

## The Buycott intention analyzed from sexual orientation and religion: The O Boticário's Brazilian case

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### Abstract

This paper analyzes the results of the O Boticário's advertising involving gay couples in Brazil. On Virtual Social Media (VSNs), while conservative consumers, religious leaders and protestant politicians were trying to boycott, the LGBTTT community has shown their Buycott Intention. A non-probabilistic sample with 336 consumers was used in this study and the Kruskal-Wallis's and Chi-Square Test have approved our three hypothesis: (H<sub>1</sub>) - the politicians influence their followers on VSNs in relation to Boycott Intention - consumers influenced by Marcos Feliciano and Jair Bolsonaro have had more Boycott Intention than those who were connected to Jean Wllys' ideas; (H<sub>2</sub>) - sexual orientation and (H<sub>3</sub>) - Religion are associated to Buycott Intention in the O Boticário's case. Specifically, analyzing Religion in this sample, Catholics, Agnostic and Atheist have the same Buycott Intention when they are compared to Protestants (who have lower Buycott Intention). These results suggest the Buycott Intention within LGBTTT consumers might be an answer about O Boticário's brand reposting.

**Keywords:** Buycott Intention; Boycott Intention; Backlash.

### Resumo

Este artigo analisa os resultados de publicidade de O Boticário envolvendo casais homossexuais no Brasil. Nas mídias sociais virtuais, enquanto os consumidores conservadores, líderes religiosos e políticos protestantes estavam tentando boicotar, a comunidade LGBTTT tem demonstrado a intenção oposta. A amostra não-probabilística com 336 consumidores foi usada neste estudo e do teste qui-quadrado de Kruskal-Wallis, comprovando nossas três hipóteses: (H<sub>1</sub>) - os políticos influenciam seus seguidores nas mídias sociais em relação à intenção de boicote - os consumidores influenciados por Marcos Feliciano e Jair Bolsonaro tiveram mais intenção de boicote do que aqueles que estavam ligados às ideias Jean Wllys'; (H<sub>2</sub>) - orientação sexual e (H<sub>3</sub>) - A religião está associada à intenção de *buycott* no caso do O Boticário. Especificamente, analisando religião nesta amostra, católicos,

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agnósticos e ateus têm a mesma intenção de *buycott* quando são comparados aos protestantes (que têm menor intenção de *buycott*). Estes resultados sugerem que a intenção de *buycott* dos consumidores LGBTTT pode ser uma resposta sobre a repercussão em relação à marca O Boticário.

**Palavras-chave:** *Buycott*; Boicote; Repercussão.

## Introduction

The context of Internet and social challenges shows us the relevance of understanding virtual social networks (VSNs) and consumer behavior. Some cases on consumer behavior's literature evidence the relation between VSNs and consumer decision to buy or not buy (KOZINETTS; HANDELMAN, 1998; KANG, 2012) and VSNs and political engagement (LOADER et al., 2014; CRUZ; ABELHA, 2013). Specifically in Brazil, some cases reveal the importance of analyzing the virtual environmental and consumer decision, e.g. the boycott consumer decision (Cruz et al., 2012).

Cruz et al. (2012) investigated the impact of famous people at VSNs on individual consumer boycott's decision. The authors presented the results of the famous people in Brazil influencing the boycott decision. In fact, the research demonstrated that famous people in Brazil could encourage their fans (or people who respect their social figure) to boycott a company. One of the results in this research shows that politicians and famous religious people could encourage their followers at VSNs to boycott a company who could dissatisfy them.

The mix between religion and consumption is not a Brazilian phenomenon. For example, Swinberghe et al. (2014, p. 464) studied the consequence of consumer activism in the United States. The authors show us that religion motivates consumer activism - highly religious customers express their dissatisfaction when attitudes from a company go against their values through an increase in complaint behavior (backlash) and a raise in the boycott participation among Christian consumers.

In 2015, O Boticário (an important Brazilian cosmetic company) presented a TV campaign showing different people buying O Boticário's perfume as a gift on Valentine's Day to their partners. Despite acknowledging the considerable amount of criticism the campaign would receive, since Brazil has many cases of homophobia, O

Boticário ran the scene with the delivery of the perfume to their partners: two homosexual couples (one female and one male) and a straight couple whose age difference was notorious. This commercial started a conflict between openly religious politicians and the gay community on VSNs, which ended up reflecting in various Brazilian magazines (GOES, 2015; ALESSI, 2015). When religious people decided then to boycott O Boticário (famous religious people on VSNs influenced them) the LGBTTT community have decided to buycott - the act of awarding a company when the consumer wants to demonstrate their support (NEILSON, 2010).

The VSNs in Brazil are becoming an important field for understanding various attitudes and behaviors when analyzing the relation between consumption and religion or consumption and politics. For example, Protestants boycotted the Salve Jorge soap opera in 2012 because its title referenced Jorge - a Brazilian saint's name (CRUZ, 2013b). The Babilônia soap opera was boycotted in 2015 as well because a gay kiss involving an elderly female couple was showcased at the premiere episode (STYCER, 2015). The Frente Parlamentar Evangélica (FPE) - a politician group with openly religious deputies and senators (whom happen to be protestant leaders at their churches) - engaged on these two boycotts cases on VSNs.

On the other hand, some deputies (as Jean Wyllys) are working hard to defend the human rights trying to create laws that could protect LGBTTT people and civil rights. The number of homophobic crimes has increased in Brazil. Regarding the Brazilian Human Rights Secretary of Presidence of Republic, each hour one gay in the aforementioned country suffers from some kind of violence. Comparing 2011 and 2014, the growth of violence against the gay community in Brazil was of 460% (SDHPR, 2014).

