Part I: Issues and Concepts

1 Introduction: The Sharing Economy and the Tourism Industry

Babak Taheri, Roya Rahimi, and Dimitrios Buhalis

The sharing economy is one of the most rapidly growing market phenomena in history. Over thousands of years, groups of people have shared the use of assets. The invention of the internet, and the development of social media platforms, has made it more convenient for asset owners and the entity looking to use such assets, to reach one another. Information on the Internet is spreading through a wide range of different websites. Different types of websites often diffuse similar content in terms of topics and subjects but in different forms (Inversini and Buhalis 2009). The mechanism may also be referred to as sharing economy, collective economy, shared consumption, or peer economy (Dolnicar, 2021). A new economic model has been developed based on the peer-to-peer activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services (Hamari et al., 2016).

Belk (2007, p.126) defines sharing as "the act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and/or the act and process of receiving or taking something from others for our use". Kumar et al. (2018, p.2) argue that the sharing economy business model "consist(s) of a firm, or service enabler [e.g., Airbnb], which acts as an intermediary between the suppliers

of a good or service [. . .] and customers who demand those underutilised goods and services".

A sharing economy can therefore be defined as an economic system in which assets and services are shared between people. It is an integrated collaboration and the ability for human interaction, peer-to-peer (P2P) commercial exchange (e.g., underutilised inventory via fee-based sharing) (Altinay & Taheri, 2019, p.180).

The sharing economy has attracted a great deal of attention in recent decades with platforms such as Airbnb and Uber experiencing explosive growth (La, et al., 2022, Sthapit, and Björk, 2019). In hospitality and tourism research mainly focuses on the Airbnb impacts on the tourism socio-economic system (Buhalis et al., 2020), people's mobility, and sharing economy start-up (Cheng, 2016). More recently there has been renewed conversations on sharing as a part of the broader circular economy concept, considering the unsustainable exploitation of global resources.

The sharing economy plays an important role in enabling sustainable communities and cities. Its main idea perfectly fits into the three dimensions of sustainable cities: economy, environment, and society (Dolnicar, 2021; Priporas et al., 2017). Altinay and Taheri (2019) summarised the main overarching theories with regards to sharing economy in hospitality and tourism studies. These include: Theory of planned behaviour; Complexity theory; Social exchange theory; Norm activation model; Value co-creation; Transaction cost theory; Social comparison theory; Social cognitive theory; and S-O-R theory. They also provide a list of emerging themes based on current literature: trust and reputation; disruptive customer behaviours; consumer choice and segmentation; pricing strategies; socially excluded consumers; traveller personality; and customer satisfaction.

This book focuses on the sharing economy from a marketing and managerial perspective. It explores implications in tourism marketing and management, services marketing, and urban studies. The book introduces a cutting-edge perspective on the theoretical and empirical development of sharing economy studies in the service industries field. It offers a new insight to indicate potential research opportunities and areas of interest in different aspects of sharing economy.

Designed for researchers in the social sciences, this book prepares scholars to investigate how the sharing economy is related to societal issues. Building upon theoretical and practical developments concerning the sharing economy, the contributors adopt different approaches and methods to assess new perspectives in sharing economy. They do this, often, by altering

existing methods and exploring new data sources and practices. The book, with its practical approach, is also a valuable source for students and practitioners in the field of business and management. In the pages that follow, the book provides an overview of broad themes and foundational points in the sharing economy domain.

Overview of the chapters in this book

The chapters in this book fit primarily into one of the three major themes, namely issues and concepts; impacts and value; as well as future developments of the sharing economy.

Part I explores issues and concepts, taking a closer look at the variety of fundamental concepts within the sharing economy domain. The opening chapter by **Esther Martos-Carrión** and **Cristina Miguel** define the basic concepts and provide a short history of the sharing economy, conceptualisations, and related concepts (e.g., the gig economy, the circular economy, platform economy) in the sharing economy. In the next chapter, **Ilker Gul** elaborates on the early stages of sharing economy and the reasons for its emergence. He discusses how the sharing economy works and what problems it addresses. He concludes by providing some potential impact and future implementation of the concept. The following chapter by **Lucie K. Ozanne**, **Girish Prayag** and **Rosemarie Martin-Neuninger** provides some understanding of the experience of being a host for Airbnb and the subsequent challenges. In doing so, they undertake a qualitative study interviewing twenty-two Airbnb hosts. They identify three different types of hosts, namely: professional, semi-professional, and casual hosts. They suggest that different operational aspects are prioritized by different types of hosts, which has implications for guest-host management and other forms of peer-to-peer providers. **Roberto Micera** and **Piera Buonincontri** provide an overview of the sharing economy in tourism. Their research design uses the systematic review, a method for identifying and evaluating key scientific contributions to a field among extensive literature. The data analysis provides general and deeper information on the topic.

Part II focuses on impacts and value concerns and perspectives within the sharing economy. **Adele Berndt** and **Michael Peasley** in their chapter attempt to answer two main questions: 1) How are the traditional transport and accommodation services evaluated relative to the matchmaker services (such as Uber and Airbnb)?; and 2) What is the intention to support these shared services among the various cultures? In doing so, they compare and

contrast traditional and shared services and then provide the theoretical basis for their study. **Tenisha Brown**, **Acolla Cameron**, **Leslie-Ann Jordan-Miller** and **Brian Fronti** in their chapter explore the impact of Airbnb on the traditional accommodation sector in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). They use a qualitative approach to determine – in the broadest sense – what impact has occurred, the extent of the impact as perceived by the traditional accommodation sector and measures which can be introduced to manage the impact. This study provides an understanding of the challenges and opportunities surrounding the operation of Airbnb. This can be employed to guide relevant policy discussions and regulatory framework development for the global hospitality and tourism industry. **Cláudia Oliveira**, **Celeste Eusébio** and **Filipa Brandão** in their chapter explore the main driving forces of collaborative consumption and their influence on the tourism sector. They also explore peer to peer (P2P) accommodation and related concepts such as modus operandi, new market, and potential impacts. **Fabiola Sfodera** and **Alessio Di Leo** in their chapter explore creative tourism and the co-creation of value concepts in the tourist experience within several destinations. These include Loulè Agave (Portugal), Empordanet (Spain), Namur Province (Belgium), Quito (Ecuador), and Bangkok (Thailand). The analysis of these cases indicates how these territories were able to identify existing social capital able to define a differentiated and integrated tourist offer in terms of contents and values. This helped them to meet the current demand for tourism and holiday consumption that translates into a new 'style of consumption' oriented towards relationships, encounters, exchange and experience. **Jeroen Oskam** explores ongoing discussion on the ethical discourse of 'sharing' and 'collaborative' consumption. He also provides a discussion around Airbnb in Amsterdam, that linked vacation rentals to the debate on 'over tourism', the charitable initiatives by Airbnb and the discussion on rating systems.

The final **Part III** centres on future developments within the sharing economy domain. The opening chapter by **Kathryn Waite** and **Rodrigo Perez-Vega** provides an understanding of the opportunities and risks of Big Data use in digital marketing activity for sharing economy businesses. They critically evaluate how Big Data is used in digital marketing and aligns techniques to the marketing challenges facing sharing economy businesses. They discuss the core critical debates surrounding Big Data use and identify the barriers to generating business value from a range of digital marketing techniques, prior to ending with a discussion of the practical implications. **Pfarelo Manavhela** and **Unathi Sonwabile Henama** in their chapter explore the future of mobility according to Uber. In doing so, they use the 'Lifestyle Entrepreneurship' lens to define and characterise value propositions and