

DO THI MAI DOAN THUC

**AIRBNB STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS AND
BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS: THE CASE OF
AIRBNB IN VIETNAM**



UNIVERSITY OF ALGARVE

Faculty of Economics

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Ph.D. in Tourism

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AIRBNB STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS: THE CASE OF AIRBNB IN VIETNAM

Ph.D. in Tourism

Statement of originality

I declare that this thesis is my original work and it has not been published. The authors and their works, and other documents were consulted and properly cited in this thesis which are listed in the list of references.

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**“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”
Nelson Mandela**

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ABSTRACT

Research on Airbnb accommodation providers and consumers' perception and behavioral intention has received much scholarly attention within the sharing economy literature in the recent decade. From the literature on consumer side, despite growing interest in studying the effect of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on Airbnb customers' perception and behavioral intentions through online review mining techniques, limited Airbnb related research was conducted as an empirical study to provide insight into how Airbnb customers with different personal characteristics adopt eWOM, and what are the drivers of their intention to spread positive WOM after the stay experience. In addition, it is worth noting that this study overlapped with the period of the global pandemic, COVID-19 - which has impacted this short-term rental platform seriously, however, less is known about Airbnb customers' eWOM adoption process and Airbnb hosts' decision making process in a health-related crisis. Moreover, the large proportion of the existing studies focus on the matured Airbnb markets, while cultural and situational factors were found to hold a great importance on influencing Airbnb stakeholders' perception and their subsequent behaviours. Thus, this study aims to explore the perception and eWOM related behavioral intentions of Airbnb consumers; and to study the antecedents of Airbnb hosts' continuance intention with the sharing platform in an emerging sharing economy market – Vietnam, especially in the setting of the global pandemic.

Guided by the positivism paradigm, this research is a combination of four scientific papers which tend to achieve the aforementioned general objectives. More specifically, the first paper of this study utilized the Cognitive appraisal – Emotional response – Coping Behaviour model to re-examine the most commonly confirmed antecedents of consumers' perceived values towards Airbnb and broadening the comprehension of how these perceived value affect Vietnamese Airbnb consumers' satisfactions, and electronic and traditional word-of-mouth ((e)WOM) intention. The findings confirmed the significant role of perceived functional benefits, monetary values, and hedonic benefits on encouraging Airbnb consumers' positive (e)WOM intention directly or indirectly via satisfaction with their stay experience. Results also revealed that the relationships among social interaction, novelty, sustainability, and customer satisfaction were not significant in the Vietnamese Airbnb market. These contradictory findings provide stronger evidence on the critical influence of cultural values in Airbnb customers' perception and behavioral intentions. Moreover, the novelty of this study lies in the confirmation of the impact of traditional WOM intention on eWOM intention from the message

communicators' perspective, in which this finding has not been discussed until now in any research context.

Second, through extending the Stimuli – Organism – Response model, the next paper of this research expands our understanding of the determinants of Airbnb customer loyalty beyond the well-established contribution of customer satisfaction, since it identified the influential role of perceived enjoyment on Airbnb customers' intention to spread positive comments towards this accommodation sharing platform. Moreover, the theoretical contribution of this study is also related to the investigation of the moderating role of Airbnb customers' sociodemographic and tripographic characteristics in the associations among perceived enjoyment, its antecedents (home benefits, social interaction, authenticity and monetary value) and consequences (eWOM intention). The results revealed that these relationships remain unchanged among the different groups of customers, except business travellers, which offer a foundation for the empirical comprehension of this emerging Airbnb target market segment. To achieve the research objectives of the first two studies, an online survey-based questionnaire using a non-probabilistic sampling method was applied to collect data on a sample of Vietnamese customers who had experienced Airbnb accommodation within a year before the period of data collection. A total of 352 questionnaires were collected, from which 163 and 162 eligible Airbnb users in Studies 1 and 2 respectively were retained for data analysis by the application of the Partial Least Square approach to SEM (PLS-SEM).

Third, guided by the conclusion of customers' distinct eWOM adoption in the literature, this part of the research aims to provide an empirical evidence on explaining the contradictory findings regarding the effect of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' behavioral intentions through considering the moderating role of consumers' sense of power and perceived psychological risk towards COVID-19. Furthermore, this work also takes into account the importance of cultural differences in Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions by carrying out a cross-national study among Italy, Portugal and Vietnam. More particularly, this study expanded the Model of Goal directed Behavior (MGB) to investigate how eWOM influences Airbnb existing and prospective customers' desire to book Airbnb accommodation indirectly through attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, anticipated emotions, and trust in hosts which consequently lead to their purchase intention. In order to test the proposed hypotheses, an electronic survey was conducted in these three countries which resulted in a total sample of 1,849 respondents (including 1,146 Italian, 262 Portuguese and 441 Vietnamese Airbnb users

and non-users). Airbnb non-users are defined as those who are aware of the Airbnb platform but have never experienced it before. The collected data were later analysed by also using PLS-SEM. The findings found the different moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in Airbnb customers' eWOM adoption process across these three research contexts, which confirmed the significance of cultural and situation factors in studying eWOM and Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions. Furthermore, desire to book the shared accommodation was found as the most influential factor in customers' purchase intention, which confirmed the suitability of the MGB in studying Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions in the uncertain situation brought by a global pandemic.

Fourth, the final part of this research shifts the focus to Airbnb accommodation service provider – Airbnb hosts in order to examine the antecedents of their continuance intention with the platform during the COVID-19 pandemic. Airbnb hosts are usually considered as micro-entrepreneurs that are not professionally trained in hotel management. Grounded on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), this study proposes a conceptual framework integrating TPB constructs including Airbnb hosts' attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control, and a dedication-based factor, so called trust towards Airbnb to study their loyalty intention along with the moderating effect of Superhost badge on the modeled relationships. A sample of 160 Vietnamese Airbnb hosts was observed through an electronic survey and data were later analyzed with PLS-SEM. Findings showed that Airbnb hosts' attitude, perceived behavioral control and trust towards Airbnb significantly impact their intent to continue listing the assets on the platform. Last but not least, findings confirmed the existence of the moderating role of Airbnb hosts' status in their decision-making process during an unprecedented pandemic. Thus, this study subsequently enriches the literature on the accommodation sharing industry from the lens of different types of accommodation service providers and contributes to advancing the theory in the field of micro-entrepreneurs' response towards crises.

This research provides practical implications in two specific ways. First, the findings of this study shed light on Airbnb platform management and Airbnb hosts's understanding of Vietnamese Airbnb customers' perceived values, their perception towards the shared accommodation and subsequent eWOM related behavioral intentions. Second, these results also support the platform management company and local authorities in setting up effective management strategies to reduce Airbnb guests and hosts' perceived risks of the crisis, enhance

their mutual trusts and trust towards the platform which finally increase their satisfaction and loyalty in the setting of COVID-19 or similar crises in future.

Keywords: Airbnb consumers, perceived value, satisfaction, eWOM, Airbnb hosts, trust, continuance intention, Vietnam.

RESUMO

A investigação sobre a percepção e a intenção comportamental dos consumidores e dos fornecedores de alojamento através do Airbnb tem vindo a receber uma acrescida atenção dos académicos na literatura da economia colaborativa, na última década. Apesar do crescente interesse no estudo do efeito do “boca a boca” *online* (eWOM) na percepção dos clientes do Airbnb e nas suas intenções comportamentais através de técnicas de mineração de avaliações *online*, a literatura com enfoque nos consumidores revela que ainda são limitados os estudos relacionados com o Airbnb, sobretudo estudos empíricos que forneçam informação sobre como os clientes do Airbnb com diferentes características pessoais adotam o eWOM e quais são as motivações para a sua intenção de divulgarem um “boca a boca” (WOM) positivo após a experiência de estadia. Além disso, é importante notar que este estudo coincidiu com o período da pandemia global de COVID-19 – a qual impactou seriamente esta plataforma de aluguer de alojamento de curta duração, pelo que pouco se sabe sobre o processo de adoção do eWOM dos clientes do Airbnb e acerca do processo de tomada de decisão dos anfitriões do Airbnb no contexto de uma crise de saúde pública. Há ainda a salientar que a grande parte dos estudos existentes se concentra nos mercados do Airbnb maduros, nos quais fatores culturais e de contexto têm uma grande importância na influência da percepção das partes interessadas do Airbnb e dos seus comportamentos subsequentes. Assim, este estudo tem como objetivo explorar a percepção e as intenções comportamentais relacionadas com o eWOM dos consumidores do Airbnb; e estudar os antecedentes da intenção dos anfitriões do Airbnb continuarem na plataforma de partilha num mercado emergente de economia colaborativa – o Vietname, nomeadamente no cenário da pandemia global.

Guiada pelo paradigma positivista, esta investigação resulta de uma combinação de quatro artigos científicos que procuram alcançar os objetivos gerais acima mencionados. Mais especificamente, o primeiro artigo deste estudo utiliza o modelo *Cognitive Appraisal – Emotional Response – Coping Behavior* para reexaminar os antecedentes mais comumente confirmados como valores percebidos dos consumidores em relação ao Airbnb e ampliar a compreensão de como esses valores influenciam a satisfação e a intenção “boca a boca” *online* e tradicional ((e)WOM) dos consumidores vietnamitas do Airbnb. Os resultados confirmaram o papel significativo dos benefícios funcionais, dos valores monetários e dos benefícios hedónicos percebidos em encorajarem diretamente a intenção de um (e)WOM positivo dos

consumidores do Airbnb, ou indiretamente através da satisfação com a sua experiência de estadia. Os resultados também mostraram que as relações entre interação social, novidade, sustentabilidade e a satisfação do cliente não são significativas no mercado vietnamita do Airbnb. Esses resultados contraditórios fornecem evidências mais fortes sobre a influência crítica dos valores culturais na percepção e nas intenções comportamentais dos clientes do Airbnb. Além disso, a novidade deste estudo reside na confirmação do impacto da intenção do WOM na intenção do eWOM na perspectiva dos comunicadores de mensagens, o qual é um resultado que ainda não foi discutido até agora em nenhum contexto de pesquisa.

Em segundo lugar, através da extensão do modelo *Stimuli – Organism – Response*, o próximo artigo desta investigação expande a nossa compreensão acerca dos determinantes da lealdade dos clientes do Airbnb, para além da bem conhecida contribuição da satisfação do cliente, uma vez que identificou o papel determinante do prazer percebido dos clientes do Airbnb na sua intenção de espalharem comentários positivos sobre esta plataforma de partilha de alojamento. Além disso, a contribuição teórica deste estudo está também relacionada com a investigação do papel moderador das características sociodemográficas e tripografias dos clientes do Airbnb na associação entre o prazer percebido, os seus antecedentes (benefícios da casa, interação social, autenticidade e valor monetário) e as suas consequências (intenção do eWOM). Os resultados revelaram que essas relações permanecem inalteradas entre os diferentes grupos de clientes, exceto nos turistas de negócios, os quais oferecem uma base para a compreensão empírica deste segmento de mercado emergente do Airbnb. Para atingir os objetivos da investigação nos dois primeiros estudos, foi aplicado um inquérito eletrónico por questionário, usando um método de amostragem não probabilístico, para recolher dados de uma amostra de clientes vietnamitas que haviam experimentado um alojamento reservado através do Airbnb no período de até um ano antes do momento de recolha de dados. Foi observada uma amostra de 352 indivíduos, dos quais 163 eram utilizadores elegíveis para o estudo, os quais foram retidos para a análise de dados. A análise de dados foi realizada através da aplicação do Modelo de Equações Estruturais de Mínimos Quadrados Parciais (PLS-SEM).

A terceira parte desta investigação, guiada pela evidência da literatura que os clientes adotam o eWOM de forma distinta, pretende fornecer uma evidência empírica para explicar as descobertas contraditórias sobre o efeito do eWOM nas intenções comportamentais dos consumidores do Airbnb, considerando o papel moderador da sensação de poder e risco psicológico percebido pelos consumidores em relação ao COVID-19. Além disso, este

trabalho também tem em consideração a importância das diferenças culturais nas intenções comportamentais dos clientes do Airbnb, através da realização de um estudo transnacional em Itália, Portugal e Vietname. Mais especificamente, este estudo expandiu o *Model of Goal directed Behavior* (MGB) para investigar como o eWOM influencia o desejo dos clientes, atuais e potenciais do Airbnb, em reservarem alojamentos através do Airbnb, de forma indireta através da atitude, das normas subjetivas, do controlo comportamental percebido, das emoções antecipadas e da confiança nos anfitriões que, conseqüentemente, levam à sua intenção de compra. Para testar as hipóteses propostas, foi realizado um inquérito eletrónico por questionário nesses três países, no qual foi observada uma amostra total de 1.849 respondentes (incluindo 1.146 italianos, 262 portugueses e 441 vietnamitas utilizadores e não utilizadores do Airbnb). Os não utilizadores do Airbnb são definidos como os indivíduos que conhecem a plataforma do Airbnb, mas nunca a experimentaram. Os dados recolhidos foram posteriormente analisados também pelo PLS-SEM. Os resultados revelaram a existência de um papel moderador diferente segundo a sensação de poder e de risco psicológico no processo de adoção do eWOM dos clientes do Airbnb nesses três contextos de pesquisa, o que confirmou a importância dos fatores culturais e de contexto no estudo do eWOM e das intenções comportamentais dos clientes do Airbnb. Além disso, o desejo de reservar alojamento partilhado foi identificado como sendo o fator mais influente na intenção de compra dos clientes, o que confirmou a adequação do MGB em estudar as intenções comportamentais dos clientes do Airbnb.

