

## Customer orientation in the South African minibus taxi industry

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### Abstract

Owner-managers in a mini-bus taxi industry in South Africa operate in a cooperative business model and need to collaborate with each other to become more customer oriented and to achieve client satisfaction. This study aims to examine the perceptions of owner-managers - and their customers (passengers) to determine the level of customer orientation when implementing the services marketing mix strategy. This study used a mixed method research approach. The first phase entailed the collection of qualitative data through four focus groups involving minibus taxi owner-managers. While a second phase was quantitative and used a survey technique to collect data from both minibus taxi owner-managers and passengers. A total of 256 owner managers and 640 customers participated in the quantitative study. The results indicate that both the minibus taxi owner-managers and the customers perceive the services provided by the mini-bus taxi industry is customer oriented. However, owner-managers perceptions of their service offering is significantly more customer oriented when compared to that of the customers.

**Keywords:** customer orientation, services marketing mix, minibus taxi, marketing mix strategy, small medium size enterprises.

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