

## THE EFFECT OF MODELING ON TIPPING BEHAVIOR

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*Abstract:* The present experiment attempted to determine whether or not the modeling effect reported in the helping-behavior literature could be used to enhance tipping behavior. In 5 bakeries, confederates who were placed ahead of a subject were instructed to give (or not) some money to the employee. The subsequent behavior of 300 subjects was then observed and the money given to the employee was also evaluated. Results showed that a tipping-model led the subject to more readily give a tip to the employee. It was also observed that the mean of tipping was significantly greater in the modeling condition than in the control condition.

*Key words:* tipping behavior, model vs. no-model condition

In many countries, consumers give voluntary tips to workers after they rendered services to these customers. Commonly, waiters and waitresses of bars or restaurants, casino croupiers, taxicab drivers, tour guides... were rewarded by a tip for their services. Because tips represented a large part of income of such workers, it will be interesting for social psychologists to determine the factors that could enhance tipping behavior. The experiment presented here tested the effect of modeling on tipping behavior.

Good service and prompt attention do little to guarantee a big tip from a customer (Harris, 1995). Lynn and Latané (1984) found that in restaurants there is no connection between the quality of the food and the provided tips. In fact, most of the studies on tipping behavior have shown that external factors are more likely to have an effect on the customer's behavior. Some of them depend on the nature of the interaction between a waiter/waitress and his/her customer. Manipulation of a waiter's or waitress's nonverbal behavior can induce increased tipping. Thus, a broad

smile uncovering a waitress' teeth in a bar can result in a significant rise in her tips when compared to a situation in which the smile is less strongly marked (Tidd, Lockart, 1978). Moreover, stooping down when talking to a customer also leads to bigger tips (Davis, Schrader, Richardson, Kring, Kieffer, 1998). A simple touch of a customer in a restaurant by a waitress or a waiter may increase the size of tips granted (Crusco, Wetzell, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Lynn, Le, Sherwyn, 1998; Stephen, Zweigenhaft, 1986). Environmental factors influence tipping behavior. Cunningham (1979) noticed that sunshine tended to increase customers' generosity toward a restaurant waitress. Rind (1996) found that if a server in a hotel informed the guests that the weather was sunny, this led to higher tipping than when the server informed them that it was raining. In this experiment the guests had not yet seen the sky. So, belief in a sunny sky is sufficient to induce greater tips percentages. This effect was confirmed by Rind and Strohmets (2001) who found that when a server in a restaurant wrote on the back of cus-

tomers' checks that the weather would be good the next day, this message led to increase tipping behavior compared to a situation where nothing was written on the customers' checks or when the server wrote that the weather would not be so good. Another type of research on factors influencing tipping rests on the manipulation of adding information to the customer's bill. Rind and Bordia (1995) have found that writing "thank you" on the back of customers' checks increased their generosity toward a female server more than when nothing was written on the checks. A happy drawing on the customers' checks also has a positive effect on tipping behavior. A simple hand-made drawing of a smiling face (Rind, Bordia, 1996) or of the sun (Guéguen, LeGohérel, 2000) led the customer to give a larger tip to a waiter or waitress of bars or restaurants. A small card bearing a joke and attached to the bill prompted customers of bars or restaurants to give tips more readily and to make them larger (Guéguen, 2002).

All of the studies referred to above showed that customers took into account various items of information that were not connected to the quality of the services, the food or the beverages. These findings prove that other external information could affect the tipping behavior.

The effect of a model on help has been investigated by several social psychologists who worked on helping-behavior. It has consistently been found that people are more likely to perform a helpful act after observing someone else performing the act than in the absence of such observation. Begin (1978) found that when a confederate agreed to sign a petition, the subject who had shown the scene agreed more readily to sign the petition when solicited than when no model was presented. When the confederate refused to sign, this led the

subject to refuse to sign in a greater proportion than in the no-model condition. Ross (1970) found that seeing someone respond to a request for aid increases the probability of others helping. In his experiment, a male-experimenter, walking in a shopping mall, pretended to have lost a contact lens. In the no-model condition, while groping for it on the floor, he asked the first person who passed by (a subject) to help him. In a model condition, the experimenter asked a confederate to help him and, then, after the confederate started to look for the lens, the experimenter asked help from the first person passing by as in the no-model condition. The results showed that a greater percentage of help was obtained in the model condition and that subjects in this group who stopped and helped the experimenter spent more time helping him than the subjects who helped in the no-model condition. In these two studies above, request of help was addressed to the subject. Furthermore, the positive effect of modeling is also observed on spontaneous helping behavior. Zener-Solomon and Grotta (1976) found that a male-experimenter walking alone in a large supermarket who "accidentally" dropped a pencil, index cards and sheets of paper in a folder, was helped more readily by people around him if a confederate, who followed the experimenter, stopped and began to help him.