Em quarto lugar, a parte final desta investigação muda o foco para o fornecedor de serviços de alojamento através do Airbnb – anfitriões do Airbnb, com o objetivo de investigar os antecedentes da sua intenção de continuarem na plataforma durante a pandemia de COVID-19. Os anfitriões do Airbnb são geralmente considerados como microempreendedores que não são formados profissionalmente em gestão de alojamentos. Com base na *Theory of Planned Behavior* (TPB), este estudo propõe uma estrutura conceitual que integra os construtos da TPB, incluindo a atitude dos anfitriões do Airbnb, as normas subjetivas e o controlo comportamental percebido, e um fator baseado em dedicação, denominado confiança em relação ao Airbnb, para estudar a sua intenção de lealdade com o efeito moderador do selo Superhost nos relacionamentos modelados. Uma amostra de 160 anfitriões vietnamitas do Airbnb foi observada através de um inquérito eletrónico por questionário e os dados foram posteriormente analisados através do PLS-SEM. Os resultados mostraram que a atitude dos anfitriões do Airbnb, o controlo comportamental percebido e a confiança em relação ao Airbnb

influenciam significativamente a sua intenção de continuarem a alugar os seus alojamentos na plataforma. Por último, mas não menos importante, os resultados confirmaram a existência do papel moderador do estatuto dos anfitriões do Airbnb no seu processo de tomada de decisão durante uma pandemia sem precedentes. Assim, este estudo também enriquece a literatura acerca da indústria de partilha de alojamento sob a ótica de diferentes tipos de prestadores de serviços de alojamento e contribui para o avanço da teoria no campo da resposta dos microempresários a crises.

Este estudo também fornece implicações práticas em duas vertentes específicas. Em primeiro lugar, os resultados deste estudo abrem novos caminhos na gestão da plataforma Airbnb, tendo em consideração a compreensão dos fornecedores de serviços de alojamento sobre os valores percebidos dos clientes vietnamitas do Airbnb, a sua percepção em relação ao alojamento partilhado e subseqüentes intenções comportamentais relacionadas com o eWOM. Em segundo lugar, esses resultados contribuem também para apoiarem a empresa de gestão da plataforma e as autoridades locais na definição de estratégias de gestão eficazes para reduzir os riscos de crise percebidos pelos hóspedes e anfitriões do Airbnb, aumentando a sua confiança mútua e a confiança em relação à plataforma, o que, por sua vez, aumentará a sua satisfação e lealdade no cenário de COVID-19 ou em crises semelhantes no futuro.

Palavras-chave: consumidores do Airbnb, valor percebido, satisfação, eWOM, anfitriões do Airbnb, confiança, intenção de continuidade, Vietname.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research background and overview

Tourism is one of the driving forces of global economic growth and accounts for 10.3% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) which makes it one of the largest economic sectors worldwide until the end of 2019 (WTTC, 2019). The boost of the tourism industry has impacted positively the multi-faced perspectives in the country including employment opportunities and economic development, infrastructure improvement, limitation of urban relocation by creating local jobs which can improve quality of life and health, promotion of traditional art works, international friendship enhancement, pride of the local people and the growth of their awareness towards environmental issues (Rukuiziene, 2014).

However, starting by the end of 2019, the worldwide society and economic management had experienced an unprecedented exogenous shock caused by the severe pandemic of COVID-19 (GDA, 2020). There is no doubt that the tourism sector and its vulnerable groups are among the hardest hit compared to others (UNWTO, 2020), as Okumus and Karamustafa (2005) stated that tourism is affected by many external factors, including political instability, economic elasticity, the environment and weather. To decelerate the progression of pandemic flu by decreasing the influx of travelers from the infected areas, countries applied travel restrictions such as banning international flights. A robust decline in tourism demand as a consequence of lockdowns and border closures caused approximately 62 million travel and tourism related job losses and contributed only 5.3% to global GDP in 2020 – an enormous fall of 18.6% in number of jobs and 50.4% in its contribution to GDP compared to the pre-pandemic era. Due to the effort of countries in boosting COVID-19 vaccination coverage, these figures were more slightly optimistic in 2021, for example, the contribution of the travel and tourism sector to the global economy grew by 21.7% and an increase of 18.2 millions jobs. In 2022, the lift up of travel restrictions from many countries together with the enhancement of travellers' confidence, the global travel and tourism sector is expected to accelerate its pace of recovery to 43.7% compared to the previous year (WTTC, 2022).

Being one of the main service providers in the tourism product's supply chain, accommodation plays an important role in fostering the tourism industry and also ensuring

tourists' overall experience and satisfaction. While traditional accommodation businesses have still been developing rapidly to catch up with tourism growth, which many are not realized in the world of sustainability (Jones et al., 2014), a sharing economy business model where “smarter systems, smarter people, smarter designs and smarter businesses” will prevail (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2010, p.5). A sharing economy, or also known as peer-to-peer (P2P) economy, is defined as a “peer-to-peer based-activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services” (Ma et al., 2020, p.77). The creation of online platforms have made sharing transactions much more convenient and easier than ever, as these technology platforms facilitate systems to match service providers and customers more effectively (Eckhardt et al., 2019). Particularly, according to Allen (2015), customers easily utilize these online platforms to access the sharing economy, though the platform management companies do not own the assets such as cars, houses, or working tools; what they possess is the platform and the algorithms that support matching potential individual sellers and buyers. The sharing objects are more varied from intangible (i.e. knowledge and space) to tangible resources and assets (i.e., accommodation, tools and cars) for free or with a fee (Eckhardt et al., 2019). This type of sharing has been applied in various areas of social and economic activity, however, tourism is clearly found as one of the sectors most impacted (European Parliament, 2017). Scholars in the tourism and hospitality field argued that the sharing economy will largely change the future of the hospitality industry (Tussyadiah & Park, 2018).

An outstanding example of a sharing economy is a platform where people can list and book short-term accommodation -Airbnb. Starting operations in 2008 in San Francisco, Airbnb has been listed in Nasdaq since 2020 and currently has more than 7 millions listings which are located in over 100,000 cities in 220 countries and regions (Nasdaq, 2022; Stratosjets, 2022). Sharing accommodation is undoubtedly less resource consuming than the traditional accommodation service providers, which consequently creates positive impacts in terms of environmental dimension in sustainability (Zvolska, 2015). Its advocates judged that the platform has provided benefits to both tourists and the hosts through easy access to a wide range of choices that are often of high quality, more affordable, more authentic and environmentally friendly (European Parliament, 2017). In contrast, others claimed that Airbnb provides unequal competition with the traditional hotels, reduces job security, avoids government taxes and poses a threat to safety, health and disability compliance standards (European Parliament, 2017). The key users in Airbnb platform are service consumers (guests)

and service providers (hosts). Airbnb hosts are recognized as micro-entrepreneurs who enjoy the feelings of freedom, flexibility, achievement and personal growth (Zhang et al., 2019). The competitive advantages of Airbnb over traditional accommodations are renowned as providing authentic and unique experiences, though hosts are not educated, professional and experienced in hospitality management. Botsman and Rogers (2010) stated that commercial sharing platforms need to encourage enough both service-sharing users and suppliers to be sustainably successful.

The rapid development of Airbnb has led to an emerging body of literature examining the factors that motivate or constrain users from engaging in Airbnb. From the consumer side, monetary value, home benefits, sustainability, authenticity, novelty, social interaction, and functional benefits are the major motivational factors which influence a customer's decision to adopt Airbnb; while distrust, unfamiliarity, insecurity, and perceived risks are the main constraints (e.g. Cheng & Jin, 2019; Guttentag et al., 2018; Guttentag, 2015, 2016; Tussyadial, 2015; So et al., 2018; So et al., 2021; Tussyadiah & Zach, 2017). From the providers' perspective, Zhang et al. (2019) found eight motivations that encourage Airbnb hosts' microentrepreneurial activities, including: social value, financial benefits, cultural value, ease of operation, idle resources, freedom, flexibility, and excitement. On the contrary, there are correlations between hosts' perceived risks and their behavioral responses of satisfaction, and continuance intention to use or to recommend this business to others (Olya & Alipour, 2018). These perceived risks refer to service risks, financial risks, psychological risks, safety and security risks, and political risks. However, the vast majority of research about sharing economy being limited to developed countries, while existing cross-cultural research with Airbnb users revealed that customers' perception and behavior may be culturally-driven (e.g. Davidson et al., 2018; Tran et al., 2022; Xi et al., 2021).

It is worth noting that this study period overlaps with the global pandemic – COVID-19. Relating to tourism and crisis research, according to Cushnahan (2004), crisis management in the tourism industry does intentionally focus on large corporations such as chain hotels, airlines, and tour companies, while small and medium-sized businesses which usually known as having lack of resources, are a small business, or have limited knowledge and experience are more vulnerable to crisis impact. Needless to say, many small and micro firms went to premature business closure. Moreover, response and recovery strategies are likely to be distinctive according to the nature, scale, type and impact of the crisis or disaster. A review on

crisis related research shows that the large majority of research has been focused on crisis management from a supply side perspective in developed countries (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2004), while crisis management from the consumers' perspective has received little attention (Vassilikopoulou et al., 2009). Scholars believe that this worldwide crisis may have changed the customers' behaviors and attitudes, as it has already happened in previous pandemic crises (Chuo, 2014; Lee & Chen, 2011; Lee et al., 2012).

In relation to accommodation sharing platforms, this health-related crisis has inarguably triggered an unprecedented shock to the P2P accommodation market (Dolnicar & Zare, 2020). Moreover, Airbnb was also claimed as lacking strategic thinking in effectively responding towards the crisis (Carpenter, 2020). Thus, Airbnb has been witnessing a significant loss of number of hosts and listings resulting from failing to provide sufficient support to hosts (AirDNA, 2020). At the same time, researchers also confirmed that the COVID-19 pandemic has not only imposed new dynamics regarding the structures of shared accommodations on the one side, but also the choices, needs, necessities and uses of customers on the other side (Gossling et al., 2021). Hence, this study also takes the pandemic into account to understand Airbnb consumers and service providers' perception and their decision - making process in the severe situation of a global health related crisis, which can be considered as one of the critical strategies in crisis response and recovery for Airbnb platform management in order to continue their sustainable success.

Vietnam can be deemed as an interesting case to study tourism crisis management, and particularly, Airbnb in the crisis for the following reasons. First, the tourism industry has been promoted as a key driver of the country's economic growth in the past decade. In the pre-pandemic, the number of international tourists to Vietnam increased by an average of 22.7% per year between 2015 and 2019 (Tourist Information Center, 2020). More particularly, the country attracted more than 18 million international tourists and 85 million domestic visitors in 2019, which made Vietnam being ranked at sixth out of the top 10 fastest-growing tourism industries globally (Tuan, 2020). Second, though the Vietnamese government's response towards the COVID-19 pandemic has been recognized as effective strategies by the world leaders, the applied travel restrictions has resulted in a sharp decrease in the number of international visitors in 2020 and 2021, with approximately 3,8 million and 0,16 millions tourist arrivals to Vietnam, respectively (VNAT, 2021). Third, among travel business sectors,

accommodation was the most affected segment and accommodation sharing platform – Airbnb is not an exception.

With respect to the development of Airbnb in Vietnam, the platform started its business in 2015 with over one thousand listings (My My, 2019). However, Vietnam was rapidly listed as the global Airbnb top – growing destination in 2017 with an increase of 212% and 255% in terms of the booking rate in Hanoi and Danang – two of the biggest cities in Vietnam, respectively (Vietnam Economic Times, 2018). In early 2020, the platform had over 80,000 listings, which later gradually declined due to the COVID-19 (My My, 2019). More than 18,000 Vietnamese hosts listed their accommodations on Airbnb with nearly 50% of them providing private rooms and 47% offering entire apartments. The majority of Vietnamese Airbnb hosts hold multiple listings (69%) because they believe that renting out the accommodations for short-term stays generates 20-50% higher revenue than long-term rental contracts (Vietnamnet Global, 2019). Notably, the dominant markets for Airbnb in Vietnam are foreign tourists which accounted for 84% of Airbnb guests in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi (VnExpress, 2019). The heavy reliance of the business on the inbound tourists has underscored the negative impact of the pandemic on the operation of Airbnb in Vietnam, since the country closed down its international borders in March 2020 to control the outbreak of the virus. Thus, to be able to survive during this health related crisis, many hosts sold their assets, while other hosts diversified their business strategies, such as listing their accommodations in other types of platforms such as Booking.com, or promoting their services to domestic visitors (Nguyen & Van, 2021).

There is very little research investigating Airbnb service consumers and providers in Vietnam. Exceptionally, Nguyen (2020) studied the factors influencing Airbnb booking intention among Vietnamese millennials travelers. His study confirmed that perceived usefulness, ease to use, price transparency, ratings and attitudes toward Airbnb are the influential factors in Airbnb booking intentions, of which perceived usefulness is the most significant determinant. Other studies are from Tran and Filimonau (2020) which explored the (de)motivation factors in choosing Airbnb in Vietnam through a comparison of the existing and potential Airbnb users' perception; and an investigation of the general impact of COVID-19 on Airbnb in Vietnam (Nguyen & Van, 2021). Therefore, a study with a comprehensive combination of influential factors in explaining Vietnamese Airbnb stakeholders' perception and attitudinal and behavioral loyalty in a global pandemic is essential to sustain the business

of this sharing platform. Attitudinal loyalty refers to the likelihood of customers' intention to recommend a product, brand, or service to others (Bloemer & De Ruyter, 1999), while behavioral loyalty can be manifested in their purchase or repurchase intention. Moon et al. (2019) found that Airbnb hosts and guests perceive the interaction differently during the transactions, which consequently impact their satisfaction, recommendation intention, and usage continuance intentions distinctly, which urge the need of understanding these two key stakeholders' perceptions and behavioral intentions.

Due to a significant heterogeneity of Airbnb properties and hosts and limited information regarding its quality prior to consumption, Airbnb customers attach great importance to the external signals such as online customer reviews in their accommodation booking process (Ert et al., 2016; Viglia et al., 2016). In a research about Airbnb customers in Malaysia, scholars concluded that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has the biggest impact on customer's intention towards using Airbnb (Chin et al., 2019). EWOM is defined as any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or a company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet (Hennig – Thurau et al., 2004). That is the reason why the two core advertising channels that Airbnb has been using to achieve consumer acquisition are online advertising and word-of-mouth (WOM). Thus, gaining a holistic comprehension of the determinants which encourage Airbnb existing consumers spreading positive (e)WOM is undoubtedly critical for Airbnb service providers and management.