Nowadays, the following arena is stablished on Brazil's VSNs: Jean Wyllys, as deputy, trying to give the LGBTTT community the right of love (gender regardless) and Jair Bolsonaro and Marcos Feliciano defending the Christian values by attacking LGBTTT people. Aware that Brazilian people use too much Internet and VSNs discussing politics (CRUZ; ABELHA, 2013), these deputies have showed their point of view about O Boticário advertising. While Jean Wyllys has tried to discuss the importance of O Boticario's action, Silas Malafaia (a protestant leader) has attacked the company asking the faithful ones of his church and others protestants to boycott O

Boticário because the campaign was an affront to Christian and traditional family values.

Analyzing the context of religion, human rights, consumption and VSNs in Brazil, this paper aims to verify the O Boticário case, trying to understand the result of the campaign, which has put into discussion the different ways to love. We have some questions to answer in this paper: Did the consumers boycott or did they just have the intention? Did the Atheist and Agnostic consumers have a different intention to Catholics and Protestants to boycott or Buycott? Did the gay consumers do their buycott? Supposing that the buycott has occurred did the buycotters connect to Jean Wyllys' or Bolsonaro's and Feliciano's idea? This study will highlight the answers to these questions.

This first part of this paper presented the Brazilian scenario of VSNs and political engagement on human rights or Christian values. The next one will present the background of backlash, boycott and buycott. The third section discusses the method, the sample and the data collection. The results are presented in the fourth section. The last part discusses the results, the relevance of this paper on VSNs scenario in Brazil and the limitation of statistical methods.

### **Activism and Consumer Behavior**

Plenty of media vehicles in Brazil use the term boycott for presenting situations whose involve conflict between a person and a company, between NGOs and companies (like Greenpeace and Nestlé) or protests on VSNs (as protestants leaders showing their ideas about politics). However, the boycott concept considers just the situation when the consumer does not buy some product or service because they disagree with some company attitude or behavior (FRIEDMAN, 1999; KLEIN et al. 2004; 2002; SOULE, 2009). In other words, the boycott is an individual act that happens when a consumer decides not buying because there is one or more company characteristics, behavior or attitudes which are in conflict with his ideology - ecological, regarding minority groups, religious and social boycott (FRIEDMAN, 1999; KOKU, 2011; CRUZ, 2013b); or economic point of view - economic boycott (BARDA; SARDIANOU, 2010).

Situations involving protests in front of a company asking for better labor conditions or ecological engagement on environment; people sharing pictures on Facebook about slave job or ecological damages done by some company; sending emails to a company asking for more respect towards gay people or Protestants, are not boycott. All of these examples are backlash. The backlash is an act of repudiation (SMITH et al., 2010) and it can be done by a person, a group, an organization or all of them together (CRUZ, 2013a). It is necessary to highlight that an effective boycott could be a result of backlash actions done by other consumers, NGOs, political or religious groups.

## **Backlash**

There is no much theory about backlash when we analyze this concept considering Management theories - especially on Marketing or Strategy fields. However, plenty of papers discussing backlash exist in the literature - mainly if we analyze the feminist movement and others social movements. For example, there are studies that verify the anti-feminist backlash (YEUNG et al., 2014); or the perception of men and women about feminine job titles (BUDZISEWSKA et al., 2014).

If we analyze the Management area, we could find some papers that discuss backlash (SEN, 1996; CRANE, 2000; PALAZZO; BASU, 2007; STOLL, 2008; SMITH et al., 2010) despite most of them not going further over other themes or knowledge fields. Stoll (2008) discussed the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) paying attention to the relevance of CSR as a strategy to minimize the backlash. Crane (2000) analyzed the backlash as an important way to introduce green products in USA market in the middle of the 90s, since the education of children or journalist and groups' pressure could explain the demand of green products. Porrit (2005) has analyzed backlash highlighting the repetitive failure of financial success.

There is a relevant case involving backlash and boycott in marketing literature: the Colorado Boycott. In in the mid-90s the Colorado Court voted against minority civil rights (the civil rights of gays and lesbians). The result in United States was a backlash: a list of 112 boycott participants (including Havard University, American Sociological

Association and prominent persons e.g. Madonna and Barbara Streisand) was released asking for a boycott at Colorado products (Sen, 1996).

Thus, the boycott is contained within the context of the backlash, since boycott is an act of repudiation related to buying. Backlash also contains other manifestations not related to the act of consumer purchase (such as videos posted on VSNs and spreading negative information about an organization) or the manifestations from a group of activists fighting for a cause, for example. That way, backlash may include different manifestations, with different actors and means of communication, whereas the boycott involves only the consumer and the organization – not involving other actors (CRUZ, 2013a).

While doing a boycott, a consumer can decide to do a backlash, a boycott or both. An individual boycott decision can be designed with other kinds of backlash (VSNs posts on Facebook or Twitter) and these others types of backlash can influence other consumers to boycott (gaining respect of media or other stakeholders). In other words, an individual boycott decision being influenced by backlash actions may become an efficient group boycott decision.

## **Boycott**

Consumer boycott has been incorporated into the discussion of consumer behavior studies over recent years (FRIEDMAN, 1999; KLEIN et al., 2004; BARDA; SARDIANOU, 2010; BASU et al., 2006; KOKU, 2011; HOFFMANN; STEFAN, 2013). The term was used for the first time around 1880, to designate a retaliation organized by small tradesmen who were negotiating with a large American rancher, Mr. Charles Boycott. The term boycott has been used since that moment, when the small group of tradespeople realized they could retaliate against the rancher by ceasing to buy his products because of his unreasonable demands (SOULE, 2009).

