

Political Reactance and Consumer Victimization in Business Protest Support

Hyun Jung Crystal Lee
Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
Eline De Vries
University Carlos III of Madrid

Cite as:

Lee Hyun Jung Crystal, De Vries Eline (2025), Political Reactance and Consumer Victimization in Business Protest Support. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (126007)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



Political Reactance and Consumer Victimization in Business Protest Support

Abstract

Ceaseless technological innovations and regulatory policy changes have been fueling tectonic shifts in business environments, to which many businesses adapt. Yet, many others resist and protest the changes, while attempting to attract public attention to the concerns they raise. Such protests may push forward necessary changes and motivate the revision of corporate policies or governmental regulations, but they can also be risky and even evoke opposition from consumers when consumers feel victims of such protest. Three experiments show how business protests aimed against another entity (i.e., a competing business or governmental institution) can trigger perceived consumer victimization and undermine support for the protest. Consequently, consumers turn away from the protesting business and toward competing firms—often, ironically, the one that is being protested against. In particular, the studies provide insights into the role of political orientations in how consumers respond to business protests going against another business or governmental regulation.

Keywords: *Business Protest, Consumer Victimization, Political Orientation*

Track: *Consumer Behavior*