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Article

Motivations for Peer-to-Peer Accommodation: Exploring Sustainable Choices in Collaborative Consumption

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Abstract: This research aims to contribute to the growing body of knowledge of Collaborative Consumption (CC) by exploring the motivations that influence the use of Peer-to-Peer (P2P) accommodation platforms from the demand side. There has been a significant increase in interest in sustainable choices regarding P2P accommodation in recent years. To address this gap and contribute to the collaborative consumption and P2P accommodation theory a quantitative study was conducted through a survey yielding 235 responses from both users and non-users of P2P platforms. The findings of this study suggest that P2P accommodation platform usage is influenced by multiple motivations, including sustainability, belonging, economic benefits, and convenience. Interestingly, the study also found that individuals with higher levels of academic qualifications are more likely to adopt this mode of consumption. Moreover, the study is the first of its kind to quantitatively address this topic and, therefore, contributes significantly to the field of collaborative consumption and P2P accommodation theory. By understanding the motivations of P2P platform users, policymakers and practitioners can develop targeted strategies to promote sustainable choices in this sector. Overall, this study provides a useful framework for future research on collaborative consumption and sustainable P2P accommodation.

Keywords: collaborative consumption; peer-to-peer accommodation platforms; motivations; sustainability; tourism industry

1. Introduction

The increasing popularity of digital platforms for peer-to-peer exchanges has led to a surge in interest in models like the Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption [1]. This growth can be attributed to various factors, including technological advancements, evolving consumer mindsets, and the rise of online communities and activities [2]. Thus, it is crucial to understand the factors that contribute to the adoption of these models in the market. While several studies have investigated the decision-making process of consumers they tend to analyze these models collectively, without distinguishing between them [3–5]. The Sharing Economy is an economic model characterized by individuals providing temporary access to underutilized goods to other individuals without monetary compensation, while Collaborative Consumption involves peer-to-peer exchanges facilitated by online services and communities, with compensation involved [6,7]. These exchanges, however, are coordinated and based on online services and communities in Collaborative Consumption, and there is compensation involved. Thus, the compensation associated with the transaction is the feature that distinguishes the two models. Both models are prevalent in the tourism and hospitality sectors as P2P accommodation services [8]. The role of consumers in Collaborative Consumption is critical to its development [9], underscoring the importance of investigating the factors that influence their consumption choices. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore the

role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in consumer use of P2P platforms, with a focus on tourism, specifically on accommodation.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1. The Sharing Economy and Collaborative Consumption

The growth of the internet and Web 2.0 [10] has facilitated the balance of supply and demand, opening up new avenues for economic and social interaction [11]. These new media quickly piqued users' interest, spawning the Sharing Economy (SE) and Collaborative Consumption (CC), and despite their similarities, these concepts represent different economic models, with the main difference being the definition of "sharing". Three fundamental principles of SE are presented in the literature [12]: i) the existence of peer-to-peer exchanges and interactions; ii) sharing is temporary and the owner never loses ownership; and iii) it ensures that more benefit is derived from underutilized assets, because the owner can cede their use to someone else even if they are not being used at the time. As the name implies, there is "sharing" of assets, and because sharing is an altruistic act, the actors in this market are not compensated for it [13]. CC, such as SE, involves the transfer and use of assets between peers, and typically requires payment for the transfer. Consumers who choose CC are not solely motivated by economic concerns, but also by a desire to try new brands, support environmentally sustainable practices, and foster a sense of community. Both extrinsic and intrinsic motivations drive the adoption of CC practices [14]. One area where CC has been applied is lodging where digital platforms provide access to unused or underutilized lodging [15]. This aspect of CC is seeing rapid growth in the tourism sector with activities such as transportation sharing, dining, culture, and traditions [16]. Transactions volume and revenues associated with lodging-based CC are increasing rapidly [17,18].

