klein et al., 2004). The current research aims to perform the bibliometric analysis of published research on consumer boycott. This research is designed to answer the following research questions (RQs): RQ1: What is the general information and pattern of annual publication trends related to research on consumer boycott? RQ2: Which are the leading institutions and scholars have published the most articles relevant to the studies on consumer boycott?

## **Method**

This study used Bibliometrix package in RStudio and Biblioshiny Web application to perform the bibliometric analysis. Biblioshiny is a Web-based app that allows no coders to use bibliometrix and it provides routines for data collection, analysis, and visualization, incorporating metrics for researchers, sources, documents, and structures of knowledge (conceptual, intellectual, and social) (Aria & Cucurullo, 2017). Data were extracted from Scopus database on 7 June 2024 and only articles journals in English language were selected.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***a. General Information***

A total of 161 articles were extracted from Scopus database and published between 2004 and 2024 involving 323 authors. Out of 323 authors, 46 authors were single-authored documents while the remaining of 277 authors were multi-authored documents. The collaboration index was 2.45, which means, on average, 2 to 3 authors have written an article.

### ***b. Publication Trends***

The number of publications related to consumer boycott has generally consistent and recorded below 10 articles each year. Then, publication starts to record double digit figures consistently every year from year 2020 until 2023. Given the increasing trend in research related to consumer boycott, it is plausible that the number of publications on consumer boycott will multiply.

### ***c. Most Productive Institutions and Authors***

Universiti Utara Malaysia has been identified as the most productive institution in publishing research related to consumer boycott with 10 articles. In terms of the most productive author of publications related to consumer boycott, Hoffman, S. was ranked first with five (5) articles. In second place came Abdul-Talib, AN, Kim C., and Kim S. with four (4) articles, followed by Hong, C. and Yuksel, U. with three (3) articles in the third place.

### ***d. Most cited articles***

The most cited article with 526 citations was authored by Klein et al. (2004) and titled, "Why we boycott: consumer motivations for boycott participation". The paper examined individual consumer's motivation to boycott. The second most cited article with 387 citations was authored by McDonnell and King (2005) and titled, "Keeping up appearances: reputational threat and impression management after social movement boycotts". The third most cited article with 230 citations was authored by Ettenson and Klein (2005) and titled, "The fallout from French nuclear testing in the South Pacific: a longitudinal study of consumer boycotts".

### ***e. Keyword analysis***

To identify the most prominent themes among consumer boycott research, a keyword analysis was conducted. The keywords associated with each article are those provided by the authors at

the time of publication. According to Zheng et al. (2016), keywords are used as clear, representative, and concise descriptions of the research content; by using keywords, emerging themes and trends in research can be identified. Data revealed that boycott(s)/consumer boycott(s) was the most frequently mentioned keyword (n=92). Other common keywords included animosity/consumer animosity (n=7), boycott (n=6), consumer behaviour (n=6), corporate social responsibility (n=6), and theory of planned behavior (n=6).

## Conclusion

This article analysed the the annual publication trends, most productive institutions and authors, most cited articles, and frequent keywords. This study's findings conclude as follows. Firstly, the number of publications on consumer boycott begins to reliably record double-digit numbers annually since 2020 through 2023. Secondly, the most cited article in consumer boycott obtained 526 citations. The paper examined individual consumer's motivation to boycott. Thirdly, "animosity/consumer animosity" was the second most common keyword used by authors which helped researchers understand the common theme of the research flowing among them within the consumer boycott research.

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