One of the most relevant study ever conducted in the boycott theory is 'Why we boycott?' (KLEIN et al., 2004). The investigation presents the most important consumer reasons to boycott. Despite having numerous gaps in boycott theory, some studies showed interesting perspectives to understand boycott motivations. Some studies have discussed different potions of view as the gender influence on boycott (BARDA;



SARDIANOU, 2010, 2010; NEILSON, 2010); the CSR impact on boycott consumer decision (DI MAIO, FABRI, 2013; DOEPKE; ZILIBOTTI, 2009; BASU et al., 2006); or religious values influencing boycott participation (SWINBERGHE et al., 2014). Although the boycott studies in Brazil are published by the same author and his co-authors elucidating the gaps in Brazilian context they are still relevant. Some of those investigations discuss the relevance of VSNs on consumer boycott (CRUZ et al, 2012); the guilt perception difference within men and women impact on boycott (CRUZ et al., 2013); the boycott consumer decision when a consumer can buy a luxury goods (CRUZ; ROSS, 2013); or a new type of boycott (CRUZ, 2013b).

Considering the different kinds of boycott, Table 1 presents the types of boycott identified within the Brazilian context in the beginning of the XXI century on the basis of Friedman's (1999) and Cruz's (2013b) classification. According to Table 1, boycott is characterized by having three dimensions: economic dimension (including economic boycott), ideological dimension (ecological, religious, minorities' boycott and the social boycott) and experiential dimension (relational boycott).

The economic boycott occurs when the consumer ceases to buy a product because they understand that there exists a disloyal relationship of consumption and that the company exaggerates in its use of economic power over the consumer. This relationship may be constructed on the basis of market characteristics such as the monopolistic activity of a company or of variables related to the supply and demand of products to the consumer (FRIEDMAN, 1999). The religious boycott occurs when the action of a company goes against the religious values and beliefs of a group of consumers. The third type of boycott is minorities' boycott, and occurs when a group marginalized by society is disrespected or not taken into account by a company. Ecological boycott may occur when a company disrespects or displays abuses over issues related to the environment.

In a theoretical study, Cruz (2013b) has enlarged the boycott's taxonomy understanding that Friedman's labor boycott discussion has not involved the CSR context. In his point of view labor boycott has not analyzed the CSR context - which has opened the possibility to present the idea of social boycott (including the labor boycott discussion as well). In the same investigation the author presented the idea of relational boycott, which occurs when a consumer ceases to buy because a bad

relational experience with a company (e.g. a company not offering the attention needed about the problems from a previous purchase).

Specifically in Brazil, cases involving boycott and religion are usual as we see in Brazilian soap operas (Salve Jorge and Babilônia), and the VSNs are the most important locus to share consumers' ideology, values or hatred. Concerning Cruz et al. (2012), the politicians know that their followers could be influenced on VSNs in order to cease buying from some company, which has an ideological conflict with their values or wishes. Having in mind the considerable number of politicians who are religious leaders and are part of FPE, we have an interesting and explosive context to analyze on VSNs.

TABLE 1 – Examples of Recent Boycotts in Brazil and Other Countries

Type	Characteristics	Cases
Economic	Consumers cease to buy a product or service because they do not agree with micro or macro-economic variables (e.g. price monopoly).	North West Company - abusive prices in far areas in Canada.
Religious	Historically, religious groups try to dominate their faithful ones by the means of their ideologies and beliefs. The boycott is a mean whereby these groups attain their objectives. Examples include boycotts of films, soap operas or advertisements with inappropriate content for their members.	Brazilian soap opera Salve Jorge was boycotted by protestants in Brazil because Jorge is a Catholic saint.
Minorities	These are actions undertaken by a minority groups who have specific or circumstantial objectives as compared with the mainstream society or in favor of groups in a situation of vulnerability (e.g. context of racial or homosexual segregation).	Barilla company's president said gay couples would not be included on Barilla's advertisings.
Social	Occurs when the consumer ceases to buy from a company because corporate social responsibility.	Nike's children and slave job in China



Ecological	Is undertaken as from the moment when consumers realize that a company is acting in such a way as to harm or abuse the environment. Generally, consumers are influenced by NGOs, which act in the favor of the preservation of the planet.	Nestlé being accused of destroying forest, in order to buy palm oil to produce the Kit Kat chocolate.
Relational	Occurs in the after-sale when a customer discovers that the company does not offer the attention regarding the problems that may arise from a purchase or in the pre-sale when they feel a lack of attention, respect, cordiality or technical knowledge of the product or service from employees or those who represent the company.	Tok & Stok (a Brazilian retail company) and others companies not solving client's problems.

Source: Elaborated by the authors from Friedman (1999) and Cruz (2013b).

## Boycott

Boycott occurs when a consumer decides to buy a product or a service from a company because he believes in some positive attitudes, values or behaviors that are visible and are not in conflict with their own ideals. (WICKS et al., 2014; HOFFMANN, HUTTER, 2012; NEILSON, 2010; FRIEDMAN, 1999; 1996). For example, in a context of civil rights a consumer can buy a product from a company whose CEO has spoken supporting gay marriage in a TV program; or, because a priest has recorded a video talking about a brand which supports church actions at Christmas. Concerning Friedman (1999), numerous boycott actions in the past have been supported by celebrities who wanted to reward a company.