This later experiment tends to prove that modeling had a positive effect on spontaneous behavior. Therefore, it could be interesting to test the effect of a model on tipping behavior. In some cases, customers are exposed to the behavior of other people toward a service worker (casino croupiers, tours guides...). Hence, some modeling effects could occur that might lead customers exposed to a model giving a tip, to imitate his/her behavior

and then to give a tip to the service worker, too.

The present study has tested the effect of modeling on tipping behavior. It was carried out in France where giving a tip to service workers is unusual because French legislation mandates that service charge be included in the cost of a product or a service. Thus, the customer is aware that a minimum wage is guaranteed for employees. Therefore, it seems really worth investigating the factors influencing tipping in a country where this behavior is not common practice. Most of the research concerning factors affecting tipping comes from the USA. Because a service charge is not included in food prices, tipping is of paramount importance in that country. Guéguen and LeGohérel (2000) have shown that in France, drawing a sun at the bottom of the bill had a positive effect on the tip. A humorous drawing seems to influence tipping behavior in both the French, as well as the American customers. External factors seem to exert a positive effect on the behavior of French customers.

#### *Hypothesis*

Insofar as numerous studies have asserted that modeling had a positive effect on helping behavior, we assumed that modeling could have a positive influence on tipping as compared to a situation where no model was used.

### METHOD

#### *Participants*

The participants were 317 adults (106 men and 111 women) who called at 5 bakeries in different towns on the West Atlantic coast in France. Seventeen participants

were eliminated because they were not exposed correctly to the interaction between the confederate and the employee.

#### *Materials*

A 15 cm x 8 cm x 6 cm wicker basket was used to collect the tips. Each wicker basket contained 3 Euros in various coins (1 of 1 Euro, 2 of 50 cents, 3 of 20 cents, 6 of 5 cents, 5 of 2 cents). A notice bearing the words "For the Service" printed in "Arial police" was placed in front of the basket.

#### *Procedure*

The experiment was carried out in five bakeries from 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. on three consecutive Saturdays, at the beginning of summer. The managers of the bakeries kindly consented that their bakeries be used for conducting the experiment. In these bakeries a wicker basket intended to receive the tips was placed near the cash desk and stood there for over six months. Most of the customers of these bakeries who were regular customers could have noticed the wicker basket and the message. The practice consisting to present a wicker basket intended to receive tips for the service workers is a common practice in towns but not in rural regions. That is why bakeries situated in urban zones were used to conduct the experiment.

The experiment began while no customer was as yet in the bakery. Five confederates (2 males and 3 females) aged 20 to 22 yrs, along with five female employees aged between 18 and 24, who were unaware of the hypothesis, took part in the experiment. Furthermore, these were instructed to play a consistent role toward the confederates in each case. A confederate was inside the

bakery pretending to look over the pastries on view. If a customer entered the bakery, then the confederate approached the cash desk where a female employee was standing. The employee was instructed to smile and say "hello sir/miss" and to ask the confederate what he/she wanted. The confederate asked the employee to give him/her a "special" bread which cost 1.20 EUR. In any case, the confederate gave a 2 EUR coin to the employee. The latter smiled at the confederate and said "Thank you!" when she received the coin. Then the employee opened the till and gave the confederate the change with one coin of 50 cts, one coin of 20 and 1 coin of 10 cents. The confederate, smiling, said "Thank you!" to the employee. Then, according to a random assignment, the experimental or the control condition took place. In the tipping-model condition, the confederate took the 50-cent piece, put it into the wicker basket and said "This for you". Immediately the confederate smiled again at the employee and said "Have a nice day!". The employee smiled back at the confederate and said "A nice day to you, too, sir/miss!". Then, the confederate left the bakery. In the no-tipping-model condition, the confederate took his/her change without putting any coin in the wicker basket. He/she smiled at the employee and said "Have a nice day!". As in the tipping-model condition, the employee smiled at the confederate in return and said "A nice day to you, too, sir/miss!". The confederate then left the bakery. In each condition, after leaving the bakery the confederate entered a car parked near the bakery waiting until the customer left the bakery. Then he/she went back to the bakery, gave back the bread to the employee and waited until a new customer entered. After the confederate had left the bakery, the employee was instructed to play a consistent role toward

the customer. She was instructed to smile, to say "hello sir/miss" and to ask the customer what he/she wanted. The employee was instructed to proceed as usual with the customer: gave him/her the different items, gave him/her the amount and then took his/her money and, possibly, gave him/her the change. Then the employee made a mental note of whether the customer put some money in the wicker basket. When the customer had left the bakery, the employee noted on a sheet how the client had behaved, namely, whether he/she had left a tip or not and its amount. The employee was also instructed to note the gender of the customer and his/her approximate age.

