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“Tipping Required”: Development of a Model to Understand Customer Reactions to Non-Voluntary Tipping Systems

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines customer response to non-voluntary tipping systems as an emerging trend in the servicescape. A non-voluntary tipping system is a form of service inclusive pricing (e.g., increasing menu prices, automatically charging a percentage of tip on the final bill regardless of table size). Across four experiments, results suggest that non-voluntary tipping leads to higher customer anger than voluntary tipping, which leads to lower return intentions. The results also show a larger difference in customer response (customer anger, return intentions) to non-voluntary and voluntary tipping systems under high service quality than low service quality. The mediating role of the components of self-determination theory (autonomy, relatedness, competence) is discussed.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ismail Karabas is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Management, Marketing, and Business Administration at Murray State University. Ismail teaches principles of marketing and integrated marketing communications. Ismail’s research focuses on services marketing and advertising.

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