2.2. Motivations for Collaborative Consumption

The motivations for participating and collaborating on online platforms, including CC platforms, are influenced by various factors [19], such as socioeconomic and ideological concerns as well as a preference for more sustainable consumption [20]. Given the increased interest in sustainable choices related to P2P accommodation, it is essential to explore the role of sustainability as a motivation for P2P platform usage. Therefore, the following first hypothesis was formulated:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): *The perception that using P2P accommodation platforms is a more sustainable choice of consumption positively influences the motivation to use them.*

The tourism industry has experienced a rise in the adoption of CC as a response to four identified market failures [21]. First, traditional tourism system has an excess of underutilized assets, causing dead capital, idle assets, and latent expertise. CC offers these unused assets, which bring diversity to products and services and economic benefits to local actors. Second, the traditional tourism sector has established processes that lack flexibility and negatively impact traveler satisfaction. CC solutions, such as peer-to-peer feedback, enable trust building and adaptability, which enhance the relationship between travelers and hosts. Third, regulatory inequalities have hampered innovation in the traditional sector, while collaboration on digital platforms provides greater market access with low entry barriers [22]. Fourth, technological innovation has also shifted the tastes of tourists, and the new generation seeks to distance themselves from traditional tourism and intermediaries, instead seeking tailored suggestions from peers [23]. CC allows for a more diverse range of offerings because residents can also be suppliers, eliminating the need for new investments and increasing market interaction. Platforms such as Airbnb, Vrbo, and Couchsurfing have facilitated the renting out of homes or rooms to travelers seeking alternatives to traditional lodging [24]). However, concerns about the replacement of residents with visitors and its effects on rental housing and destination locations exist [25]. Landlords may find it more cost-effective to host multiple travelers during the

summer months than a single occupant, as they can charge more and supplement their stay with extra services.

The literature also emphasizes the importance of a sense of belonging in the adoption of CC practices [26]. The spread of this model is inextricably linked to technological advancement and how it enabled greater human connection. As a result, the sense of belonging to a digital community with shared ideals emerges as a CC driver. In light of the literature, the second hypothesis posits that:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The perception that P2P accommodation platforms are a type of consumption that provides a sense of belonging positively influences the motivation to use them.

Consumption strongly linked to access rather than possession did not emerge with SE and CC; such practices were already common in the market, for example, the ability to request books for free from public libraries [27]; the novelty of these models is that these transactions are made between peers. This transformation was made possible by innovation in information and communication technologies, as well as the development of Web 2.0. According to Boros et al. [28] these advancements not only enabled collaborative consumption, but also provided tools for it to be done between peers. As a result, the dynamics between consumers and suppliers have shifted, allowing for new consumption opportunities that can take better advantage of existing resources enabling collaborative consumption as well as tools for it to be done between peers. Thus, the dynamics between consumers and suppliers have shifted, allowing for new consumption opportunities that can make better use of existing resources and have impacted a variety of industries. Transactions in these markets are conducted through an online platform owned by a third party rather than the supplier or the consumer [29].

Technologies that enabled the creation of P2P platforms not only enabled the creation of new markets, but also had an impact on existing ones through their modernization [30]. This innovation and modernization have resulted in the addition of new features, increased supply diversity, and new tools that improve demand convenience. P2P lodging is an example of the creation of a new market; previously, tourists could only stay in places where there were hotels or other lodging solutions; however, when the opportunity for all individuals to rent a space they have available in their residence is created, the list of possibilities for tourists to stay increases and diversifies exponentially.

P2P platforms have two main strands, one related to asset transactions and the other to access, whether it is access to goods or professional knowledge [31]. The most well-known examples of the first generation of platforms are eBay and Craigslist, which facilitate the sale of goods between peers. These platforms enabled confidence to be built in this channel, allowing consumption through it to become normalized. The second generation of platforms was characterized by Airbnb and Uber, where the emphasis is on the provision of services, whether in a peer-to-peer or more traditional context [32,33]. The value of this type of platform increases as the number of users involved grows. As a result, the success of P2P platforms is dependent on community members' participation, willingness, and availability to share their assets with others [34].

Given the current number of participants in CC [35] and the positive growth trend for the coming years [36], there has been an increase in interest in understanding the motivations that influence consumers to choose this form of consumption over other alternatives [37–39]. Participation in CC may be influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, which is the topic of this section [40]. Intrinsic behaviors are natural and spontaneous motivations that exist in individuals and serve the primary purpose of achieving pleasant and positive feelings and extrinsic behaviors are those that are performed under duress, are not representative of oneself, and serve an external purpose, such as a reward [41].