A control condition was also tested where no-model was used. Only customers who entered the bakery when no other customers were present were used as participants. This condition was devised in order to test spontaneous altruism of customers: evaluate the behavior of customers when they were not exposed to the behavior of someone else. In this condition the employee was instructed to act in a similar manner as with customers in the tipping and no-tipping model conditions.

As the experiment was conducted in a natural setting, it was not possible to control all of the customer's behavioral factors. The customer's behavior was registered only when he/she stood behind the confederate during the interaction with the employee. In 17 cases (7 in the tipping-model condition and 10 in no-tipping model condition) the customer did not stand behind the confederate (he/she was standing near the entrance of the bakery, he/she was standing in front of the stall displaying the pastries or he/she was standing in the middle of the bakery looking outside until the confederate left). So, in these cases, the customers were not included in the data analysis.

## RESULTS

No statistical differences in the data were found between the 5 employees (and then between the five bakeries) either as to the rate of customers who left a tip,  $X^2(4, 300) = 8.24, p > .08$ , or as regards the tip size,  $F(4, 60) = 2.17, p > .08$ . No statistical differences in the data were found between the 5 confederates either as to the rate of customers who left a tip,  $X^2(4, 300) = 2.87, p > .20$ , or as to the tip size,  $F(4, 60) = 0.93, p > .20$ . Also, no significant sex-related differences in the confederates were noted either as regards the number of customers who left a tip,  $X^2(1, 300) = 3.12, p > .07$ , or as regards the tip size,  $F(1, 60) = 2.65, p > .20$ . Hence, the data were combined across sex of confederates and across the employees. The results are presented in Table 1.

Data concerning the number of customers who gave a tip were analyzed with a 2 (gender) x 3 (experimental conditions) Log-Linear analysis. A main effect of experimental conditions was found ( $X^2(2, 300) = 25.85, p < .001$ ). When the confederates had left a tip, customers gave a tip more readily (37%) than when the confederate left no tip (11%) or when no model was present (13%). Two by two comparisons showed that the tipping-model condition was statistically different from the no-tipping model condition ( $X^2(1, 200) = 18.53, p < .001$ ) and the no-model control condition ( $X^2(1, 200) = 15.36, p < .001$ ), whereas no difference was found between the no-tipping model condition and the no-model control condition ( $X^2(1, 200) = 0.19, p > .20$ ). No statistical difference was found between male and female customers ( $X^2(1, 300) = 1.59, p > .28$ ). No interaction effect between the

Table 1. Rate of the number of people who gave a tip and how much they gave according to the experimental conditions and the sex of the subjects

	Tipping-Model	No Tipping Model	No-Model Control
Customers who gave a tip (in %)			
Male-customers	32.0 (N = 50)	10.0 (N = 50)	10.0 (N = 50)
Female-customers	42.0 (N = 50)	12.0 (N = 50)	16.0 (N = 50)
Tips amount (in Euros) 1			
<i>Male-customers</i>			
Mean	0.513	0.25	0.150
Standard Deviation	0.265	0.14	0.050
N	16	5	5
<i>Female-customers</i>			
Mean	0.752	0.37	0.281
Standard Deviation	0.279	0.15	0.141
N	21	6	8

1- The values are calculated among the customers who gave a tip in each group

two factors was found ( $X^2(6, 300) = 2.29$ ,  $p > .20$ ).

An analysis of variance (Anova) was used to analyze the amount of tips left by the customers. A main effect of experimental conditions was found ( $F(2, 60) = 19.95$ ,  $p < .001$ ). When the confederate gave a tip to the employee, customers who in turn left a tip, gave a donation that was significantly higher (0.65 EUR) than that given by customers who were exposed to a no-tipping model (0.31 EUR). The difference was statistically significant ( $F(1, 47) = 14.94$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The tipping-model condition was also statistically different ( $F(1, 49) = 28.00$ ,  $p < .001$ ) from the no-model control condition (0.23 EUR). Furthermore, despite the appearances, no difference was found between the no-tipping model condition and the no-model control condition ( $F(1, 23) = 2.39$ ,  $p > .10$ ). A main effect of participants' gender was found ( $F(1, 60) = 10.53$ ,  $p < .002$ ). Females gave tips that were significantly higher (0.58 EUR) than the tips left by males (0.39 EUR). Pair comparisons showed that females gave larger tips than males in the tipping-model condition ( $F(1, 30) = 5.17$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Furthermore, no difference was found between the no-tipping model condition ( $F(1, 10) = 1.85$ ,  $p > .20$ ) and the no-model control condition ( $F(1, 12) = 3.96$ ,  $p > .07$ ). The interaction between the experimental condition and participants' gender was tested but revealed no statistical effect ( $F(1, 49) = 0.45$ ,  $p > .20$ ).

