

Investigating how the role of service robots impacts consumers' emotional response and behavioural intention

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Abstract

Service robots have been widely deployed in service encounters. This paper aims to explore the impact of the role of robots (augmentation versus substitution) on consumers' emotional responses and behavioural intentions. Through three experiments, this research empirically examines how the role of robots affects consumers' emotional trust and switching intention towards robots. Results showed that when service robots are substituting (versus augmenting) human employees, consumers develop a lower degree of emotional trust and a higher degree of switching intention. These relationships are mediated by perceived cost-cutting attribution. Furthermore, the research examines the boundary condition of symbolic value. This paper contributes to the Concept Combination Theory. The results of this research provide new insights into the role of service robots that could be useful for robot designers and companies using robots for customer service encounters.

Subject Areas: *Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Services, Customer Relationship Management and Customer Satisfaction*

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