

# THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

## Departmental Research Seminar



### Order Matters: Rating Service Professionals Reduces Tipping Amount By

Dr Alison Jing Xu  
University of Minnesota

**Date : 8 Feb 2023 (WED)**  
**Time : 10 – 11:30 am**  
**Venue : M802 & online via Zoom**

#### Abstract

As customer ratings have become ubiquitous and digital platforms can directly request ratings and tips from customers, understanding how a customer rating influences tipping becomes important. We investigate whether, how, why, and when the order of rating and tipping affects both consumer behaviors in seven studies, including one quasi-field experiment, one archival data analysis, one randomized field experiment, and four randomized lab experiments. We show that asking customers to rate a service professional before tipping negatively impacts the tip amount but that tipping first does not affect subsequent rating scores. We propose that the negative effect of rating on tipping occurs because, when rating a service professional first, customers categorize their feedback as a reward for the service professional, which partially alleviates the felt obligation to tip, resulting in a smaller tip. This negative effect is more evident when customers (1) tip from their own pocket, (2) have higher categorization flexibility, or (3) perceive that the service professional benefits from the rating. Moreover, highlighting the consistency motivation after rating but before tipping can attenuate this effect. These boundary conditions not only support our proposed mechanism and evaluate alternative processes but also have significant practical implications.

**Dr Alison Jing Xu** is Associate Professor of Marketing at the Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota. Alison's research focuses on consumer decision processes and examine how mind-sets, decision sequence, retail environments, human sensory inputs, and technology advancements influence consumer and manager decision making. Alison's research articles have been published in leading academic journals including the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* of the United States of America, *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Management Science*, *Psychological Science*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, and *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, among others. Her scholarly contributions have been recognized by the 2015 Marketing Science Institute Young Scholar Program and the 2018 Society for Consumer Psychology Early Career Award. She received the Outstanding Faculty Teaching Award at Carlson in 2021 and was named Poets and Quants' Best 40-Under-40 Business School Professors of 2022.

**All interested are welcome.**



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