

Well-Intended but Effective? How Marketing Regulations Influence Consumer Behavior

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Cite as:

Riede Kim, Bamberger Boas (2021), Well-Intended but Effective? How Marketing Regulations Influence Consumer Behavior. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 50th, (93947)

Paper from the 50th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, May 25-28, 2021



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Abstract

Policy makers are increasingly introducing marketing regulations to prevent global health threats caused by irresponsible consumption. However, empirical research is ambiguous about the effectiveness of such well-intended regulatory interventions in nudging consumers toward healthier consumption. Drawing on social cognitive theory, this study empirically tests the effects of marketing regulations on consumers' behavior along the purchase process stages. We surveyed 1,236 consumers in three countries and across different industries about consumer behavior under varying regulations. Also, we replicate the findings with 191 participants using an experimental design. The results consistently reveal that marketing regulations have unintended harmful effects on both consumers and firms. Specifically, marketing regulations ultimately harm consumer brand loyalty and compliance through a negative impact on self-efficacy beliefs and subsequent self-determined decision making.

Keywords: *marketing regulations; consumer protection; public policy*

Track: Transformative Consumer Research