Prior studies have mainly focused on investigating the relationships between motivation, perceived security and customers' attitude, which act as the antecedents of their loyalty intentions toward Airbnb (e.g. So et al., 2021; Yang & Ahn, 2016). Nonetheless, according to Li et al. (2021) and Stollery and Jun (2017), the concept of customer perceived value in Airbnb literature is relatively unexplored, which leads to contradictory and inconclusive findings concerning the relationship between Airbnb customers' perceived value and their loyalty intentions (e.g. An et al., 2019; Meng & Cui, 2020; Tajeddini et al., 2022). Furthermore, with respect to research on customer loyalty, the vast majority of articles studied Airbnb consumers' repurchase intention (Liang et al., 2018; Mohlmann, 2015; So et al., 2021; Wang & Jeong, 2018). Considering the influential role of (e)WOM in retaining the existing Airbnb customers and attracting more potential ones, further studies which uncover

the various antecedents of review-writing behavior to develop feasible eWOM strategies are called by King et al. (2014).

EWOM giving intention means consumers using technology to share their opinion or experience after using a product or service. Extant literature affirmed that satisfaction with the service experience act as a direct effect on triggering customers' (e)WOM intentions and also a significant mediator between the perceived value and this subsequent behavioral intention (e.g. El-Aldy, 2019; Jeong and Jang, 2011; Tussyadhiad & Zach, 2017). Nonetheless, the eWOM literature in the setting of the sharing economy still has some missing gaps which are worthwhile for a deeper investigation. First, a consideration of traditional and electronic word-of-mouth giving intentions as two separate constructs in a single integrated framework and their possible interlinkage have been ignored in existing studies. Findings from Do et al. (2019) study concluded the impact of traditional WOM on eWOM from the perspective of message receivers, which consequently raises an interesting concern "Does this confirmed relationship hold true from the message communicator's side?". Until now, there is still not any study approaching this question. Second, previous studies confirmed the influence of customers' social demographics and trip characteristics on shaping how customers' value perception towards a hospitality service affects their emotions and behavioral intentions distinctly (e.g. Han & Ryu, 2006; Poon & Huang, 2017). Nonetheless, the different influential levels of these variables in customers' perceived values, emotional response and (e)WOM intentions toward P2P accommodations still remain unclear. Last but not least, the strength of the Stimulus – Organism – Response (S-O-R) model in figuring the essential of external factors has been less frequently used to examine the relationships between P2P accommodation users' cognitive states, emotions and their subsequent actions (Mody et al., 2017; So et al., 2021., Xu & Gursoy, 2020)

Regarding literature on the impact of eWOM on consumer behavioral intentions, Chuo (2014) called for further investigation of interpersonal influence between various eWOM networks in consumer's risk attitude change in the context of a health crisis. The vast majority of existing research confirmed the significant influence of eWOM in consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism industry in general (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014; Filieri et al., 2015), or in Airbnb platform in particularly (Chin et al., 2019; Cui et al., 2019). For instance, positive online reviews and ratings enhance visibility for Airbnb listings, foster confidence in customers to use Airbnb accommodations

frequently through reducing risk and ambiguity (Bridges & Vasquez, 2018; Kwok et al., 2020). Nonetheless, potential customers process and use the online review differently which can be explained by the dissimilarity of customers' culture and characteristics (e.g. Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020; Sher & Lee, 2009; Tapanainen et al., 2021). One of the customer's demographic characteristics - sense of power, which refers to social status, income, age and gender was confirmed to play a critical role in various hospitality settings (Tucker, 2014). Powerful customers are likely to be more optimistic of risk, are action – oriented and have an illusion of personal control over the results, whereas their powerless counterparts are more sensitive to risk and are inhibition – oriented (Anderson & Galinski, 2006, Fast et al., 2009), which might lead customers to different reactions towards eWOM. Moreover, according to the literature review of the motivational factors in travelers' adoption of online reviews, Technology acceptance model (TAM) and Theory of planned behavior (TPB) are most commonly used to study the relationship between eWOM and customer behavioral intentions (e.g. Assaker, 2020; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Lee et al., 2021; Tapanainen et al., 2021). Some researchers criticized these theories because they only comprise the rational and non-violational variables, while emotional factors are found to be the utmost important determinants in travelers' decision making process during the pandemic (e.g. Wang et al., 2021)

To overcome this limit, this thesis proposes the Model of Goal Directed Behavior (MGB) which includes not only rational, but also emotional and motivational factors to holistically study the role of eWOM in enhancing Airbnb customers' booking intention. Additionally, little is known about how consumers' perception and behavioral intentions differ according to their level of sense of power or risk perception (e.g. Liu & Mattila, 2017). Although these studies have emphasized the role of these constructs in consumer behavior, the moderating nature of sense of power and psychological risks in the linkages among eWOM and its consequences have not been investigated conceptually, particularly in the accommodation sharing sector during the global pandemic. For this reason, this thesis approaches this research gap, especially in the consideration of cultural differences among the three countries, namely Italy, Portugal and Vietnam. Hofstede (1993) proposed five dimensions to identify cultural differences and to investigate cross-cultural consumer behaviors, namely: power distance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, uncertainty avoidance, and long/short-term orientation. In this scenario, Vietnam, Portugal and Italy appear to be three interesting contexts to be investigated, given the relevant cultural differences that exist among them, and that might potentially cause their different responses toward online reviews from

other customers. For example, Portuguese registered a high “Uncertainty avoidance” score (99) in comparison to Italy (75) and Vietnam (30), meaning that Portuguese might be less optimistic of risk when compared to counterparts (Hofstede, 2022).

Beside the important role of existing and potential customers, to be able to compete with traditional shopping, there must be enough choice that the customers feel satisfied with what is available on the online business (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). This requirement is also well applied in the platform-based sharing economy service, where the service consumers and suppliers form a two-sided market around the platform and these two parties interact with each other. The value of the platform increases with the size of the network. As mentioned previously, COVID-19 has not only reduced a significant number of Airbnb listings, hosts, but also left a significant change in the choices, needs and preferences of customers.

The serious impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on accommodation sharing platforms’ business has been attracting a great number of scholars who studied service consumers and provider’s perception and behavioral intentions (e.g. Bresciani et al., 2021; Farmaki et al., 2020; Gyodi, 2022). From the accommodation service provider’s side, a few significant examples include the qualitative studies from Zhang et al. (2020) which investigates how sharing accommodation hosts in China have responded towards the COVID–19 pandemic, and Farmaki et al. (2020) which intends to explore peer-to-peer accommodation hosts’ perception and response towards the impact of the pandemic in Mediterranean countries. Nevertheless, the cultural differences or hosting experiences might cause the dissimilar responses from hosts in another context. Moreover, the moderating factors which might influence the relationships between antecedents and Airbnb hosts’ behavioral intentions has received less scholarly attention in extant Airbnb literature (Kwok & Xie, 2018). The findings from Liang et al. (2017) study revealed that an accommodation with the Superhost badge is more likely to receive positive reviews and higher ratings, which might support the argument that Airbnb hosts with Superhost badge are more intentionally engaging long-term with the platform. As a result, understanding the antecedents of Airbnb hosts’ continuance intention in the uncertain situation brought about by the pandemic, especially through a comparison between Airbnb ordinary hosts and Superhosts, deserves a further investigation.

In the context of the sharing economy, the Airbnb service providers and consumers are totally strangers who mainly interact with each other through the third-party platform before

making a decision; hence enhancing their mutual trust and trust towards the platform is necessary to ensure the successful transaction. According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), trust is determined as one party's confidence that the other party will keep his promises based on three main dimensions namely: competence, benevolence, and integrity. Trust is undoubtedly necessary in building sustainable relationships, especially in an online business where the socially distant relationships exist (Kim, 2017). Extant research revealed that individuals differ considerably in their general propensity to trust other people due to their distinct cultural backgrounds, personality traits, religious beliefs and past experiences (Rouibah et al., 2016). People with higher levels of trust are more willing to take the risk of making an exchange (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The significant relationship between trust towards online platforms and consumer loyalty has been emphasized in previous research in different contexts, such as online shopping websites (Flavian et al., 2006), consumer-generated platforms (Fileri et al., 2015), or accommodation sharing platforms (Godovykh et al., 2022; Kim & Kim, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). Furthermore, trust significantly mitigates the complexity, uncertainty and the risk travellers might perceive when traveling (Chen, 2013), especially when this is occurring during a health-related crisis scenario (e.g. Hassan & Soliman, 2021). Thus, given the relevant role of trust the existing literature attributes to it as being a key determinant in shaping Airbnb service providers and consumers behavioral intention, this construct is also included in this thesis.

To sum up, despite the widespread literature about P2P accommodation service consumers and providers' perception and behavioral intentions, research about accommodation sharing consumers and providers' motivational factors and behavioral intentions in a developing and emerging market – Vietnam, especially under the circumstance of a global pandemic, almost does not exist. Therefore, the recognition of Vietnamese Airbnb stakeholders' perceptions and behavioral intentions will support the platform management company and local authorities in setting up the pertinent management strategies to reduce Airbnb guests and hosts' perceived risks of the crisis, enhance their mutual trusts and trust towards the platform which consequently increase their satisfaction and loyalty. Moreover, findings from this study also shed light on Airbnb accommodation service providers's understanding of Vietnamese Airbnb customers' perceived values, their perception towards the shared accommodation and subsequent behavioral intentions in today's challenging and competitive hospitality landscape.

1.2. Research aim and objectives

Based on the comprehensive review of existing literature, the general purposes of this thesis are (i) to explore the perception and eWOM related behavioral intention of Airbnb consumers; and (ii) to study the antecedents of Airbnb hosts' continuance intention with the sharing platform in the setting of the global pandemic. Particularly, this thesis firstly intends to retest the previously confirmed perceived value dimensions of Airbnb customers in the context of an understudied market – Vietnam, and to investigate the influential role of these value perceptions in inducing customer satisfaction and (e)WOM intentions. Secondly, it aims to examine whether the effect of eWOM on Airbnb customers' purchase intention in the health-related crisis remains similar between powerful and powerless consumers, or consumers with different levels of psychological risk across different national cultures. Finally, it intends to understand the determinants of Airbnb accommodation service providers' continuance intention, with Superhost badge acts as a moderator. This is an article-based thesis, in which each of its four papers approach an above-mentioned research gap with each research objectives accordingly. These specific objectives are:

1. To investigate how Vietnamese existing consumers do conceive the value of Airbnb experience and explore the role of perceived value and satisfaction in predicting customers' (e)WOM intentions. Moreover, the effect of traditional WOM on eWOM giving intention will also be tested (**Study 1**).
2. To examine the effect of the atmospheric stimuli and monetary value on Airbnb existing customers' perceived enjoyment and their positive eWOM intention as a consequence, in consideration of the moderating role of customers social demographics and tripographics (**Study 2**).
3. To investigate how eWOM influences Airbnb consumers' rational evaluation, cognition, emotion and motivation, and the consequent effects of these constructs on Airbnb consumers' purchase intention, through moderating effects of sense of power and psychological risk, especially with taking into account cultural differences (**Study 3**).
4. To evaluate how the individual attitudinal and behavioral factors (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control), and trust towards Airbnb platform, may affect the continuance intention of Vietnamese Airbnb Superhosts and ordinary hosts in COVID-19 (**Study 4**).

1.3. Significance of the study

The significance of this study relates to its contributions to the existing knowledge of the sharing economy, eWOM in the hospitality and tourism industry, and tourism crisis management through investigating the accommodation sharing platform stakeholders' perceptions and behavioral intentions with an emphasis in a developing country and in the setting of a global pandemic. This thesis therefore provides the following theoretical and practical contributions. From the theoretical side, rather than focusing solely on the impact of eWOM, this study firstly examines the previously confirmed antecedents of consumers' perceived values towards Airbnb in an emerging sharing economy market – Vietnam – and broadening the comprehension of how these perceived value impact consumers' satisfactions and (e)WOM intention. Furthermore, the impact of traditional WOM intention on eWOM giving intention will firstly be examined in the literature. Additionally, the moderating effect of customers' social demographics and tripographics in the relationships among (e)WOM giving intentions and its antecedents is also investigated.

Secondly, this thesis provides an empirical evidence on explaining the contradictory and incomplete findings regarding the role of eWOM in customers' perceptions and behavioral intentions in the existing literature (e.g. Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020; Sher & Lee, 2009; Tapanainen et al., 2021). Specifically, this thesis proposes and tests the possibly differential moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in the relationships between eWOM and Airbnb consumers' rational, cognitive, affective factors, or the relationships between these constructs with their purchase intention by taking cultural and contextual differences into consideration.

Last but not least, this thesis contributes to the limited knowledge of Airbnb service provider's reactions towards the crisis by extending the TPB model with trust towards Airbnb to explore the determinants of Airbnb hosts' continuance intention, with a comparison between Airbnb Superhosts and ordinary hosts. From the practical side, this thesis offers practical implications to Airbnb stakeholders in Vietnam including local authorities, Airbnb management team and Airbnb service providers to sustain the business effectively and efficiently throughout the vulnerable time of COVID-19 outbreak or similar crises in the future.