#### DISCUSSION

In this experiment we have found that a model who gave a tip to a service worker led people who observed his/her behavior to give a larger tip than when no-model was present or when the model did not

give any tip. These findings show that the amount of donations was significantly higher in the tipping-model condition than in the no-tipping model or in the no-model control condition. So, in this experiment, modeling induced the group of customers as a whole and each customer individually to become more generous. Such results are congruent with the research on the effect of modeling on helping (Begin, 1978; Ross, 1970; Zener-Solomon, Grotta, 1976). The no-tipping model did not lead the customer to a negative effect when compared to the no-model control condition. These results are not congruent with literary data on modeling. Begin (1978) found that when a confederate refused to sign a petition, this led a greater proportion of subjects to refuse to sign that petition than in the no-model condition where no confederate was present. Furthermore, in our experiment, the no-tipping model was not a negative model as was the case in Begin's study. Perhaps the customers who were placed behind the confederate did not see the wicker basket or could not interpret the behavior of the confederate as a negative behavior. To become a negative model and, in order to respect the same procedure as in the tipping-model condition, the confederate in our experiment would have to tell the employee: "I don't want to give you anything for the service". So, we can imagine the incongruity of such behavior in this context.

Our findings confirm the powerful effect of modeling in a new context and with a new helping behavior. This study was carried out in France where giving a service worker a tip is unusual because French legislation mandates that a 12% service charge be included in the cost of the service or in the product. Thus, the customer is aware that a minimum wage is guaranteed for the service worker. So,

because such behavior is perhaps unusual to the customer, the mode of acting by a "confederate-customer" who gave a tip to the employee had created a high pressure to imitate the confederate and to give, in turn, a tip.

These findings had some managerial implications because increasing the tips may create a greater state of fulfillment at the workplace for the employees; their work becoming far more interesting owing to an increase in tips. Of course, the positive effect of modeling on tipping behavior was obtained by the customer's observation of the confederate's behavior. So, using a confederate seems necessary to obtain an effect. Furthermore, employees could use the customer in order that he/she becomes a model for the other customers. For example, if the employee had the possibility to induce tipping behavior from a first customer of a line-up, then this client, becoming a model, could affect the behavior of the customer behind him/her, and so forth. Thus, in order to create this modeling effect, the employee had to influence tipping behavior of the first customer of a line-up. Research shows that tipping can be positively affected by various factors manipulated during interaction between a service worker and a customer. A waiter's or a waitress's touch of a male or a female customer's arm or shoulder tends to increase the size of the tips (Crusco, Wetzel, 1984; Hornik, 1992; Stephen, Zweigenhaft, 1986) particularly when this customer is young (Lynn, Le, Sherwyn, 1998). A customer receiving a broad smile from a waitress will probably leave a larger tip than when he/she receives a simple smile with lips closed (Tidd, Lockard, 1978). The same also holds when the waiter leans towards the client (Davis, Schrader, Richardson, Kring, Kieffer, 1998). Waitresses wearing a flower in their hair are likely to

obtain larger tips from customers (Stillman, Hensley, 1980). Thus, employees could use these techniques in order to induce a tipping behavior in a customer who, in turn, could become a model for other customers. It will be interesting for future research to observe the effect of spontaneous tipping of one customer on the behavior of other customers.

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## VPLYV MODELOVEJ SITUÁCIE DÁVANIA SPREPITNÉHO

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*Súhrn:* V experimente sme sa pokúsili zistiť, či vplyv modelovej situácie, o ktorej sa v literatúre referuje ako o pomocnom správaní, by bolo alebo nebolo možné použiť na zlepšenie dávania sprepitného. V piatich pekárstvach boli spolupracovníci-experimentátori inštruovaní tak, aby dali (alebo nedali) nejaké peniaze zamestnancovi. Následne sme sledovali správanie 300 jednotlivcov a spočítali sme aj peniaze, ktoré zamestnanec dostal. Výsledky ukázali, že modelová situácia dávania sprepitného viedla jedincov ochotnejšie dávať zamestnancovi sprepitné. Ukázalo sa aj, že priemerná hodnota sprepitného bola signifikantne vyššia v modelovej situácii než v situácii kontrolnej.