

Chapter 6

PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTANCE THEORY

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INTRODUCTION

A choice made by a person is a free behavior and recognized to be freedom owned. At times, freedom to behave can be threatened or eliminated by certain attempts and these can yield to certain losses that should be encountered. Threats to freedom of behavioral acts are frequently seen in influence attempts to change consumer's product or service choices from a marketing perspective. The common response to the interventions on free behavior is to regain freedom.

Brehm (1966) elicits the reactions to an eliminated or threatened freedom under his social psychological theory addressed as '**Psychological Reactance Theory**'. Psychological reactance is defined as 'the motivational state of a person to restore freedom which is threatened or eliminated' (Brehm & Hammock, 1966, p. 546). Reactance emerges in the existence of free behaviors. When an individual does not possess freedom of choice, yet there will not be any perceived threat. As in the case of a student in freshman year, being assigned to mandatory courses, or being obliged to own the textbook of a course does not consign the freedom of making any choice. Reactance arouses as a response to the elimination of freedoms and referred to as 'the context of other forces motivating the person to give up the freedom and comply with the threat or elimination' (Brehm & Brehm, 1981, p. 37). The influence attempts to change

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media channel like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Netflix), demographics (the proportion of young population determines the health preservation need) are presented to be the major drivers of the new habits adopted (Sheth, 2020).

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