1.4. Study design

As clearly stated in section 1.2, in order to fulfil these objectives, this thesis is fully guided by the positivism paradigm. Creswell (2003) defines positivism paradigm as a deterministic philosophy in which effects or outcomes can be determined by cases. The key objective of this paradigm is to test a theory in a new context or to predict related consequences through observation or measurement (O’Leary, 2004). Hence, quantitative data collection methods and analysis are most commonly used following this paradigm. The thesis applies questionnaire based surveys which are considered suitable data collection methods to achieve the research aim and specific objectives in this study. Questionnaires have been applied commonly to gather quantitative information from a large group of people in a relatively short amount of time (Babbie, 1990). Moreover, the survey is also less biased and less intrusive than other methods and is cost effective and efficient to assess attitudes or describe characteristics of a large population (Babbie, 1990). However, the disadvantages to this method still exist. For instance, it is not easy to create a real life-scenario when using surveys, and there might be indirect reasons for the respondents’ answer (Babbie, 1990). Despite these disadvantages, scholars still consider and use this method most commonly in measuring consumers’ attitude, perception, satisfaction and loyalty in accommodation sharing related research (e.g. Ma et al., 2022, So et al., 2021)

Considering these advantages and disadvantages in mind, three surveys were conducted through using online self-administered questionnaires. This mode of data collection has several advantages over other methods (e.g. face to face, mail survey) such as easy access to respondents, inexpensive, and approaching larger and more diverse samples in a shorter time frame (Sheehan, 2001; Buhrmester et al., 2011). These questionnaires included a number of published measurement items which link closely to the construct of the study and these measurement items were organized in a scale format. To ensure the accuracy of translation, translators were asked to interpret the questionnaires from English to Vietnamese, Italian and Portuguese and other experts supported translating back to English, as being recommended by Brislin (1970).

The three data collections through non-probability sampling methods were conducted. Particularly, the first data collection gathered 163 and 162 usable questionnaires from Vietnamese Airbnb existing customers who had stayed at an Airbnb venue at least once from 2019 onward (Studies 1 and 2 respectively). The second one collected 441, 1,146 and 262

eligible questionnaires from Vietnamese, Italian and Portuguese Airbnb customers, respectively (Study 3). The target population in this study are those who used to stay at an Airbnb accommodation, or knew about the platform but never used the service before. The last one gathered 160 usable questionnaires from Vietnamese Airbnb hosts with more than one year of activity before the data collection (Study 4). After the data collection, a series of statistical analysis were performed including, running descriptive data analysis to profile the sample with the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 and applying the SmartPLS 3.0 to test the conceptual model. PLS was chosen over the first-generation techniques due to its minimal requirements on measurement scales, residual distributions and sample size. The detailed research design is presented in each of the following four chapters.

1.5. Definitions of key terms

To provide a strong background for the proposed conceptual frameworks in the four studies in this thesis, definitions of theories, relevant constructs and key terms are presented below.

Airbnb: is an online platform that connects hosts and travelers for accommodation rentals. It allows homeowners to list their available rooms or entire houses on a popular platform and only pay a service fee of 3% (or higher for hosts who have a Super Strict cancellation policy) for any successful transaction. Customers therefore can easily search among a diversity of choices and pay for a guest service fee ranging from 0% and 20% of the booking subtotal. The guest service fee gets lower as the reservation cost gets higher (Airbnb, 2019).

Continuance intention: is defined as an individual's intent to continually use or reuse the product/ service from a particular provider (Bhattacharjee, 2001). In this research, Airbnb hosts' continuance intention is defined as their intention to continue listing accommodation in Airbnb platform.

Perceived value: is defined as the customer's overall evaluation of the product or service's utility based on perception of what customers have received and what they have given up (Zeitham, 1988), or the result of cost-benefit analysis in subjective term which can be simply understood by the term "value for money" (Tam, 2004)

Purchase intention: is defined as a situation where a customer tends to buy a certain product in a particular condition (Mirabi et al., 2015). In this thesis, this term refers to Airbnb existing and prospective customers' intention to book an Airbnb accommodation in the future.

Satisfaction: is conceptualized as an attitude that results from a mental comparison of a service and quality that a customer expects to receive from a transaction after purchase (Kim, 2012). Customer satisfaction in hospitality is described as “the extent of overall pleasure or contentment felt by the customers, resulting from the ability of the hotel experience to fulfill the customer’s desires, expectations and needs in relation to their hotel stay” (Qiu et al., 2015, p.91).

Sharing economy: is a collective denomination for a business model where transaction activities are happening on online platforms that create an open marketplace for the temporary use of goods or services often provided by private individuals (European Commission, 2016).

The Cognitive appraisal – Emotional response – Coping behavior framework: the appraisal process starts with an initial cognitive appraisal of an experience and then progresses through emotional assessments, which subsequently results in an individual’s behavioral intentions (Bagozzi, 1992).

The Model of Goal Directed Behavior (MGB): was suggested by Perugini and Bagozzi (2001), in which the attitude is a consequence of a rational evaluation, and the desire is a comprehensive result from the rational, emotional, and social aspects (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Particularly, the MGB reconstructs the Theory of Planned Behavior and assumes that attitude and subjective norms indirectly influence behavioural intentions through a desire factor (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001).

The Stimulus – Organism – Response (S-O-R) model: the atmospheric attributes are proposed as the external stimuli (S) whereby customers perceive and interpret such stimuli to enhance their internal states (O), which subsequently leads to their behavioral intentions (R) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB): which central factor is individuals' intention to perform a given behavior is commonly used to investigate the antecedents of behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Behavioral intention plays a pivotal role within the TPB model which signifies the

length to which an individual intends to perform or not to perform a certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This concept is determined by three preceding motivational factors, including: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Trust: is determined as one party's confidence that the other party will keep his promises based on three main dimensions namely: competence, benevolence, and integrity (Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

Word-of-mouth (WOM): is the communication between consumers about a product/service or provider without the commercial influence (Litvin et al., 2008). According to traditional communication theories, social communication consists of four major elements: communicator (sender), stimulus (message), receiver (audience), and response (receivers' reaction) (Cheung & Thadani, 2012).

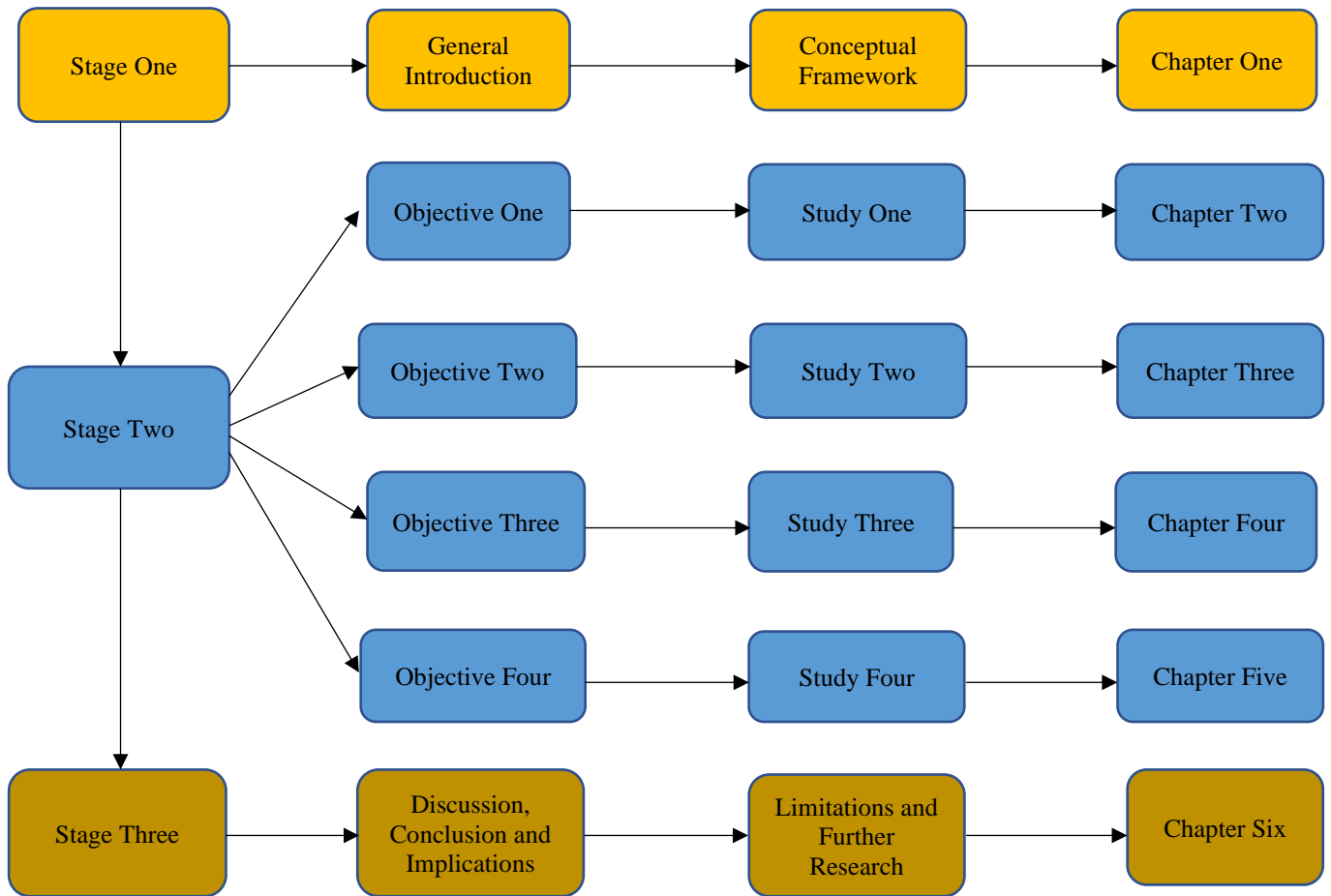
Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM): is defined as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or a company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet" (Hennig – Thurau et al., 2004, p.39)

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured in four scientific interrelated papers and is written in the English language. The whole project follows three major Stages, as illustrated in **Figure 1**. The First Stage involves the design of the conceptual framework, setting and description of methods which comprises chapter One. Chapter One includes a comprehensive literature review of the key concepts underpinned by this study, namely sharing economy, Airbnb, customer perceived value, satisfaction, (e)WOM, the MGB, the TPB model, the S-O-R model, the Cognitive appraisal – Emotional response – Coping behavior, and the role of trust in the online transaction context. This review provides the basic comprehension for addressing the research objectives. Moreover, the sampling techniques, survey design and administration, data collection methods, and choice of statistical techniques for data analysis opted for this research is also described in this chapter. Stage Two presents the research findings through four separate chapters. Each chapter approaches each research objectives that corresponds to a scientific paper which is marked as Chapter Two, Three, Four and Five. The Third Stage refers to Chapter Six which highlights the main findings and contributions of this thesis. The theoretical contributions and

practical implications are also discussed in this chapter. Lastly, the limitations of this research and the directions for further research conclude this final chapter.

Figure 1.1 – The outline of the thesis



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CHAPTER TWO

STUDY 1: UNDERSTANDING VIETNAMESE CONSUMERS' PERCEPTION AND WORD-OF-MOUTH INTENTIONS TOWARDS AIRBNB

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Abstract

Purpose- This paper aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Vietnamese consumers' perceived value, and to explore the relationships between its constructs, satisfaction and (e)word-of-mouth intentions towards Airbnb. Moreover, the relationship between traditional word-of-mouth (WOM) and electronic WOM (eWOM) was also investigated.

Design/methodology/approach- An electronic survey was applied to collect data on a sample of Vietnamese Airbnb guests. A total of 352 questionnaires were collected, from which 163 eligible Airbnb users remained for data analysis. The Partial Least Square approach to SEM was used to analyze the data.

Findings- The findings suggested that monetary, functional and hedonic benefits significantly impact Vietnamese customer satisfaction with Airbnb accommodation, which in turn acts as a direct effect and mediator in encouraging customers' (e)WOM giving intentions. Moreover, traditional WOM intention positively influences eWOM giving intention.

Originality/value- This study provides a better comprehension of customers' perceived value that influences customer satisfaction and their (e)WOM intentions towards Airbnb. Second, it extends the literature on WOM intentions from the message communicator's perspective by confirming the positive association between traditional and eWOM giving intentions. Finally, this article reveals insights in the sharing accommodation in a fast growing market in South East Asia (Vietnam), which supports sharing accommodation platforms and service providers to develop appropriate marketing strategies.

Keywords: Airbnb, customers' perceived value, customer satisfaction, traditional word-of-mouth, electronic word-of-mouth.

2.1 Introduction

Sharing economy is a collective denomination for a business model where transaction activities are occurring on online platforms. These platforms facilitate an unrestricted market for the temporary use of goods or services often offered by private individuals. Airbnb is a prominent example of the sharing economy that connects hosts and travelers for accommodation rentals (Guttentag et al., 2018). The rapid development of Airbnb has led to an emerging body of literature investigating the factors that motivate or constrain consumers from using Airbnb (e.g. Guttentag, 2015; Guttentag et al., 2018; Tussyadiah, 2015; So et al., 2018; Lalicic & Weismayer, 2018). Monetary value, home benefits, sustainability, authenticity, emotion, novelty, social interaction, and functional benefits are the main motivational factors which influence customers' decision to adopt Airbnb. In contrast, distrust, unfamiliarity, insecurity, and perceived risks are the major constraints which appeared frequently in the extant literature. Generally speaking, prior studies have mainly focused on investigating the relationships between motivation and perceived security with attitude and loyalty towards Airbnb. In respect to research about customer loyalty, the vast majority of research studied Airbnb consumers' repurchase intentions (Liang et al., 2018; Möhlmann, 2015; Wang & Jeong, 2018).

Regarding the intangible characteristic of a service, to reduce the uncertainty and complexity in making a purchase decision, customers look for additional information (Litvin et al., 2008). Prior scholars confirmed that consumers are influenced by recommendation and online reviews when they are planning a trip, booking a hotel or a restaurant (Kwok & Yu, 2013). As a platform facilitating the transaction between strangers, Airbnb exploits online reviews/ rating to capture guests' stay experiences (Guttentag, 2015). The online reviews will further impact potential users' booking decisions (Liang et al., 2018). Thus, it is crucial to understand the determinants which encourage Airbnb guests appraising their whole stay experience through spreading positive word-of-mouth (WOM) online and/or directly to their acquaintances. The existing literature review concentrated mostly on the impact of electronic WOM (eWOM), hence King et al. (2014, p.172) suggested further studies to "uncover various antecedents of review-writing behavior". Yen and Tang (2019) approached this concern with a research about the effects of hotel attribute performance on eWOM behavior. Nonetheless, Guttentag et al. (2018) confirmed that Airbnb and conventional hotels are not identical, as they offer different scales and types of services to customers' distinct expectations and needs.