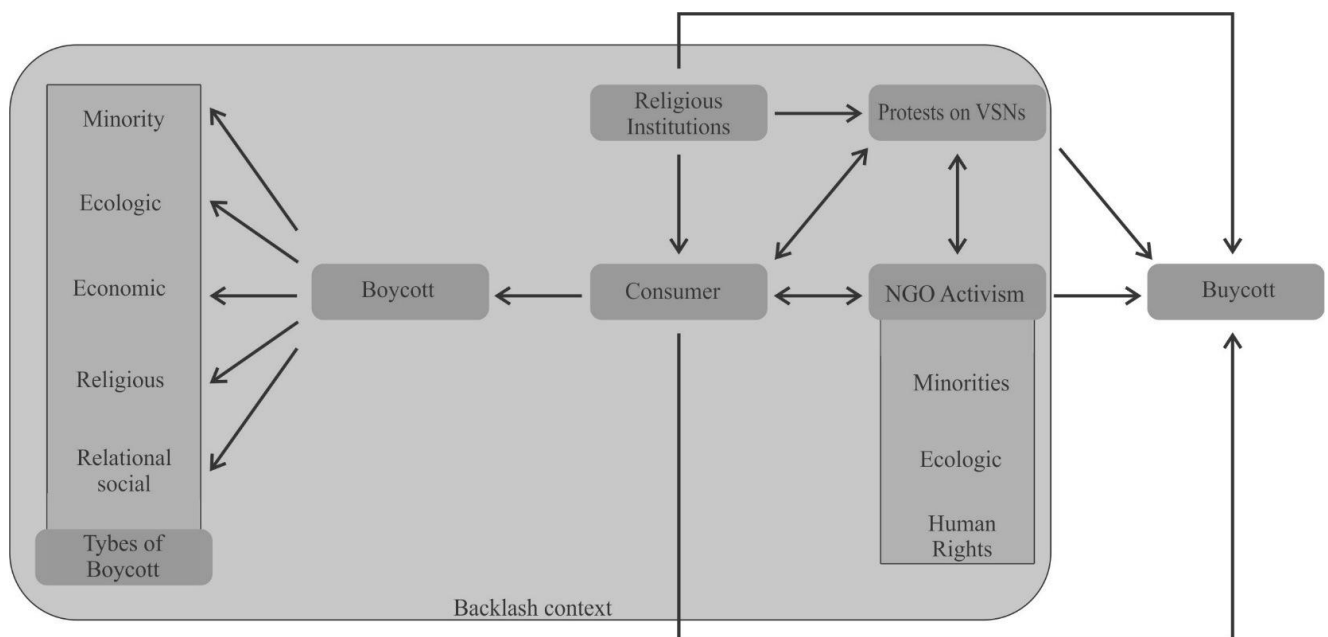
Regarding what Friedman has presented (1996; 1999), the boycott is the other side of the coin as a positive behavior for consumer activism. In an opposite way of boycott, boycott is a kind of award given by consumer to a company, which is working in the same way of the client's idea, values, attitudes or behaviors. Neilson (2010) and Hoffmann and Hutter (2012) displayed the relationship between CSR and consumer decision to award a company which pays attention to CSR attitudes. When a consumer perceives a CSR context, he is motivated to buy – that being a type of reward.

Ecological perspective shows cases of boycott, as presents Neumer (2000). The author has discussed that ecological consumer action is more effective in encouraging green market because the consumers are sensitive about buying ecological products. Regarding Neumer's findings, the consumers can boycott when they believe in green actions at the US market. Other studies are investigating the boycott act in consumer decision as well.

Wick et al. (2014) have verified the boycott between teenagers and their parents on political consumerism. According to the authors "(...) parental modeling is the most important predictor of youth political consumerism, and young political consumers also engage in civic and political activities". Again (e.g. SWINBERGHE et al. 2014), political engagement can be a part of consumer decision to buy (buycott) or not buy (boycott) a product or a service.

The Backlash, Boycott and Buycott theories were shown and discussed in this section. Next section will present the hypothesis of this study analyzing O Boticário's case study in Brazil answering the question: what consumer action/decision was more effective - backlash actions and boycott or buycott? The Figure 1 presents the concepts and their theoretical relation and the next section will describe the boycott theory.

Figure 1: The Backlash Context and Buycott



Source: Authors.

A boycott decision can be a deliberated decision motivated by an internal conflict of values (KOZINETTS; HANDELMAN, 1998), previous experience or loyalty (KLEIN et al. 2004) or even economic reasons (BARDA; SARDIANOU, 2010). As we see at Figure 1, consumers could be influenced to boycott by religious institutions, NGOs and VSNs but, in another way, they can also boycott influenced by the same stakeholders in other positive situations. Despite what this theory has shown before in this section and the Brazilian context - which we have presented in the first section – now we present the hypothesis's table to O Boticário's case in Brazil.

Table 2 - Hypotheses's Table

Hypothesys		Theory	O Boticário Context
H <sub>0</sub> : There is no association with the politician chosen by consumer and Buycott Intention	H <sub>1</sub> : There is no association with the politician chosen by consumer and Buycott Intention	Politicians can influence their followers on boycott decision on VSNs (Cruz et al., 2012)	FPE (a group of protestant politicians) could influence the chances of boycott
H <sub>0</sub> : Buycott Intention and Sexual Orientation are not associated.	H <sub>2</sub> : Buycott Intention and Sexual Orientation are associated.	Buycott (Friedman, 1999; 1996; Neilson, 2010)	The Gay Community could award O Boticário doing Buycott (or being stimulated to do it)
H <sub>0</sub> : There is no difference among religions on Buycott Intention	H <sub>3</sub> : There is difference among religions on Buycott Intention	Consumers receive influence by Christian values (Swinberghe et al.'s (2014)	Boycott attitudes were noted at VSNs promoted by protestant leaders

Source: Authors.

## Method

This investigation is a quantitative research using (ii) descriptive data to show the O Boticário's advertising at Valentine's Day in Brazil (2015) exploring the context of VSNs in Brazil and (ii) Chi-Square's and Kruskal-Wallis' Tests to analyze the

difference among consumers when we consider the Buycott Intention, Boycott Intention, Buycott, Boycott, Backlash Attitudes, Sexual Orientation, Religion and Politicians. This section presents the Design of Variables, Sample, Data Collection and Data Analyzes.

### Design of Variables

Understanding the usual misconceptions about boycott and backlash's theories, we decided to present all variables at Table 3 highlighting how we measured those in this paper. Boycott Intention is the only interval variable and all the others are nominal. For example, when we decided to measure the buycott we asked consumers if they have gone to a store to buy O Boticário's product after viewing the advertising. Similarly, we can only confirm a boycott attitude if a consumer that has boycotted bought from that company before; if not, this is a boycott intention. The Theory's column below highlights how other authors have worked in this topic - not necessary as a statistical variable.