CC, in addition to being understood as an environmentally friendly behavior, can have its origins in more individualistic motivations, such as gaining economic benefits [42]. Moreover, there are two major benefits associated with this dimension [43]: i) The user is not required to bear the costs of ownership; ii) CC allows access to resources at a lower cost than traditional alternatives. Accordingly, the literature grounds the third hypothesis of the model:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): *The perception that P2P accommodation platforms are a form of consumption with economic benefits positively influences the motivation to use them.*

Marketers report an increase in market demand for convenience, whether related to transactions, access, or other factors [44]. Although convenience is not a sufficient motivator for customer loyalty, studies show that it is a necessary condition for attracting and retaining customers [45]. Building on existing literature, the model's fourth hypothesis assumes that:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): *The perception that using P2P accommodation platforms is a more convenient form of consumption positively influences the motivation to use them.*

3. Materials and Methods

The study used survey-based research to investigate the demand-side motivations that influence the use of P2P accommodation platforms, in order to better explain the phenomenon of Collaborative Consumption.

The research explored the individual influence of sustainability, sense of community, economic benefits and convenience as motivations to use P2P accommodation platforms. The research methodology involved multiple stages, which can be summarized as follows: (1) conducted a literature review to establish a conceptual model, to formulate hypotheses, and to select the constructs; (2) proposed hypothetical model based on identified variables and relationships; (3) administered a survey using selected constructs and respective measures to collect data; and (4) analyzed data and test hypotheses.

3.1. Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

The study collected data on constructs related to Portuguese participants' motivations to use P2P accommodation platforms identified for verifying the proposed research model and hypotheses. A survey with a seven-point Likert scale was distributed through PC and smartphones. Demographic information was also gathered.

3.2. Measurement

In this study, we observed and analyzed previous studies before selecting variables that were appropriate for the study. Items validated in previous studies were chosen to ensure the content validity of the variable measurement items. The questionnaire was pretested by 10 academics and graduate students, and it was revised to reflect the pretest results and the comments of the respondents. Table 3 lists the variables and measurement items that were used in this study.

Table 3. Survey instruments.

| Construct | Source | Item | Question |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|------|---|
| Sustainability (S) | Hamari et al., 2016 | S1 | P2P accommodation platforms help to save natural resources. |
| | | S2 | P2P accommodation platforms are a sustainable mode of consumption. |
| | | S3 | P2P accommodation platforms are ecological. |
| | | S4 | P2P accommodation platforms are efficient in terms of using energy. |
| | | S5 | P2P accommodation platforms are environmentally friendly. |
| Sense of Community (SC) | Lamberton and Rose (2012) | SC1 | P2P accommodation platforms allow me to be part of a group of liked-minded people. |
| | | SC2 | P2P accommodation platforms allow me to belong to a group of people with similar interests. |

| | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|----|---|
| Economic Benefits | Hamari et al., 2016 | E1 | P2P accommodation platforms benefit me financially. |
| | | E2 | P2P accommodation platforms can improve my economic situation. |
| Convenience (C) | Seiders et al., 2007 | C1 | I can easily determine priori to shopping whether P2P accommodation platforms will offer what I need. |
| | | C2 | I am able to get to P2P accommodation platforms quickly and easily. |
| | | C3 | The merchandise I want at P2P accommodation platforms can be located quickly. |
| | | C4 | I am able to complete my purchase quickly at P2P accommodation platforms. |

4. Results

4.1. Sample Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis of the sample (participants of the survey) revealed that most individuals of user group, 95 (70.4%) were women, 65 (48.1%) from Generation Z, 101 (74.8%) single, and 115 (85.1%) with a higher education. Non-users are mostly women 64 (64%), from generation Z 65 (65.0%), single 81 (81%), and have a high school education 40 (40%). The demographic characteristics of the sample are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 4. Users' demographic information ($n = 135$).