Lastly, there is limited research investigating Airbnb users in Vietnam. Exceptionally, Nguyen (2020) studied the factors influencing Airbnb booking intentions among Vietnamese millennial travelers. Tran and Filimonau (2020) explored the (de)motivation factors in choosing Airbnb through a comparison of the existing and potential Vietnamese Airbnb users' perception. Based on the above discussion, this study covers the existing research gaps by examining the driven factors of another customer loyalty's perspective: traditional and electronic WOM giving intentions through the application of the Cognitive appraisal-Emotional response-Coping behavior framework. This theory reveals the determinants of customer emotions in consumption situations and its roles on customer behaviors (Bagozzi, 1992; Lages, 2012). The contribution of this study is three-fold. Firstly, this paper contributes to a better comprehension of customers' perceived value that influences customer satisfaction (CS) and their (e)WOM intentions towards Airbnb. Secondly, it extends the literature on WOM intentions from the message communicator's perspective by confirming the positive association between traditional and eWOM giving intentions. Finally, it provides insights into the sharing accommodation in a fast growing market in South East Asia (Vietnam) which was listed as an Airbnb top growing destination, with approximately 40,000 listings made available on Airbnb (VNexpress, 2019). This in turn will support sharing accommodation platforms and service providers in developing appropriate marketing strategies.

2.2 Literature review and hypotheses development

2.2.1 The Cognitive appraisal–Emotional response–Coping behavior framework

The Appraisal–Emotional responses–Coping behavior framework is defined as a mediation model to investigate the relationship between an individual's emotion and response behavior (Lages, 2012). This appraisal process starts with an initial cognitive appraisal of an experience and then progresses through emotional assessments, which subsequently results in an individual's behavioral intentions (Bagozzi, 1992). Researchers have commonly applied this framework to study the impact of customer cognitive appraisal (e.g. value perception) on customer coping behavior (e.g. loyalty, behavioral intentions) through the mediating effects of customer emotional responses (e.g. satisfaction, trust, or memorability) in various tourism and hospitality contexts (e.g. Taylor et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021). Thus, grounded on this well-known framework, the following section investigates the conceptual linkages between

constructs underlying the mechanism through which customers' perceived value contribute to (e)WOM giving intentions towards Airbnb.

2.2.2 Customers' perceived value, satisfaction and word-of-mouth intentions

Customers' perceived value

Customers' perceived value refers to their overall appraisal of the product or service's utility according to their perception of cost-benefit trade-offs in the transaction (Zeithaml, 1988). In the accommodation sharing platform, a perceived value model was tested with the results that explore the distinctive value aspects of guests' perception towards this platform, which comprises of functional value (So et al., 2018; Guttentag et al., 2018), value for money (So et al., 2018), novelty value (William & Soutar, 2009), emotional and social value (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001), and green value (Jiang & Kim, 2015). However, prior research ended up somewhat with inconsistent conclusions of customers' perceived value, which can be explained by the application of different approaches and motivational constructs in the distinct population. Therefore, an investigation with a comprehensive combination of the confirmed motives is essential to understand Airbnb users' perception in a specific geographical context.

Customer satisfaction

CS is conceptualized as an attitude that results from a mental comparison of a service and quality that a customer expected to receive from a transaction after purchase (Kim, 2012). Satisfied customers are more likely to say positive things about the organization, will do more business, repurchase and recommend the experience to others (Rather & Sharma, 2017). Existing studies in hospitality management identified perceived value as a key driver of CS (Yang & Mattila, 2016). Additionally, CS was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between customers' perceived value and loyalty (Williams & Soutar, 2009; El-Adly & Eid, 2016), which can be assumed as a determinant of (e)WOM giving intentions.

Traditional and electronic WOM

WOM is defined as the communication between consumers about a product/service or provider without the commercial influence (Litvin et al., 2008). WOM is considered as one of the most influential factors affecting consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism industry (Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014). In the era of digital revolution, eWOM communication, which

refers to any positive or negative testimony made by potential or existing customers about a product or its provider, is made available to a large number of individuals and institutions via the Internet (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). There are some unique characteristics which distinguish eWOM from traditional peer review, including greater scalability, speed of diffusion, persistency, accessibility, measurability, and quantifiability (Cheung & Thadani, 2012; Hung & Li, 2007).

Table 2.1: A summary of literature review in what concerns the relationships among customers' perceived value, satisfaction and loyalty

| Authors | Main results |
|--|--|
| Nguyen et al. (2008) | Confirmed positive relationships between monetary benefit, eWOM and CS |
| Tussyadiah (2016) | Confirmed the influences of economic benefit, enjoyment and home amenities in Airbnb CS |
| Li et al. (2021) | Found the significant associations between perceived hedonic, utilitarian value and CS |
| Tussyadiah and Zach (2017) | Social interaction between guests and host highly connect with guests' satisfaction and positive WOM |
| Jiang et al. (2019) | Found the impact of Airbnb customers' perceived functional attributes, economic, emotional, social, ethical values on their satisfaction through value co-creation process |
| Melissa and Zahra (2015) | Confirmed a satisfactory experience leads to generate positive eWOM |
| Williams and Soutar (2009); El-Adly and Eid (2016) | Confirmed the mediating role of CS in the relationship between customer perceived value and loyalty |

Customers' perceived value and satisfaction

Regarding the relationships between customers' perceived value and satisfaction, Li et al. (2021) found the significant influence of **hedonic** and **utilitarian value** on customer satisfaction towards Airbnb. Customers perceive the utilitarian value of Airbnb accommodation based on **monetary benefits**, convenience, and home attributes (Lee & Kim, 2018). Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2018) previously confirmed a positive relationship between **monetary benefit** and CS in Airbnb, or **functional benefit**, was found as the key determinant of CS and the possibility of selecting a sharing option again (Möhlmann, 2015). Tussyadiah (2016) found the **novelty factor** which attracts travelers using sharing accommodation is the isolating location from popular tourist areas. Furthermore, the **social interactions** with Airbnb

hosts which enhance guest's self-concept (Lee & Kim, 2018), highly connect with guest satisfaction (Tussyadiah & Zach, 2017). Another common motive that encourages customers participating in the sharing economy is **sustainability** (Tussyadiah, 2015). Moreover, according to the Appraisal – Emotional responses – Behaviour framework, it is reasonable to argue that customers will be satisfied with Airbnb accommodations if they strongly perceive the aforementioned value during their stay experience. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Perceived monetary benefit positively influences CS.

H2a: Perceived hedonic benefit positively influences CS.

H3a: Perceived novelty benefit positively influences CS.

H4a: Perceived social benefit positively affects CS.

H5a: Perceived sustainable value positively impacts CS.

H6a: Perceived functional value positively influences CS.

Customers' perceived value and (e)WOM intention

As discussed previously, CS was found to have a mediating role in the relationship between customer perceived value and loyalty. Specifically, El-Adly (2019) argued that CS fully mediates the relationship between **hedonic value** and customer loyalty. Pura (2005) documented that **monetary value** is one of the key determinants that impact loyalty, including WOM generating intentions and purchase intentions. Tussyadhiad and Zach (2017) confirmed the **direct guest-host relations** which relate to **social appeal** of accommodation sharing platforms consistently link to Airbnb guests' higher rating score, increase their satisfaction, and encourage them to leave a positive comment. In the context of green hotels, Wang and Jeong (2018) investigated whether the **green image** of hotels is positively related to consumers' green trust and satisfaction, which consequently leads to their favorable WOM intentions. Wang et al. (2004) confirmed a significant influence of **functional value** on brand loyalty through CS, or tourist satisfaction, was found as a mediator between **novelty seeking** and destination loyalty (Albaity & Melhem, 2017). Furthermore, based on the appraisal process, it is possible to hypothesize that Airbnb customers evaluate their stay experience

(perceived value) and progress through further emotional responses (their satisfaction) to finally determine behavioral intentions (WOM intentions), as the below hypotheses:

H1b/H1c: Perceived monetary benefit influences customer (e)WOM intentions through the mediating role of CS.

H2b/H2c: Perceived hedonic benefit impacts customer (e)WOM intentions through the mediating role of CS.

H3b/H3c: Perceived novelty benefit impacts customer (e)WOM intentions through the mediating role of CS.

H4b/H4c: Perceived social benefit has an indirect impact on customer (e)WOM intentions via CS.

H5b/H5c: Perceived sustainable value has an indirect impact on customer (e)WOM intentions via CS.

H6b/H6c: Perceived functional value influences customer (e)WOM intentions through the mediating role of CS.

Customer satisfaction and (e)WOM behavioral intentions

In the hotel industry, a satisfactory experience in the attributes of service availability and surrounding conditions can lead customers to generate positive eWOM (Melissa & Zahra, 2015). Accommodation providers who identify their customers' experiences would be able to enhance these moments and customers are finally more likely to share their experiences to others (Cetin & Dincer, 2013). Jeong and Jang (2011) also affirmed the relationship between CS and willingness to provide positive eWOM on forums or travel review websites. Based on literature review, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H7a/H7b: Overall CS positively impacts customer (e)WOM intentions.

2.2.3 Traditional and electronic WOM intentions

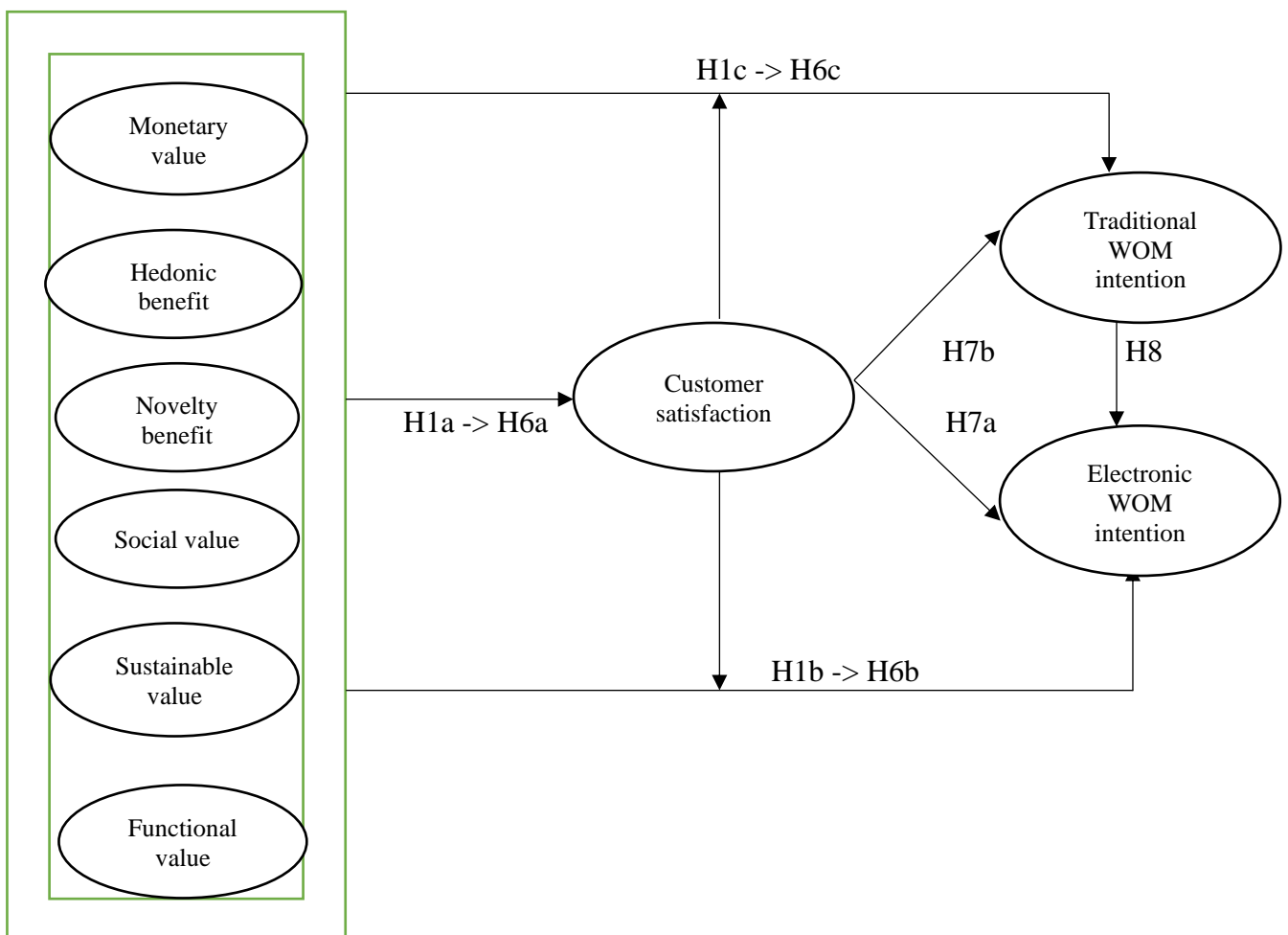
Nguyen et al. (2019) investigated the impact of traditional and eWOM on travel intentions. Their findings confirmed the influence of traditional WOM in eWOM from the

perspective of message receivers, as the source of traditional WOM is usually from customers' internal networks and thus, is considered more trustworthy and reliable. Does this association also hold true from the communicators' perspective? This study shed light into this question by assuming that customers' traditional WOM giving intention also positively impacts their willingness to share experience on online social networks, as customers are more likely to recommend the high-quality products and services to friends or relatives. Thus, the hypothesis is defined as:

H8: Traditional WOM intention is positively related to eWOM intention.

Guided by the Appraisal–Emotional–Behavioral framework, this study evaluates the conceptual linkages illustrated in **Figure 2.1**.