Table 3 - Variables of this Investigation

Name	Type	How was measured	Theory
Boycott	Nominal	A consumer has been a client before O Boticário's advertising and after campaign they have decided to cease buying.	Klein, Smith, John (2004)
Buycott		After watching O Boticário's advertising, a consumer went to an O Boticário's store and bought a product.	Neilson (2010)
Boycott Intention	Interval	A seven points scale, in which was needed to choose a number from 1 (meaning more boycott intention) to 7 (meaning lower boycott intention).	Cruz (2013b)
Buycott Intention		After the advertising, a consumer did not go to an O Boticário's store but shared positive comments on	_____

Name	Type	How was measured	Theory
Backlash Attitude	Nominal	VSNs and had the intention to buy any of O Boticário's products.	Smith et al. (2010)
Sexual Orientation		The consumer protested on VSNs after O Boticário's Valentine's Day advertising.	
Religion		A consumer could choose as their sexual orientation: bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual or others (sexual orientation and consumption).	Kate (2002)
Politician		A consumer could choose the option that better represented them.	Swinberghe , et al. (2014)
		Four politicians and the "No one." option were presented.	Cruz et al. (2012)

Source: Authors

## Sample and Data Collection

A probabilistic sample is an ideal statistic data to show, without mistakes, the association among the aforementioned variables but in various cases, we did not achieve the best sample (a probabilistic one). However, when a study does not have the intention to generalize its results, it uses a non-representative sample. In this investigation, two reasons were relevant to decide the sample: (i) a lot of comments on VSNs in Brazil were posted about O Boticário's advertising in early June; and (ii) our networks on Facebook and WhatsApp do not include all citizens in Brasil. In other words, few consumers had a chance to answer the survey.

Concerning the comments on VSNs in Brazil, every phenomenon occurred at VSNs is too brief (MILLS, 2012) and a researcher should be faster to collect data representing intentions, behaviors or attitudes. Viralization at social media, as discusses Mills (2012), can occur becoming a company's advertising in a viral marketing campaign. We decided to collect data, which we could understand in that moment - even the ideal way should be a probabilistic sample. In other words, our

intention here is to describe the consumers who answered the survey and we do not desire to generalize our findings to a Brazilian gay community or protestant population.

Trying to minimize the non-representative sample we chose five gay and five protestant research assistants to send to their colleagues (by Facebook and WhatsApp) the survey's link. In our point of view choosing these people they might send this to people who could think similar to them. The O Boticário's survey was created on June, 5<sup>th</sup> and finished on June, 13<sup>th</sup>. During nine days 366 consumers answered the survey.

### **Data Analyzes**

Data collected here are non-parametric and we should to use Kruskal-Wallis' Tests to analyze any impact among the variables that have been designed before. Adam and Anthony (1996) discuss that numerous behavioral studies are not parametric and usual tests as Student must not be used being Kruskal-Wallis an alternative test to analyze a supposed impact. As we showed before, many nominal variables were used in this investigation, showing us a qualitative nature of the data. Despite this characteristic, we had to utilize Chi-Square's Tests. For example, "I was consumer and I will not buy anymore" or "I am Catholic" emphasizing we should use Chi-Square Test. The  $H_1$ ,  $H_2$  and  $H_3$  were tested using Kruskal-Wallis and Chi-Square, with 366 consumers, significance at the 5% and a confidence interval of 95%.

### **Results**

This study brings us interesting findings about O Boticário's campaign – which was televised at 2015 in Brazil. After analyzing 366 consumers, we have found in statistic descriptive data the intention of buycott and boycott. For example, only 05 consumers have decided to boycott O Boticário. We should just call boycott if the consumer has bought an O Boticário product before - these five consumers did. In the same way, we just should call it buycott if the consumer has gone to a shop and bought an O Boticário product - 07 consumers did it after watching the advertisement.



Other analysis are interesting minding their highlight over the possibility that consumers have boycotted O Boticário. For example, there is a group (15 consumers) that does not buy Brazilian perfume or products; however, they were encouraged to buy an O Boticário's product after watching the campaign. This is really provocative because there were various pictures on Facebook sharing this same content: "The biggest problem with the O Boticário's campaign is: Brazilian gay people do not buy Brazilian perfume." Although these data being descriptive, we get to 146 consumers who have bought before and have the intention to buy again, while 30 consumers felt motivated to buy - even though O Boticário is a brand that they do not buy. The descriptive data has shown us that boycott intention has had more attention among consumers than boycott intention in O Boticário's campaign for Brazilian's Valentine's Day.

Understanding the descriptive data, we can perceive the frequency of boycott intention and boycott intention. While 31 consumers did not agree with the campaign (which could demonstrate the boycott intention), 81 consumers published their agreement on VSNs, 28 shared it on VSNs while having the boycott intention and 07 went to a shop and bought the products. Even with 31 consumers not agreeing with O Boticário's campaign, just 08 of them have decided to boycott the company. Most part of the consumers were indifferent to O Boticário's campaign (219 consumers).

Results concerning a difference between the consumers who agree with Jean Wyllys' and the ones who agree with Jair Bolsonaro's and Marcos Feliciano's speech are presented at Graphic 1. Using an Boycott Intention variable (Cruz, 2013b), consumers who prefer Jair Bolsonaro's and Marcos Feliciano's statement have been more intended to boycott than people who prefer Jean Wyllys' and Romario's, as politicians. Despite this result, we do not have evidence to accept a nule hipotesis of  $H_1$ .

