

Review of: "Ethical and political consumption: an integrated typology of practices"

Rand Irshaidat¹

¹ Princess Sumaya University for Technology

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The topic is very timely and pressing given the current transformation in consumerism and exchange markets. The paper interestingly approaches an interdisciplinary lens that combines capitalist practices in the context of offerings and markets on one hand, and between economic concepts on the other. The four quadrants generated in the discussion provide a systematic structure for the relevant types of consumer trends. Some concerns in this regard:

The introduction commences with definitions on consumption, which is a healthy start, however, refers to what is deemed outdated references in the research protocols due to utilizing very old references. Current literature bases consumption on a dyadic relationship between the provider and the consumer. I suggest incorporating more recent references from consumer behavior on contemporary definitions of exchange markets and consumption. More importantly, an accurate emphasis on political consumption needs to be addressed to avoid misconceptions.

Reflecting on the following section in the article: "There is, however, at least one critical difference that may prohibit the use of these two concepts interchangeably. Political consumption, as a concept, can incorporate "ethics" and moral reasoning behind consumption practices and lifestyles. The opposite, i.e., the extent to which the normative framing of "ethical" consumption can unconditionally embrace all types of "political" reasoning, including illegal consumer practices, is under question. Therefore, this article treats political consumption, that is "consumer choice of producers and products [...] based on attitudes and values regarding issues of justice, fairness, or non-economic issues that concern personal and family well-being and ethical or political assessment of favourable and unfavourable business and governmental practice" (Micheletti, Follesdal and Stolle, 2004, p. xiv-xv), as a blanket term for consumption that may reflect political, ethical and environmental concerns and claims (Jensen, 1998) and which can: (1) embrace all other variants of alternative consumption practices and (2) help highlight the notion of "consumer agency" which, as explained later, is important if we are to ascribe "alternative" consumption practices any power to achieve change."

The formation of the initial argument in the aforementioned paragraph is somewhat vague and needs further clarifications. For instance, on what basis is the assumption of embedding ethics in political consumption is constructed upon? What kind of ethics in this context? Meta ethics? Applied ethics? Descriptive ethics? In the same vein, what is meant here exactly to base the choice of attitudes and values? Of whom? Political consumers? Values are the deepest level of culture and they are the feeling or a belief that a mode of behaviors is favored over another mode in a given culture. Attitudes are formed in light of values, as they are a consistent response to issues. The loose utilization of "attitudes and values" is rather confusing to the reader. The same applies to the random selection of ultimate norms as "justice and fairness". The

purpose in this paragraph is rather confusing to the reader.

What is exactly meant by “non-market” consumer practices? is "market" here reserved on economic transactions? a clear definition for the term is encouraged.

As a reader, the merger between political and ethical consumption as one research telos is perplexing since the causality or commonality between both variables is not clearly explained. The same applies in reserving the objective of political and ethical consumption in achieving change rather than acquiring a value from the political product. While the paper reflects on the view of change by equating the role of consumer to citizens and activists, further clarification is warranted on this view in the context of political consumption and change on one hand, and its connection to ethical consumption and change on the other.

In reference to the ‘Alternative Consumption’ section, it is inaccurate to claim that marketing is concerned with economic transactions rather than other scientific fields, since an imperative aspect of marketing is the social marketing realm, or non-profit marketing, which resolves around the marketing of trends and ideas, and this marketing aspect has become significantly entrenched in the marketing literature. Therefore, overlooking this vital marketing aspect debases the accuracy of argument. As a matter of fact, the paper might benefit from reflecting on social marketing model that also intersect with consumer marketing attitudinal models, including Self-Perception, Tri-Component Theory, Theory of Planned Behavior, among others.

My concern is the abolishing of the ‘value principle’ when addressing the alternative market and non-market modes of acquisition. Stemming from a premise of change rather than value in the context of consumption needs further reflections and clarifications. Meaning, in a marketing context, value is customer benefit in relation to customer cost to determine the worth of the product. Both variables are subjective. i.e. benefit can be functional, financial, social or psychological. The same applies of qualitative non-monetary aspects of cost including time and effort, let alone opportunity cost in the sphere of political consumption. Point being, even if the benefit sought is social or psychological, the end result of the consumption behaviors is acquiring value rather than inducing change.

An accurate school of thought to the concept of political consumption is warranted, since the reader travels between diverse conceptions to the term. In certain context, it appears as though the concept stems from political marketing, and treated as the typical political marketplace between political providers (candidates and parties) and political consumers (voters). In other contexts, the argument flourishes a different view to the concept that falls more on the side of citizenship. The term needs more polishing in line with the research objective of the paper.

In reference to the certification and labeling in the lodging sector, enriching the section with literature on green marketing and green consumers is advisable. Sustainability trends are inseparable from green products, green strategies, and green consumers.