Figure 2.1. Proposed Conceptual Framework



2.3 Research Methodology

2.3.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire started with an eligibility question to identify the right participants who had experience of using Airbnb since 2019 and to collect information regarding this most recent stay. The following questions aimed to investigate Vietnamese consumers' perceived value, satisfaction and (e)WOM intentions towards Airbnb experience. The last part of the questionnaire included socio-demographic questions. The chosen constructs have been well investigated in the extant literature which ensures the initial validity and reliability of the measurements, so only minor changes were required to better fit the context of this study. There were 26 items adapted from Tussyadiah (2015), Guttentag et al. (2018), Choe and Kim (2018), Lee and Kim (2018), and Wang and Jeong (2018) to measure the six dimensions of perceived value. CS was measured by four items adapted from Jiang et al. (2019). WOM and eWOM intentions were measured using six items from Walker (2001), Maxham and Netemeyer (2002), and Lee et al. (2010). The source of measurements items is summarized in **Table 2.2**. All items were evaluated on a five-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). The questionnaire was interpreted from English to Vietnamese and another expert supported translating it back to English.

Table 2.2: Source of measurement items

| Measurement items | Sources |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Monetary value | Tussyadiah (2015) |
| Good value for money | |
| Found good deals in Airbnb | Guttentag <i>et al.</i> (2018) |
| An economical alternatives to hotel | |
| Hedonic benefits | Choe and Kim (2018) |
| An entertaining accommodation experience | |
| Made me feel happy | Lee and Kim (2018) |
| Made me elated | |
| Social values | Wang and Jeong (2018) |
| Opportunities to interact more with others guests | |
| Good social opportunities with the host | |
| Feel accepted by others | |
| Leave a good impression on other people | |
| Improve the way I am perceived by others | |
| Novelty benefits | |
| Airbnb accommodation satisfied my curiosity | |
| Opportunities to learn about people, culture | |
| Less standardized accommodation environments | |
| Unique experiences | |
| Functional attributes | |
| Suitable for travel needs | |
| Meet my location needs | |
| Provide up-to-date facilities | |
| Homely feel | |
| Sustainable values | |
| An environmentally friendly accommodation | |
| More efficient resource use | |
| A sustainable way of lodging | |
| Promoting local culture | |
| Satisfactions | Jiang <i>et al.</i> (2019) |
| Satisfied with Airbnb stay | |
| Believe I did the right thing | |
| The value of Airbnb is high | |
| Overall, Airbnb met my expectation | |
| Traditional WOM intention | Walker (2001) |

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Encourage my friends and relatives to choose Airbnb | Maxham and Netemeyer (2002) |
| Say positive things about Airbnb | |
| Recommend others using Airbnb | |
| Electronic WOM intention | Lee <i>et al.</i> (2010) |
| Mention Airbnb to others through social networks | |
| Say positive online | |
| Provide more positive online information about Airbnb in effective way | |

2.3.2 Sample and data collection

An online survey was applied to the target population of Vietnamese consumers who have stayed at Airbnb properties since 2019. To verify the clarity and the logical flow of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with five participants. Based on the results of the pilot test, the questionnaire was better clarified and reduced the ambiguity of wording. The final questionnaire was administered on an online survey platform - Google doc - and later distributed to prospective participants using the convenience sampling method. The context of this study is to investigate the (e)WOM intentions of Vietnamese Airbnb guests who must be familiar with using a desktop computer, smartphone, or other electronic device, so online data collection is considered as an appropriate option (Birinci et al., 2018). To effectively approach the target respondents, the questionnaire was posted on Facebook based travel communities in Vietnam, such as: Vietnamese backpackers, Travelling to Europe, Airbnb hosts community, among others. Moreover, to approach more potential participants, the snowball sampling method was also exploited by which respondents supported to share the questionnaire link to other Vietnamese Airbnb users who met the criteria of this research. After two months of data collection (March-April), the questionnaire was accessed by 352 respondents. Airbnb non-users were asked with only one further question about their reasons for not using this platform.

2.3.3 Data analysis

Data analysis started with a data screening to check for respondents who met the research criteria. Descriptive statistics and the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach were used to analyze the data. Descriptive data analysis was conducted with the IBM SPSS 26 to profile the sample, which was followed by the use of the SmartPLS 3.0 to test the conceptual model. PLS-SEM was chosen over CB-SEM due to its minimal requirements on measurement items, sample size and residual distributions. The model is

confirmed free of common method bias, as the result of a full collinearity test revealed that all variance inflation factors (VIF) with regard to latent factors were below 3.3 (Kock, 2015).

2.4 Results

2.4.1 Demographic profile

There were 352 participants including 187 Airbnb non-users (53.1%) and 165 users (46.9%) taking part in the survey. The final subsample has 163 respondents, after excluding two unusable questionnaires because the experience happened in 2018. In respect with the perceived constraints of using Airbnb amongst non-users, the vast majority of respondents are unfamiliar with the platform (63.1%) or with other unclarified reasons (31.1%); while only less than 10% of them stated that Airbnb is either lack of value or has lack of safety. This finding is supported by the Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2018) study which identified consumers' unfamiliarity with Airbnb as one of the major demotivations of purchase intentions.

The sample profile of Airbnb users is presented in **Table 2.3**. Results show that 63.8% of the sample was female, and 71.2% was single. The mean age of participants was approximately 30. More specifically, the largest percentage of respondents was aged in 25-29 (33.1%), followed by the age range of 35-39 and 30-34. The majority of respondents had a bachelor degree or postgraduate (93.3%) and earned a monthly income which is above the national average (72.4%). Regarding the type of accommodation, 49.7% of the respondents rented an entire apartment, and 44.8% chose a private room.

Table 2.3: The sample profile of Airbnb users

| Variable | Categories | % |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Gender | Male | 36.2 |
| | Female | 63.8 |
| Age group (mean = 30.3) | ≤24 | 18.4 |
| | 25-29 | 33.1 |
| | 30-34 | 20.2 |
| | 35-39 | 20.9 |
| | ≥40 | 7.4 |
| | Marital status | Single |
| Married | | 24.5 |
| Others | | 4.3 |
| Education | Highschool | 1.2 |
| | College | 4.9 |
| | Bachelor | 63.2 |
| | Post graduated | 30.1 |
| | Others | 0.6 |
| | Income | Below the national average income |
| At national average income | | 11.0 |
| Above the national average income | | 72.4 |

2.4.2 Assessment of measurement model

The analysis started with the measurement model assessment to check the validity and reliability of the nine reflective constructs in the framework (**Figure 1**). Two items in “social benefit” (7, 13), and one item in “novelty benefit” (14) were removed because its factor loading was below the threshold value of 0.707 (Hair et al., 2019). The loading of all the retained items on its assigned construct were higher than 0.707. Moreover, the composite reliability were from 0.837 to 0.943 (exceed 0.7) and all rho_A values also exceeded 0.70 threshold (as shown in **Table 2.4**) which confirms the adequacy of construct reliability (Hair et al., 2019)

Table 2.4 also presents the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct ranging from 0.562 to 0.847 (above 0.5). Moreover, factor loadings showed the significance of all indicators (p -values<0.001), which provides stronger evidence for convergent validity. Discriminant validity was assessed through a comparison of the square root of each AVE and inter-construct correlation coefficients. The square root of AVE for each factor was higher than

the correlations between each construct and other latent variables (see **Table 2.5**). Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratios (HTMT) for all constructs were lower than 0.85, which together confirm discriminant validity.

Table 2.4: Descriptives and results of the measurement model

| Dimensions and items | Loading | CR | AVE | Mean (SD) | t | Sig. |
|---|---------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Monetary value (ρ_A: 0.835) | | 0.900 | 0.750 | | | |
| Good value for money | 0.880 | | | 3.681 0.757 | 43.421 | 0.000 |
| Found good deals in Airbnb | 0.869 | | | 3.865 0.803 | 38.929 | 0.000 |
| An economical alternatives to hotel | 0.849 | | | 3.804 0.958 | 29.932 | 0.000 |
| Hedonic benefits (ρ_A: 0.818) | | 0.885 | 0.720 | | | |
| An entertaining accommodation experience | 0.788 | | | 3.454 0.777 | 14.664 | 0.000 |
| Made me feel happy | 0.881 | | | 3.650 0.696 | 36.008 | 0.000 |
| Made me elated | 0.873 | | | 3.497 0.713 | 34.980 | 0.000 |
| Social values (ρ_A: 0.828) | | 0.867 | 0.567 | | | |
| Opportunities to interact more with others guests | 0.702 | | | 3.049 0.932 | 12.268 | 0.000 |
| Good social opportunities with the host | 0.708 | | | 3.528 0.846 | 12.140 | 0.000 |
| Feel accepted by others | 0.842 | | | 3.423 0.813 | 25.240 | 0.000 |
| Leave a good impression on other people | 0.760 | | | 3.276 0.816 | 10.512 | 0.000 |
| Improve the way I am perceived by others | 0.745 | | | 2.957 0.922 | 12.181 | 0.000 |
| Novelty benefits (ρ_A: 0.773) | | 0.837 | 0.562 | | | |
| Airbnb accommodation satisfied my curiosity | 0.705 | | | 3.528 0.809 | 12.768 | 0.000 |
| Opportunities to learn about people, culture | 0.714 | | | 3.718 0.825 | 11.090 | 0.000 |
| Less standardized accommodation environments | 0.759 | | | 3.804 0.805 | 15.129 | 0.000 |
| Unique experiences | 0.816 | | | 3.865 0.747 | 23.942 | 0.000 |
| Functional attributes (ρ_A: 0.810) | | 0.872 | 0.630 | | | |
| Suitable for travel needs | 0.810 | | | 3.951 0.716 | 27.195 | 0.000 |
| Meet my location needs | 0.812 | | | 3.859 0.725 | 21.239 | 0.000 |
| Provide up-to-date facilities | 0.796 | | | 3.644 0.804 | 24.235 | 0.000 |
| Homely feel | 0.756 | | | 3.883 0.802 | 15.077 | 0.000 |
| Sustainable values (ρ_A: 0.834) | | 0.884 | 0.656 | | | |
| An environmentally friendly accommodation | 0.834 | | | 3.417 0.813 | 27.248 | 0.000 |
| More efficient resource use | 0.795 | | | 3.748 0.778 | 22.334 | 0.000 |
| A sustainable way of lodging | 0.850 | | | 3.601 0.869 | 31.602 | 0.000 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------|--------------|--------------|--------|-------|
| Promoting local culture | 0.758 | | 3.736 0.857 | 17.535 | 0.000 |
| Satisfactions ($\rho_A : 0.908$) | | 0.935 | 0.783 | | |
| Satisfied with Airbnb stay | 0.905 | | 3.865 0.687 | 53.251 | 0.000 |
| Believe I did the right thing | 0.891 | | 3.785 0.716 | 49.964 | 0.000 |
| The value of Airbnb is high | 0.853 | | 3.601 0.714 | 33.794 | 0.000 |
| Overall, Airbnb met my expectation | 0.890 | | 3.840 0.691 | 39.416 | 0.000 |
| Traditional WOM intention ($\rho_A : 0.907$) | | 0.941 | 0.841 | | |
| Encourage my friends and relatives to choose Airbnb | 0.900 | | 3.779 0.814 | 45.880 | 0.000 |
| Say positive things about Airbnb | 0.912 | | 3.791 0.722 | 38.746 | 0.000 |
| Recommend others using Airbnb | 0.939 | | 3.810 0.723 | 84.826 | 0.000 |
| Electronic WOM intention ($\rho_A : 0.911$) | | 0.943 | 0.847 | | |
| Mention Airbnb to others through social networks | 0.909 | | 3.356 0.834 | 52.342 | 0.000 |
| Say positive online | 0.918 | | 3.393 0.854 | 46.989 | 0.000 |
| Provide more positive online information about Airbnb in effective way | 0.937 | | 3.399 0.855 | 78.947 | 0.000 |

***p-value<0.001.

Table 2.5: Correlations among latent variables

| Constructs | Customer satisfaction | Functional value | Hedonic benefit | Monetary benefit | Novelty benefit | Social benefit | Sustainable value | Traditional WOM | eWOM |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Customer satisfaction | 0.885* | | | | | | | | |
| Functional value | 0.667* 0.776** | 0.794* | | | | | | | |
| Hedonic benefit | 0.434* 0.503** | 0.378* 0.469** | 0.848* | | | | | | |
| Monetary benefit | 0.587* 0.674** | 0.520* 0.629** | 0.250* 0.304** | 0.866* | | | | | |
| Novelty benefit | 0.512* 0.606** | 0.498* 0.607** | 0.395* 0.500** | 0.361* 0.442** | 0.750* | | | | |
| Social benefit | 0.326* 0.368** | 0.337* 0.416** | 0.390* 0.468** | 0.275* 0.327** | 0.420* 0.551** | 0.753* | | | |
| Sustainable value | 0.558* 0.637** | 0.615* 0.759** | 0.386* 0.480** | 0.479* 0.580** | 0.528* 0.668** | 0.411* 0.481** | 0.810* | | |
| Traditional WOM | 0.742* 0.818** | 0.603* 0.699** | 0.321* 0.374** | 0.558* 0.642** | 0.445* 0.525** | 0.276* 0.310** | 0.509* 0.582** | 0.917* | |
| eWOM | 0.591* 0.650** | 0.412* 0.479** | 0.347* 0.405** | 0.368* 0.420** | 0.424* 0.495** | 0.395* 0.446** | 0.464* 0.534** | 0.645* 0.709** | 0.920* |

*Diagonal values correspond to the squared root value of AVE for each latent variable in order to assess the Fornell-Larcker's criterion. **HTMT values

2.4.3 Structural model assessment

The coefficients of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2) and predictive power (Q^2) for the endogenous variables were evaluated to check the predictive power of the structural model. The coefficients of determination (R^2) for endogenous constructs including: eWOM, traditional WOM and CS were 0.504, 0.590 and 0.577, respectively, which indicate a large proportion of variance explained by its predictors. The f^2 values of “functional value”, “monetary benefit”, “hedonic benefit” on CS were 0.148, 0.129 and 0.041, respectively. Additionally, *Stone-Geisser's* Q^2 value was computerized by running the blindfolding procedure with an omission distance $D=7$ to evaluate the predictive relevance of the model. All the values from this test exceed zero (CS=0.431, traditional WOM=0.476, eWOM=0.405), which confirms the sufficient predictive power.