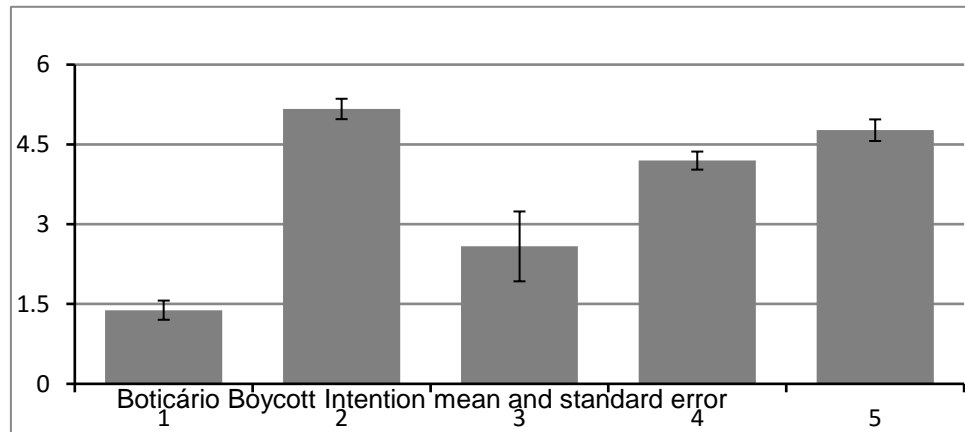
Most part of consumers have considered there were no politician who could represent them, and their intention to boycott O Boticário was lower than Jair Bolsonaro's and Marcos Feliciano's. These results help to explain the consumer behavior and politicians': conservative consumers supported by Bolsonaro's and Feliciano's ideas were stimulated to boycott O Boticário, whilst consumers supported by Jean Wyllys' ideas intended to buy from O Boticário. Even Bolsonaro not being a

member of Frente Parlamentar Evangélica (FPE) his followers in this sample were more conservative than Feliciano's ones (FPE's member) in the boycott intention. As we have supposed before, the consumers who would choose Jean Wyllys as politician might not have a boycott intention in O Boticário's case.

The statistic results shown above highlight the buycott decision in this sample. The Chi Square results show the relation among buycott, sexual orientation and religion in O Boticário's case study.

Graphic 1 - Politicians in Brazil and Consumer's Boycott Intention.

Legend: 1 - Jair Bolsonaro; 2 - Jean Wyllys; 3 - Marcos Feliciano; 4 - No one; 5 - Romário. Pearson Chi Square 161.100, DF = 8, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) = 0.000, N = 366; Likelihood Ratio = 112,587, DF = 8, Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) = 0.000, N = 366 4.1. The Boticário's Buycott and Sexual Orientation



### The Boticário's Buycott and Sexual Orientation

As we can see at Table 4,  $H_2$  is accepted in this study and the sexual orientation has defined the buycott intention in O Boticário's case in this sample. All gay consumers have approved the O Boticário's campaign but just 49 have shown buycott intention (buying O Boticário's products or sharing positives comments about the company on VSNs, post-campaign). The 37 consumers who respected the O Boticário's campaign could be analyzed in two ways: (i) they could prefer buying imported products, and because of this they do not have any intention in becoming a client; (ii) they have not wanted to show their intention on VSNs nor buying products - it could be a strategy to maintain the privacy of their sexual orientation.

Concerning the first assumption about the 37 consumers aforementioned, 31 of them prefer to buy imported perfume (83,8%) - which might explain their 'No Buycott Intention'. That frequency in this group can produce strongly ironic posts on VSNs regarding O Boticário's big misconception in its Valentine's Day advertising: Brazilian gay people do not buy Brazilian perfume.

To disagree with O Boticário's campaign for Brazilian Valentine's Day does not mean to boycott it, because the options to boycott or to do backlash have been presented to the consumers. In other words, 31 consumers in this sample did not agree with the campaign but we could not say all 31 have boycotted O Boticário - since just 08 have openly boycotted or done backlash (descriptive data). Most part of heterosexual consumers is indifferent to O Boticário's campaign - even when we analyze the frequency (there is more heterosexual consumers boycotting than homosexual ones). Nevertheless, between gay and bisexual consumers the behavior comes down to the same decision: to boycott. It is a kind of reward to O Boticário because the company has discussed, in Brazilian homophobic society, the importance of respecting the different ways to love.

Brazilian Federal Congress has politicians who should defend the human rights, but we see more and more conservative politicians promoting hatred based on a wrong interpretation about Jesus Christ's values than politicians like Jean Wyllys, who is fighting in order to achieve equal rights and criminalize homophobia. Thus, the consumer who chose Jean Wyllys probably want to reward O Boticário by doing boycott. Concerning numerous politicians are always looking forward to a reelection, they do not spend their time with human and civil rights (especially same-sex marriage and criminalizing homophobic aggressions). If the Brazilian Congress does not do its job preventing the hatred over non-straight sexual oriented people (too many politicians are promoting this behavior), the boycotting consumers could thank O Boticário for understanding the different ways to love and respecting them

Observing Chi-Square's presupposition (the data should not have many zeros at Chi-Square Test), we aggregated the bisexual consumers to it and others (Table 2) emerging 'No Buycott Intention' (fourth column) and Bisexual and Others in a sexual orientation column. Despite this 'No Buycott Intention' can be compared to 'Buycott Intention'. This strategy makes stronger the Chi Square's results (Pearson Chi-

Square's value = 39.078; DF = 2; Sig. 2-sided = 0.000, N = 366) when we compare Buycott Intention just to second and third separated (Pearson Chi-Square's value = 45.445; DF = 6; Sig. (2-sided) = 0.000, N = 366).

Table 4 - Sexual Orientation and Buycott Intention

	Buycott Intention				
Sexual Orientation	Buycott Intention	Disagree with Boticário's Campaign	Just respects the Boticário's campaign	No Buycott Intention	Total
Homosexual	49	0	37	37	6
Heterosexual	57	30	172	202	59
Bisexual/Others	7	0	8	11	7
Others	3	1	2	-	
Total	116	31	219	250	66

Source: research data.