| Item | Details | Frequency | Importance (%) |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 40 | 29.6 |
| | Female | 95 | 70.4 |
| Generational Group | Generation Z | 65 | 48.1 |
| | Millennials | 36 | 26.7 |
| | Generation X | 24 | 17.8 |
| | Baby Boomers | 10 | 7.4 |
| Marital Status | Single | 101 | 74.8 |
| | Married | 25 | 18.5 |
| | Divorced or Widower | 9 | 6.7 |
| | Total | 135 | 100.0 |
| Highest Education | Non-higher education | 20 | 14.8 |
| | Graduation | 49 | 36.3 |
| | Master degree | 45 | 33.3 |
| | Postgraduate | 6 | 4.4 |
| | Doctorate | 15 | 11.1 |
| | Total | 135 | 100.0 |
| Residence | Porto | 101 | 73.0 |
| | Aveiro | 18 | 13.0 |
| | Braga | 8 | 6.0 |
| | Lisboa | 3 | 2.0 |
| | Total | 135 | 100.0 |

Table 5. Non-users' demographic information ($n = 100$).

| Item | Details | Frequency | Importance (%) |
|--------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 36 | 36.0 |
| | Female | 64 | 64.0 |
| | Total | 100 | 100.0 |
| | Generation Z | 65 | 65.0 |

| | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|-----|-------|
| Generational Group | Millennials | 18 | 18.0 |
| | Generation X | 10 | 10.0 |
| | Baby Boomers | 7 | 7.0 |
| | Total | 100 | 100.0 |
| Marital Status | Single | 81 | 81.0 |
| | Married | 25 | 16.0 |
| | Divorced or Widower | 9 | 3.0 |
| | Total | 100 | 100.0 |
| Highest Education | Non-higher education | 40 | 40.0 |
| | Graduation | 28 | 28.0 |
| | Master degree | 18 | 18.0 |
| | Postgraduate | 3 | 3.0 |
| | Doctorate | 11 | 11.0 |
| | Total | 100 | 100.0 |
| Residence | Porto | 71 | 71.0 |
| | Aveiro | 12 | 12.0 |
| | Braga | 4 | 4.0 |
| | Lisboa | 0 | 0.0 |
| | Total | 100 | 100.0 |

4.1. Verification of Reliability and Validity of Measurement Variables

To ensure the rationality of the acquired data and before examining the research hypotheses, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire scale were analyzed. The scale used in this study was developed based on previous studies that passed expert review and therefore possessed high content validity. The reliability coefficients for the measurement items of each variable were calculated using the Reliability Analysis Function in the IBM SPSS Statistics 28 software. Results showed that the overall Cronbach's α value exceeded over 0.8 ($\alpha = 0.852$), indicating a high internal consistency of the scale. An exploratory factor analysis was also conducted using the same software to examine the construct validity of the questionnaire scale. As shown in Table 6, the results of the exploratory factor analysis showed that the KMO coefficient of the overall sample was 0.785, greater than the standard value of 0.7. The probability of significance of Bartlett's sphericity test was infinitely close to 0, which rejects the original hypothesis and validates the questionnaire.

Table 6. Validity test.

| KMO | Coeff. |
|------------------------|----------|
| Approximate chi-square | 1217.252 |
| degree of freedom | 78 |
| Significance | 0.001 |

4.2. Regression Analysis

In this study, the use of P2P accommodation platforms was selected as the dependent variable and sustainability, sense of community, economic benefits, and convenience as the independent variables to verify the research hypotheses. A multiple linear regression model was chosen to analyze the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

The regression analysis in Table 7, shows that sustainability has a significant effect on motivating the use of P2P accommodation platforms ($p < 0.01$), which validates Hypothesis H1. It indicates that sustainability is an important determinants of consumer behavior, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies. In addition, the sense of community is also an important factor for consumers to use P2P accommodation platforms, which validates H2 as well. Economic benefits and convenience have also a significant effect on the motivation to use P2P accommodation platforms, which validates hypotheses H3 and H4, respectively. So, the independent variables fully explain the variation in Motivation to use P2P accommodation platforms.