The path coefficients in the structural model are presented in **Table 2.6**. The bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 sub-samples was used to check the significance of the paths. Regarding the direct effects between perceived value, CS and (e)WOM intentions, the path from monetary, hedonic and functional attributes to satisfaction were significant. Moreover, customers who are satisfied with their experience at Airbnb accommodation will be more likely engaging in (e)WOM activities. Finally, traditional WOM intentions shows a positive impact on Airbnb users' eWOM giving willingness. Therefore, hypotheses H1a, H2a, H6a, H7a, H7b and H8 were supported. In contrast, hypotheses H3a, H4a and H5a were not supported (p -value >0.05), which can be further explained that novelty, sustainable value and social interaction were not significantly influencing CS.

According to Carrion *et al.* (2017), a significant indirect effect is the only prerequisite to establish a mediation effect. As we can see in **Table 2.6**, regarding the hypothesized indirect effects in this study, monetary benefit and functional attributes show their significant influences in both traditional and eWOM intentions through the intervening role of CS (p -value <0.05). While CS partially mediates the relationship between customers' perceived monetary value and their traditional WOM, it fully mediates the effect of functional attributes on Airbnb consumers' behavioral intentions. Additionally, perceived hedonic benefit also shows its indirect impact on traditional WOM intention through CS (p -value <0.05). Thus, H1b, H1c, H2c, H6b and H6c were supported. Nevertheless, CS does not interfere with the associations among hedonic benefit and eWOM, or the relationships between novelty, social, sustainable value and customer behaviors, which reject H2b, H3b, H3c, H4b, H4c, H5b and H5c. Interestingly, though testing the mediating role of traditional WOM in the relationship between CS and eWOM is not in this research scope, the findings reveal that traditional WOM exerts a significant mediation effect in this association.

Table 2.6: The results of structural model relationships

| | Total effect | | Path coefficients | | Indirect effects | |
|---|--------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| | β | Bootstrap-t | β | Bootstrap-t | β | Bootstrap-t |
| H1a: Monetary benefit -> CS | 0.283 | 4.543*** | 0.283 | 4.543*** | | |
| H1b: Monetary benefit -> eWOM | 0.123 | 1.513 | -0.080 | 1.064 | 0.203 | 3.615*** |
| H1c: Monetary benefit -> Traditional WOM | 0.296 | 4.288*** | 0.146 | 2.188* | 0.151 | 3.933*** |
| H2a: Hedonic benefit -> CS | 0.153 | 2.300* | 0.153 | 2.300* | | |
| H2b: Hedonic benefit -> eWOM | 0.099 | 1.147 | 0.041 | 0.589 | 0.058 | 1.319 |
| H2c: Hedonic benefit -> Traditional WOM | 0.051 | 0.732 | -0.030 | 0.469 | 0.081 | 2.208* |
| H3a: Novelty benefit -> CS | 0.141 | 1.760 | 0.141 | 1.760 | | |
| H3b: Novelty benefit -> eWOM | 0.139 | 1.329 | 0.052 | 0.729 | 0.087 | 1.449 |
| H3c: Novelty benefit -> Traditional WOM | 0.117 | 1.249 | 0.042 | 0.581 | 0.075 | 1.744 |
| H4a: Social benefit -> CS | -0.022 | 0.352 | -0.022 | 0.352 | | |
| H4b: Social benefit -> eWOM | 0.165 | 1.961* | 0.180 | 2.509* | -0.015 | 0.363 |
| H4c: Social benefit -> Traditional WOM | -0.022 | 0.293 | -0.010 | 0.142 | -0.012 | 0.352 |
| H5a: Sustainable value -> CS | 0.084 | 1.106 | 0.084 | 1.106 | | |
| H5b: Sustainable value -> eWOM | 0.179 | 1.546 | 0.113 | 1.079 | 0.066 | 1.087 |
| H5c: Sustainable value -> Traditional WOM | 0.100 | 0.966 | 0.055 | 0.581 | 0.045 | 1.070 |
| H6a: Functional value -> CS | 0.348 | 4.951*** | 0.348 | 4.951*** | | |
| H6b: Functional value -> eWOM | 0.075 | 0.728 | -0.152 | 1.560 | 0.227 | 3.916*** |
| H6c: Functional value -> Traditional WOM | 0.317 | 3.401*** | 0.131 | 1.410 | 0.186 | 3.521*** |
| H7a: CS-> eWOM | 0.475 | 5.080*** | 0.223 | 2.406* | 0.251 | 3.093** |
| H7b: CS-> Traditional WOM | 0.533 | 6.276*** | 0.533 | 6.276*** | | |
| H8: Traditional WOM -> eWOM | 0.471 | 3.945*** | 0.471 | 3.945*** | | |

***p-value<0.001; **p-value<0.01; *p-value<0.05

2.5 Discussion

2.5.1 Conclusion

Adopting the framework of Cognitive appraisal–Emotional response–Coping behavior theory, this study developed the hypothesized model to examine the relationships between six dimensions of customers’ perceived value, satisfaction and their willingness in traditional and electronic WOM activity, in the context of Vietnamese Airbnb users. More specifically, this paper aims to identify the mediating role of CS in Airbnb perceived value - (e)WOM intentions relationship. Additionally, this study offers the first attempt in investigating the significant impact of traditional WOM intention on eWOM intention from the perspective of a message communicator. Regarding the existing sharing economy related studies, there exists the contrasting findings about customers’ motives in using Airbnb and how these motives impact their satisfaction and behavioral intentions. Hence, this study adds values to the extant literature by revealing the reasonable explanation of these contradictory findings and provides an empirically comprehensive understanding of Airbnb users in a fast-growing market in South East Asia (Vietnam).

2.5.2 Theoretical contributions

The first insights reveal the adverse findings regarding the relationship between Airbnb customers’ perceived value and satisfaction. Results of this study suggest that monetary value and functional attributes serve as the antecedents of Vietnamese customers’ satisfaction with Airbnb, in which functional value is the most important determinant. Moreover, Vietnamese customers also show their satisfaction when they perceive their stay at Airbnb positively in terms of enjoyment. The results are totally in line with findings from recent research which showed that hedonic value and utilitarian value significantly influence CS (Li et al., 2021) or customers’ participation intention in sharing economy-based accommodation (Guo et al., 2020). Thus, this study once again confirms the significant importance of economic gains, functional attributes and enjoyment of Airbnb accommodation to customer experience.

The path coefficient between sustainability and satisfaction is not significant which means the perceived value of sustainable stay at Airbnb has no effect on increasing CS. This finding is consistent with prior research which noticed the concern with sustainable tourism does not significantly impact tourist’s responsible behavior (Zgolli & Zmed, 2018). Surprisingly, social benefits and novelty are not pronounced in gaining Vietnamese Airbnb

customer's satisfaction. These findings contradict extant studies which commonly confirmed the role of social interaction and novelty on guest satisfaction towards Airbnb (Tussyadhiad & Zach, 2017; Tussyadhiad, 2016). However, the insignificant relationship between social interaction and CS is supported by findings from the most recent studies which found that social value does not have an affect on Airbnb consumers' satisfaction (e.g. Sthapit et al., 2020; Bin Mahdi & Alhammah, 2021). The absence of this effect can be further justified in two following arguments relating to the specific context of the present study. Firstly, the data was collected during the lockdown in Vietnam, the government was imposing aggressive social distancing measures which might impact customer's perception and expectation towards social interaction. Secondly, according to the room type, almost half of respondents rented entire apartments, thus, they mainly communicate or interact with Airbnb hosts online. These online interactions might not be considered close and strong enough to satisfy guests' needs in interacting or building mutual relationships with hosts. With respect to the insignificant relationship between novelty and CS, the recent study from Sthapit et al. (2021) also unveiled that perceived authenticity does not always lead to Airbnb customers' perception of enjoyment. This finding provides support for the dissimilar impact of novelty seeking motivation on Airbnb customers' emotions and behavioral intentions. Therefore, the role of social interaction or novelty values in inducing CS should be simultaneously taken in consideration of cultural differences or variation across types of accommodation in future studies (Ruan, 2020).

Secondly, regarding previous research about customer loyalty, the majority of articles studied Airbnb customer's repurchase intentions (Liang et al., 2018; Möhlmann, 2015; Wang & Jeong, 2018). This study, however, examines the determinants of another loyalty's perspective: traditional and electronic WOM giving intentions, which extends the understanding of the link between consumers' perception of Airbnb value, satisfaction, and willingness in spreading (e)WOM. To encourage customers sharing about Airbnb to their acquaintances or leaving a comment on a social platform, CS plays an important role with a significant direct effect on (e)WOM intentions. This coincides with findings from prior research which found the association between satisfaction and positive (e)WOM intentions (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002; Jeong & Jang, 2011; Melissa & Zahra, 2015). Additionally, CS also plays an intervening role between the monetary value, functional attributes and (e)WOM intentions, or the influence of hedonic benefit on traditional WOM. The findings show that Vietnamese Airbnb users are more willing to recommend the platform services to their friends and family, or leave positive feedback online when they perceive the functional attributes,

financial benefit or the enjoyment of Airbnb accommodation, with their satisfaction as a mediator.

Thirdly, a distinction is made between traditional WOM and eWOM intentions. Interestingly, the current study showed that Vietnamese customers who share their Airbnb experience with acquaintances are more likely to recommend the platform to others, either directly online or through social network outlets. This finding has not been discussed up to date and thus, contributes to the existing literature by acknowledging the significant direct and mediating effect of traditional WOM on eWOM intention. Sharing the consumption experience electronically usually requires more effort and time from customers, especially those who do not frequently engage in technology or social media platforms. Thus, Vietnamese Airbnb customers are only willing to leave feedback online when they are extremely satisfied with their stay at Airbnb accommodation and eager to recommend the platform to their close networks.

2.5.3 Practical implications

Understanding relationships between Vietnamese customer's perception of Airbnb benefits, satisfaction and WOM intentions infers significant implications for Airbnb platforms and service providers. Vietnamese customers appreciate the monetary, functional and emotional values of Airbnb accommodations, which in turn acts as the antecedents of their satisfaction and loyalty. Hence, promotions or price discounts should be applied to attract consumers who are described as price sensitive consumers. In terms of hedonic benefits, providing an enjoyable stay with a themed or nicely decorated accommodation is necessary to achieve CS. Airbnb hosts can also go the extra-mile service to surprise guests with welcome letters, snacks or complimentary drinks.

Functional value plays the most important role in satisfying Vietnamese Airbnb customers and indirectly influences customers' (e)WOM intentions. Providing clean accommodation with well-equipped facilities in an accessible location should be the utmost priority for Airbnb hosts who are targeting the domestic market. These functional attributes should be highlighted and conveyed effectively in the advertising strategies and Airbnb listings information. The insignificant impact of social interaction on Vietnamese Airbnb customers' satisfaction or their subsequent behavioral intentions provokes a need for Airbnb hosts to have more pleasing interactive communications with guests, even though they book an entire apartment. Prompt

and supportive responses to Airbnb guests' requests before their stay, physically greeting guests during the check-in/ check-out, and follow-up conversations after their stay, will definitely enhance CS by increasing the perception of social interaction. Regarding the practical implications for Airbnb management, the platform should also modify the appropriate standards to reward outstanding hosts according to customers' perceived value in a specific destination. The updated standards can serve as guidelines to encourage Airbnb hosts offering the expected benefits to target customers. Lastly, Vietnamese customers who share their Airbnb experience with acquaintances are also more likely to recommend the platform to others electronically. Thus, Airbnb platforms or Airbnb hosts can also motivate existing customers sharing their whole stay experience to their family and friends with monetary or non-monetary incentives.

2.5.4 Limitations and future research recommendation

Despite the theoretical and managerial contribution, this paper is not free of limitations. Firstly, the present study focused on Vietnamese Airbnb users observed through a non-probabilistic sample with a small size, which might impact the generalization of the findings. Secondly, though the majority of respondent's Airbnb experience precisely happened before the pandemic, the primary data was collected during the COVID-19 outbreak which might affect their reflected perception and satisfaction. Thus, a study with Vietnamese Airbnb consumers' experience which happened during the crisis should be replicated to compare if there is any peculiarity related to this global pandemic and Vietnamese Airbnb consumers' perception and behavioral intentions. Thirdly, self-directed or social benefits are also major determinants which drive customers to (e)WOM giving intentions. Lastly, the tripographics or types of accommodation can also moderate the strength of the relationships between customers' perceived value and its outcomes, hence, an investigation in the moderating role of these factors is required to extend the findings of this study. These limitations leave a paucity for future research which aims to expand more factors and diverse sample groups to include consumers from different countries, and test different influential factors in customers' (e)WOM intentions.

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CHAPTER THREE

STUDY 2: WHAT INFLUENCES VIETNAMESE AIRBNB TRAVELERS' POSITIVE ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH INTENTIONS? AN EXTENSION OF THE MEHRABIAN-RUSSELL MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – This study investigates the relationship between environmental stimuli of Airbnb experience, customers' perceived enjoyment and positive electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) intentions through an extension of the Mehrabian–Russell model.

Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative methodology was adopted using a web-based survey. Data were collected from a sample of 162 Vietnamese Airbnb consumers who had stayed at the platform accommodations. A two-stage procedure with the partial least squares approach to Structural Equation Modeling was conducted to evaluate the measurement model and structural model.

Findings - The results confirmed the significant positive effect of home benefits and social interaction on Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment, which subsequently inspires them to develop intentions to spread positive comments towards this platform. Moreover, these relationships remain unchanged among the different groups of customers, except Airbnb travelers with business purposes.

Practical implications - The findings will provide Airbnb stakeholders in emerging markets with insights into identifying the important environmental factors that are more likely to stimulate consumers' enjoyment and encourage them to spread positive WOM on social network outlets.

Originality/values - This research provides a deeper comprehension of Airbnb users' emotional states and positive eWOM intentions by exploring the possible antecedents. Moreover, the study firstly proposes the moderating role of gender, purpose of the trip and type of accommodation in the hypothesized relationships. The contradictory findings of this study

also highlight the cultural difference in Airbnb customers' perception and behavioral intentions.