## Religion and Buycott

Regarding what was shown before, we could not say that boycott has happened at O Boticário's campaign but that the relation between boycott and religion is significant (Table 3 and Graphic 02). Observing Chi-Square's presupposition (the data should not have many zeros at Chi-Square Test), we aggregated the second and third columns (Table 5) presenting 'No Buycott Intention' (fourth column). Despite this, 'No Buycott Intention' can be compared to 'Buycott Intention'. Chi Square's results are stronger here (Pearson Chi-Square's value = 37.092; DF = 5; Sig.; 2-sided = 0.000, N

= 366) when we compare Buycott Intention just to second and third columns separated (Pearson Chi-Square's value = 131.895; DF = 16; Sig. (2-sided) = 0.000, N = 366).

Table 5 - Religion and Buycott Intention

Religion	Buycott Intention			No Buycott Intention	Total
	Buycott Intention	Disagree with Boticário's Campaign	Just respects the Boticário's campaign		
Catholic	40	3	77	80	20
Agnostic	22	0	34	34	6
Spiritualistic	21	1	15	16	7
Atheist	14	0	18	18	2
Others	7	0	31	31	8
African Religions	6	2	6	8	4
Traditional Protestant	2	15	19	34	6
Pentecostal Protestant	0	9	10	19	9
Total	116	31	219	250	66

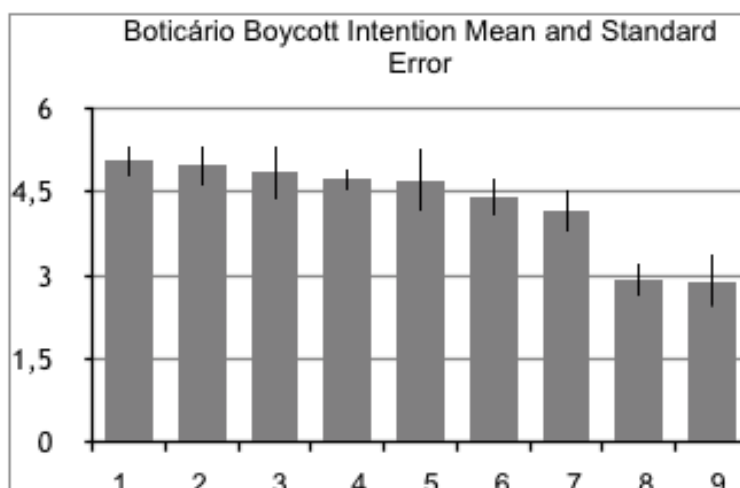
Source: research data.

In other words the religion-influenced Boticário's buycott can be divided into two groups: (i) protestants - traditional and pentecostals; (ii) Others Religions - Catholic,

Agnostic, Spiritualistic, African Religions and Others. These two groups have different behaviors: we can affirm that protestants have decided not to boycott but we can say the second group (Others Religions) had the intention to boycott O Boticário.

This difference is interesting when we compare these results to Swinberghe et al. (2014) findings. The authors have shown that consumers who believe in Jesus Christ are more inclined to boycott or express their dissatisfaction with company attitudes confronting their Christian values. Our point of view about Catholics and Protestants difference is believing (or not) in saints, but in this sample at O Boticário case study we can see (despite they being Christians) a different consumer behavior amongst them. It could be just a reflex of Brazilian context, in which the protestant religions are much more conservative than the Catholic or others. Logically, protestant consumers introduce more conservative values in their lives when compared to other religions, which reflect in their decisions as consumers. Historically in Brazil, the Catholic religion is more flexible when it comes to mixing diverse religious aspects (e.g. religious values of African religions) and probably because of this Catholics and people who follow other religions could be more open-minded about doing the boycott than protestants.

Graphic 2 - Religion and Boycott Intention



Legend: 1 - Agnostic; 2 - Spiritualistic ; 3 - Blank Vote; Others; 4 - Catholic; 5 - African Religions; Atheist; 6 - Others; 7 - Atheist ; 8 - Traditional Protestant; 9 - Pentecostal Protestant.

Source: research data.



As we see at Graphic 2, Protestants are the only consumers who did not boycott. The other religion groups are in the same statistical mean, which evidences they have the same consumer behavior in this sample. Other analysis, which has become interesting regarding these data, is the closeness in boycott intention among Agnostic, Catholic and Atheist consumers. Although their values are different (Catholics follow Jesus and Atheists do not believe in it), the results suggest the respect with different ways to love is equal between them. Analyzing these results we can understand in this sample that Protestants are more conservative than Catholics when they get to watch O Boticário's television advertising. This result confirms our first impression, which has emerged in this study: Brazilian Protestant consumers are more conservative and they religion values influence them in their consumer decision to buy (or not to buy) some product or service. In other words, Protestant consumers can be influenced by their Christian values or their religious leaders – as according to Cruz et al. (2012), who discussed marginally the religious boycott influence on VSNs in Brazil.

### **Discussion and Final Remarks**

The results showed here in this paper numerous open possibilities to start new questioning involving consumption, religion, politics and virtual social networks in Brazil. As we presented here, to accept  $H_1$  in this study evidences how big is the politicians' influence on consumption decision, when they - who were elected to represent citizens - are more interested about explaining on VSNs their religious values than working hard to build a better country. The politicians' presence on VSNs highlights the possibility to receive critics and citizen's demand (keeping on contact with electors) but demonstrate the other side of the coin: to maintain control of a specifically group which has their support.

Specifically when Marcos Feliciano's comments on VSNs are analyzed, we see a conservative speech which gains respect among his followers. Even in his speech, based on Jesus Christ's values, the content actually is filled with hatred - and gay community is the target. In fact, this politician and religious leader (as Silas Malafaia) is more worried with gay people than with living Christian values.