Table 7. Description of statistical analysis.

| Independent Variable | Regression Coefficient | Standard Deviation | Standard Regression Coefficient | p-Value | VIF |
|----------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------|-------|
| (Constant) | -2.941 | 0.004 | | 0.000 | |
| Sustainability | 0.234 | 0.001 | 0.579 | 0.000 | 1.520 |
| Sense of Community | 0.083 | 0.001 | 0.243 | 0.000 | 1.531 |
| Economic Benefits | 0.093 | 0.001 | 0.225 | 0.000 | 1.197 |
| Convenience | 0.0364 | 0.001 | 0.421 | 0.000 | 1.209 |

Dependent Variable: use of P2P accommodation platforms.

Moreover, the analysis of the standard regression coefficients shows that Sustainability ($\beta = 0.579$) is the most which has more height on the dependent variable followed by Convenience ($\beta = 0.421$). However, all the variables show to influence consumer attitude and intention to use

4.3. Discussion

Based on the analysis results, regarding the motivations, sustainability ($\beta = 0.579$) and convenience ($\beta = 0.421$) are the ones that most influence consumer attitude and intention to use. These impact directions reinforce what existing literature presents [46], implying that the use of online platforms may be motivated by environmental concerns and a desire for more sustainable consumption. Convenience is the second motivation that most contributes to the use of the platforms under analysis. In other words, after the sustainability construct, it is the fact that consumers perceive that this form of consumption reduces the time and effort required to meet a need, which makes them opt for it. (Seiders et al., 2007). The third motivation that most influences the use of these P2P platforms is a sense of belonging. Although social change has created a greater need for interaction, both online and offline, this is not of high value in the use of these platforms, which can be justified by the fact that interactions within them are optional. That is, when using P2P Lodging Platforms, the user can choose a side in which the residence is not shared with other guests or hosts, and in these cases, there is no interaction, and thus the Feeling of Belonging is not associated with this type of consumption. Economic benefits are the motivation that has the least impact on the use of P2P accommodation platforms. Contrary to what Hamari et al. (2016) argue, the choice for forms of collaborative consumption is not influenced by rational reasons related to financial gains in this sample. This conclusion is unexpected, allowing us to realize that, while this mode of consumption may be more cost-effective than traditional alternatives, this is not what conditions its use. As Dredge (2015) mentioned, the current tourist is interested in having a unique and personalized experience, making the economic dimension less valued than in previous studies.

5. Conclusions and Implications

P2P markets and the CC have recently risen in popularity. The spread of CC-related business models incorporating successful organizations such as Uber or Airbnb has piqued the academic community's interest. Given the scarcity of available literature, little is known about the factors that influence the use of P2P accommodation platforms. As a result, the scientific community is still debating the concepts of SE and CC (Belk, 2014; Botsman and Rogers, 2011). Thus, the goal of this research is to contribute to this debate over the definitions of the two concepts by examining the motivations of CC model consumers who use P2P accommodation platforms from the demand side.

The recognition that sustainability and convenience are the dimensions with the greatest relative weight in the overall motivation to join CC showing that the decision to use it is influenced by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Then, managers involved in CC must ensure certain factors to foster and maintain successful operations: (1) assuring social and environmental responsibility, encouraging and promoting sustainable practices within the platforms, such as supporting eco-friendly options, encouraging responsible consumption, and addressing issues like waste reduction or carbon footprint; (2) allowing a smooth and user-friendly experience on the

platforms. For example, facilitating effective communication channels between the parties and optimizing the booking to be quick and hassle-free, a seamless booking process.

The present study has several limitations that suggest the need for future research. The first limitation is the use of a convenience sample, which could restrict the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, although the motivations chosen for the study are supported by the literature, other motivations such as trust (Mohlmann, 2015), experience (Moeller & Wittkowski, 2010, Botsman & Rogers, 2011 and Hamari et al., 2016) and quality (Mohlmann, 2015) could also be examined. Another limitation is that the study only considered user motivations from the demand side, which could limit a complete understanding of how motivations influence both sides of the market. Future research could address these limitations by examining the impact of the aforementioned motivations on the supply side as well as through a comparative study to explore whether there are differences in motivation between consumers who use P2P platforms where the acquisition and distribution of a given resource occurs in exchange for payment (e.g., Airbnb) and those whose exchange occurs without any compensation (e.g., Couchsurfing). Additionally, comparing the outcomes of the accommodation sector with another sector and between different cultures could provide valuable insights into the effects of demographic characteristics and motivations on use and consumption.

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