Silas Malafaia is the most recognized conservative religious leader among protestants and every week he posts videos on VSNs asking their followers to follow Jesus Christ's steps: to be a saint. At the same time, he attacks gay community's members, other religions (mainly African religious as Candomblé and Umbanda) or anything else that could conflict with a conservative Christian life. That way, we should not say that protestants in Brazil do not have leaders on VSNs or that they are not represented on virtual environmental. It might be the most important reason to discuss the difference between Catholics and Protestants in this study.

In our point of view, the most relevant reason between Catholics and Protestants to have a different behavior at consumption decision in Brazilian VSNs' context is: the protestants have an effective group of politicians or spiritual leaders spending time on Internet trying to convince them in different perspectives as consumption (boycott or buycott), in becoming a saint person by resigning many things or in evidencing that protestant way is the correct way to keep in contact with God. If they have an exponential leader on VSNs, they would follow their ideas, behaviors and attitudes.

The Catholics might be too conservative either, but they do not have a leader (as Malafaia and Feliciano) who disseminate their dissatisfaction on VSNs. Analyzing social figures as Marcelo Rossi, Fábio de Mello and Antônio Maria (acknowledged priests among Catholics), they do not stimulate conservative behaviors nor attitudes. It may clarify that the O Boticário's buycott intention among Catholic consumers may be just an answer to the Catholics conservative's absence on VSNs in Brazil. This supposition reinforces  $H_1$  (based on Cruz et al, 2012) and  $H_3$ . Even  $H_3$  was built based on our initial idea that Christian consumers could boycott or have the boycott intention at O Boticário situation; this was not real in this sample. We accept that religion can influence the consumption decision as discussed Swinberghe, Flurry and Parker's (2014) among Christians, but we never thought that Catholics, Atheists and Agnostics would have the same consumption decision at O Boticário's case. It might reveal results of our non-representative sample or a glimpse at the current Brazilian society.

We affirm here only religion ( $H_1$ ,  $H_3$ ) and sexual orientation ( $H_2$ ) have influenced the Buycott Intention in the analyzed O Boticário's sample in this study. The Boycott Intention and the Boycott Attitude did not have statistical association with others

variables. We just highlighted the boycott intention difference between consumers who prefer Jean Wyllys and the ones who prefer Bolsonaro and Feliciano (the boycott intention was higher in Bolsonaro's and Feliciano's followers than in Jean Wyllys'). It makes sense because we believed consumers who agreed with Jean Wyllys might have a positive interpretation about O Boticário's advertising. The descriptive data showing 7 boycott cases and the Buycott Intention being associated to sexual orientation brings a question: was the O Boticário advertising a strategy intending a brand repositioning at Brazilian gay market?

Despite this, O Boticário changed its logotype color: during many years, it was green - now is red. A few number of people noted this challenge. Regarding the Brazilian gay market, it gathers profitable results as show some statistics (SCRIVANO, NETO, 2015) and studies (HSIEH, WU, 2011; KATES, 2002), that the O Boticário advertising at Valentine's Day would be a strategy to approximate gay consumers to O Boticário brand. The equation is simple: (i) gay consumers in Brazil prefer and buy imported perfumes; (ii) they usually do not have children; (iii) they consider spending money with cosmetics – because they are worried about their identity and appearance. If a company pays attention to that and innovates, presenting a gay couple in an advertising at Valentine's Day, than that company - O Boticário, in this case - would get respect from that community and a person from that group who has not been a client before could become a consumer. In a homophobic country as Brazil, this strategy might be dangerous but our findings suggest the boycott intention amongst gays were more effective than backlash actions, boycott attitudes or boycott intention when compared to protestants consumer intention. In general, to be friendly here by respecting diversity, civil rights and gay community may be more than sees the eye: understanding this strategy as an intelligent attitude to gain the respect from gay community.

This investigation has some limitations like the non-representative sample used here. A non-representative sample does not allow generalize the results. As this sample is not probabilistic, our decision to use VSNs was the way we found to collect data. An event which occurs at VSNs is brief, and as a researcher you have to be brief as well for understanding and measuring the consumer behavior - it is a research strategy that avoids missing important and real consumers perceptions, attitudes and

behaviors. Concerning the second limitation, we could not measure or compare the boycott's, boycott's and backlash's efficacy as we could analyze only the boycott intention. If we used an experiment with homosexual and heterosexual protestants and agnostics, we would be able to measure boycott or boycott attitude. A statistical experiment could use a probabilistic sample highlighting the difference between groups or among consumers.

However, this article discusses relevant Marketing, Strategy and Society points, evidencing their relevance on Marketing and Strategy theories as: (i) religion is an important subject to understand the analysis between the consumption and VSNs (the religious boycott, e.g. Friedman, 1999; Swinberghe, Flurry and Parker, 2014); (ii) religious leaders in Brazil can have a bearing on their followers in VSNs, mainly if they are regularly present on VSNs disseminating their Christian doctrine; (iii) the Buycott Intention amongst gay consumers could explain the O Boticário's brand repositioning strategy as we supposed and as people could now remember O Boticário's as a brand which respects the differences - while Natura (the most important competitor for O Boticário at Brazilian cosmetic market) is recognized because their sustainability managerial orientation – thus, O Boticário could be perceived as a friendly company.

Future researches have plenty of questions to answer at Brazilian context involving consumption, boycott, buycott, religion and sexual orientation. Our reflection after data analysis in O Boticário's case study in this paper reveals several questions, which we have chosen some to show here, as such: (a) could a statistical experiment between traditional and Pentecostal Protestants could show us different results about buycott and boycott intention? (b) would gay consumers who just bought imported perfumes have buycott intention or not? (c) could minorities buycotts, as gay community's, be more effective than religious boycott? (d) was the Buycott Intention at O Boticário's case was more prominent among high-level-educated consumers? and (e) did the Valentine's Day advertising increase the company profits? These and other questions might be investigated in studies intending to analyze a context involving religion, sexual orientation and consumer decision.

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