Keywords: Airbnb, authenticity, home benefits, perceived enjoyment, positive eWOM intentions, Mehrabian-Russell model

3.1 Introduction

The sharing economy is an emerging phenomenon in the recent decade which has disrupted the traditional nature of the tourism business. This disruption translates into an economic model in which users share underused assets for free or with a fee, with Airbnb as a prominent example (Guttentag et al., 2018). Airbnb has become the most successful accommodation sharing platform with five point six million active listings in over 220 countries (Airbnb, 2020). The heated popularity of Airbnb has encouraged numerous scholars studying the motivational and constrained factors from the platform users' perception from different geographical contexts (e.g. Del Chiappa et al., 2020; Tussyadiah & Zach, 2017; Guttentag, 2016; Liang, 2015; Tussyadiah, 2015; So et al., 2018). Generally speaking, the competitive advantages of Airbnb over the traditional accommodations are confirmed as providing a unique home-like environment and functional benefits which refer to the main physical products that guests receive from Airbnb (e.g. Del Chiappa et al., 2020; Guttentag, 2016). From the social perspective, this peer-to-peer accommodation platform contributes to travelers' memorable experiences through facilitating social interaction between guests, hosts and local community (e.g. Sung et al., 2018). Moreover, offering the authentic experience to immerse guests in a "live like a local" situation is also the key attribute in Airbnb accommodation (e.g. Liang, 2015; Li et al., 2019). This perceived authenticity is associated with the contextual perspective of environmental stimuli which refers to the combination of locally grounded traditions and lifestyle to be connected to a space (So et al., 2021). Thus, it is possible to assume that Airbnb accommodation experiences consist of the key environmental attributes which are commonly investigated as the antecedents of customer emotion and behavioral outcomes in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Nonetheless, limited studies have examined the relationship between physical, contextual, and social attributes with customers' emotional states and their post-consumption behavioral intention in the context of sharing accommodation. One of the few exceptions is a

recent study from So et al. (2021) which successfully applied the Mehrabian–Russell (M-R) model to explore the influences of the Airbnb accommodation experience in consumers' perceived enjoyment and repurchase intention in the U.S.A. In addition, monetary value is also an outstanding advantage which motivates travelers to choose Airbnb over conventional accommodation (e.g. Guttentag, 2016; Mao & Lyu, 2017). Therefore, based on the So et al. (2021) study, this paper extends the M-R model with another Airbnb related stimulus: monetary benefits, which might forecast better the travelers' behaviours towards Airbnb in an understudied context, Vietnam. Vietnamese consumers are confirmed as being among the most price sensitive ASEAN markets, which makes the financial benefit essential to be examined as a predictor of customer emotions and behavioral intentions (VnExpress, 2020).

Regarding the development of Airbnb in Vietnam, the country was recognized as the global top – growing destination in 2017 with an increase of 212% and 255% in Hanoi and Danang – two of the biggest cities in Vietnam, respectively (Vietnam Economic Times, 2018). The large proportion of Airbnb guests in Vietnam is accounted for by 84% of international tourists (VnExpress, 2019). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted seriously the tourism industry, and the decline of Airbnb is not an exception. Travel restrictions have been implied internationally to control the outbreak of the virus, which accordingly change tourists' plans and behaviours, such as more domestic trips or on-site travels. Thus, to achieve tourism resilience, many countries currently focus on the strategies of how to manage domestic tourism moving forward. In the same vein, COVID-19 has forced Airbnb to rethink its aspirations. Understanding Airbnb domestic travelers' perception and behavioral intentions towards the platform is undoubtedly essential for Airbnb business survival, especially for those countries where Airbnb was relying mainly on foreign tourists, particularly Vietnam. However, lack of studies has investigated Vietnamese Airbnb consumers' perception and behavioral intentions. Customer experiences in the hospitality industry are dissimilar among different national groups. For instance, the parameter comparison of American and Vietnamese culture have shown the significant differences in the main cultural dimensions, namely: individualism, power distance, or indulgence, which might explain the different perception or behaviour of the people in these specific contexts (Hofstede Insights).

The existing literature focuses heavily on the significant impact of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on consumers' decision making process in the hospitality and tourism industry due to the intangibility and experiential nature of the services (Litvin et al., 2008). Online

review and review score were confirmed as strong trust-enhancing signals, which influence Airbnb consumers' booking decisions (Abramova et al., 2017). Thus, considering their influential role in maintaining the existing Airbnb customers and attracting more potential ones, further research which uncover determinants of review–writing behavior is undoubtedly necessary for research academia and practitioners (King et al., 2014). Furthermore, the social demographics of Airbnb customers and trip characteristics might shape how environmental attributes affect their emotions dissimilarly, or strengthen the relationship between customers' perceived enjoyment and behavioral intentions. Earlier studies found that gender plays an important role in models of customer behaviour (e.g. Han & Ryu, 2006). People's accommodation decision-making process may be affected by the characteristic of their trip which is called “tripographics” (Poon & Huang, 2017). Nevertheless, the different influential levels of these moderating variables in customers' value perception, affective response and eWOM intentions towards peer-to-peer accommodations remain unclear.

To bridge the above-mentioned research gaps, based on an empirical study with 162 eligible Vietnamese users who had experience with Airbnb within the past 12 months, this research complements and advances existing literature on the accommodation sharing economy in the following ways. Firstly, it aims to provide a thorough understanding of the effect of the atmospheric stimuli (home benefits, social interaction, authenticity) and monetary value on Airbnb existing customers' perceived enjoyment, which consequently drives their positive eWOM intentions through an extension of the M-R model. Secondly, the moderating role of gender, purpose of the trip and type of accommodation are tested to reveal if there exists any dissimilarity in the relationship among environmental attributes, monetary value, customers' perceived enjoyment, and eWOM intentions between Airbnb male and female customers, or customers with different tripographics. To the practical implications, this study provides Airbnb companies and hosts with meaningful insights in an emerging market into identifying the important environmental factors that are more likely to stimulate consumers' enjoyment and encourage them to spread positive WOM on social network outlets.

3.2 Literature Review & Hypotheses development

3.2.1 The Mehrabian–Russell model

Grounded on environmental psychology theory, scholars in the marketing and management field have defined the service environment as a combination of physical, social

and contextual factors, which significantly affect the individual within that setting and their behaviour (Tombs & McColl-Kennedy, 2003). According to the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) framework of the M-R model, the atmospheric attributes are proposed as the stimuli (S) whereby customers perceive and interpret such stimuli to enhance their emotion (O), and this consequently leads to their favorable behavioral intentions (R). Many researchers applied this model to study the role of atmosphere in customer behavioral intentions in the hospitality and tourism industry (e.g. Kim et al., 2020; Meng & Choi, 2017).

With respect to the sharing economy, numerous research have been grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior or in the Technology Acceptance Model to study platform users' perception and behaviours (e.g. Mao & Lyu, 2017; Wang & Jeong, 2018). Nevertheless, the strength of the S-O-R model in figuring the essential of external factors is often ignored in investigating the service relationship between human emotional and cognitive state, and their actions. According to Mehrabian and Russell (1974), the application of this framework can provide a strong background in understanding the significant associations among external forces, the internal state of the individual and the final responses. By using the M-R model in the Airbnb study, So et al. (2021) proposed that the home amenities (physical environment), the social interaction (social perspective) and customers' perceived authenticity (contextual dimension) perform as the stimuli (S) for customers' repurchase intention (R) through the organism (O) of perceived enjoyment. Additionally, prior researchers also extended the dimension of environmental stimuli which comprise not only external environment, but also the internal forces within the customers, and found their significant impacts on customers' emotion and responses. For example, Peng and Kim (2014) extended the S-O-R model with hedonic shopping value and utilitarian shopping value as the internal influences to study customers' online shopping behavior through the intervention of cognitive and affective responses. Thus, based on So et al. (2021) study, the current paper chooses and extends the M-R model with an additional stimulus: perceived monetary value to predict another construct of Airbnb customers' behavioral loyalty – positive eWOM giving intentions. Consumers nowadays place more weight on the role of eWOM in the decision making process (Lee et al., 2008). Thus, this study goes beyond the investigation of tradition WOM to explore the linkages between Airbnb atmospheric stimuli, monetary value, perceived enjoyment and eWOM intentions.

3.2.2 *eWOM giving intentions*

Word-of-mouth is determined as the willingness of a customer to recommend events or services which satisfy or dissatisfy them at a certain level to their friends or family (Soderlund, 1998). In the era of digital technology, eWOM refers to consumers' evaluation of the utility or characteristics of specific goods or services through Internet-based technology (Litvin et al., 2008). This activity plays an important role in the relationship between customers and service providers, regarding the intangible nature and complexity of hospitality and tourism services. The more customers value a product/service they buy or consume, the more they are likely to express their opinions through positive WOM activities.

3.2.3 *The relationship between customers' perceived enjoyment and eWOM giving intentions*

Enjoyment which is defined as “the extend to which the activity of using [a] specific system is perceived to be enjoyment in its own right aside from any performance consequence resulting from system use” (Venkatesh, 2000, p. 351), has been deemed as an important subconstruct of affective response in existing hospitality and tourism related studies using the S-O-R model. In this model, customers' affective response refers to the organism through which the influence of environmental stimuli on customers' behavioral intentions occurs (e.g. Kim et al., 2020, Atzeni et al., 2021). In the context of the sharing economy, the sharing platform is an attractively innovative trend that has been producing some incredibly practical and broadly desirable products to consumers (Guttentag, 2016). Numerous research confirmed that enjoyment or hedonic motivation is one of the factors that explain customer's overall attitude and their behavioral intentions towards the sharing economy in general or Airbnb in particular (So et al., 2018; Lee & Kim, 2018). On the other hand, Babin et al. (2005) found that hedonic value components were more effective with WOM intentions rather than re-visiting intentions, or the need for enjoyment is confirmed as one of the main driving factors in travelers' review writing behavior (Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). Based on previous research findings, it is strongly supported to hypothesize that customers' perceived enjoyment which is induced from Airbnb environmental stimuli will ultimately incentivize them to spread positive eWOM, as the following hypothesis :

H1: Perceived enjoyment has a significant effect on Airbnb customers' positive eWOM intentions.

3.2.4 Environmental stimuli and customers' perceived enjoyment towards Airbnb

As mentioned above, enjoyment is one of the affective response dimensions which is captured through individuals' perception of the environmental factors. Previous researchers successfully utilized the S-O-R model and found the positive relationships between environmental stimuli and customers' emotional state in different contexts (e.g. Meng & Choi, 2017; So et al., 2021; Atzeni et al., 2021). The following sections discuss the relationship between the three dimensions of atmospheric factors, monetary value and customers' perceived enjoyment in the context of peer-to-peer accommodation.

The relationship between authenticity and perceived enjoyment

Authenticity is defined as something “which is believed or accepted to be genuine or real” (Taylor, 1991, p. 17). In respect to Airbnb experiences, a distinctive accommodation interior, uniqueness, close interactions with the hosts, and the local lifestyle or culture are the key factors that contribute mostly to guests' perception of authenticity (Lalicic & Weismayer, 2018). Authenticity is found as the critical motivation of a consumer's choice to stay at an Airbnb instead of a traditional hotel (Li et al., 2019; Lyu et al., 2018). Through the successful application of S-O-R model, prior scholars found authentic experience as the key environmental stimulus which positively affect customers' enjoyment, emotional involvement, and flow state in the context of virtual reality tourism (Kim et al., 2020, Atzeni et al., 2021) or in sharing economy (So et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the influence of authenticity in customers' perceived enjoyment is unknown for Vietnamese Airbnb travelers. Thus, considering the gap in the existing studies, the below hypothesis is suggested:

H2: Authenticity is positively related to Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment.

The relationship between home benefits and perceived enjoyment

Referring to functional cues of a hospitality setting, substantive servicescape is a combination of spatial and equipment layout, ambience, and symbols and artefacts which impact significantly on customers' emotions (e.g. Han & Ryu, 2006). With regards to an accommodation sharing platform, home benefits which consist of household amenities, a homely feel and a spacious place enhance customers' perceived value towards Airbnb

experience (Guttentag, 2016). Chaudhury et al. (2017) confirmed the positive relationship between residential or homelike environments and customers' emotional states. So et al. (2021) also stated that Airbnb home benefits stimulate customers' perceived enjoyment. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is strongly supported:

H3: Home benefits are positively related to Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment.

The relationship between social interaction and perceived enjoyment

Travelers choose to share accommodations to satisfy their desire for social relationships with the local people and meaningful connection with the hosts (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2018). Nonetheless, the findings of the association between social interaction and customers' perceived enjoyment toward a peer-to-peer accommodation are inconsistent in prior research. For instance, So et al. (2021) found that social interaction is not an influential factor in customers' perceived enjoyment, while other researchers argued that perceived social interaction stimulates customers' positive emotional states (Shuqair et al., 2019; Lyu et al., 2018). Therefore, further empirical evidence should be required to explore whether this relationship holds true in the context of Vietnamese Airbnb consumers. Based upon the extant literature, it is possible to anticipate that:

H4: Social interaction is positively related to Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment.

The relationship between customers' perceived monetary value and enjoyment

Monetary value is customers' perception of the trade-off between the advantage of the offerings and the monetary cost for achieving it (Venkatesh et al., 2012). Existing studies confirmed the role of perceived financial benefits in Airbnb customers' booking decisions (Mao & Lyu, 2017; Guttentag, 2016). So et al. (2018) affirmed that price value, hedonic benefit and home attributes affect customers' overall attitude towards Airbnb, which is significantly associated with their evaluation of the Airbnb experiences. Based on the Cognitive appraisal theory which suggested the strong relationship between an individual's evaluation of a specific object and their emotional response, it is possible to hypothesize that monetary value enhances consumers' evaluation of their experiences at Airbnb accommodation and consequently induces perceived enjoyment (Hosany, 2012). Especially, Pham and Nguyen (2019) found that

price is an influential factor on Vietnamese customers' perceived value towards online travel agencies. Thus, it is possible to propose the following hypothesis:

H5: Monetary value is positively related to Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment.

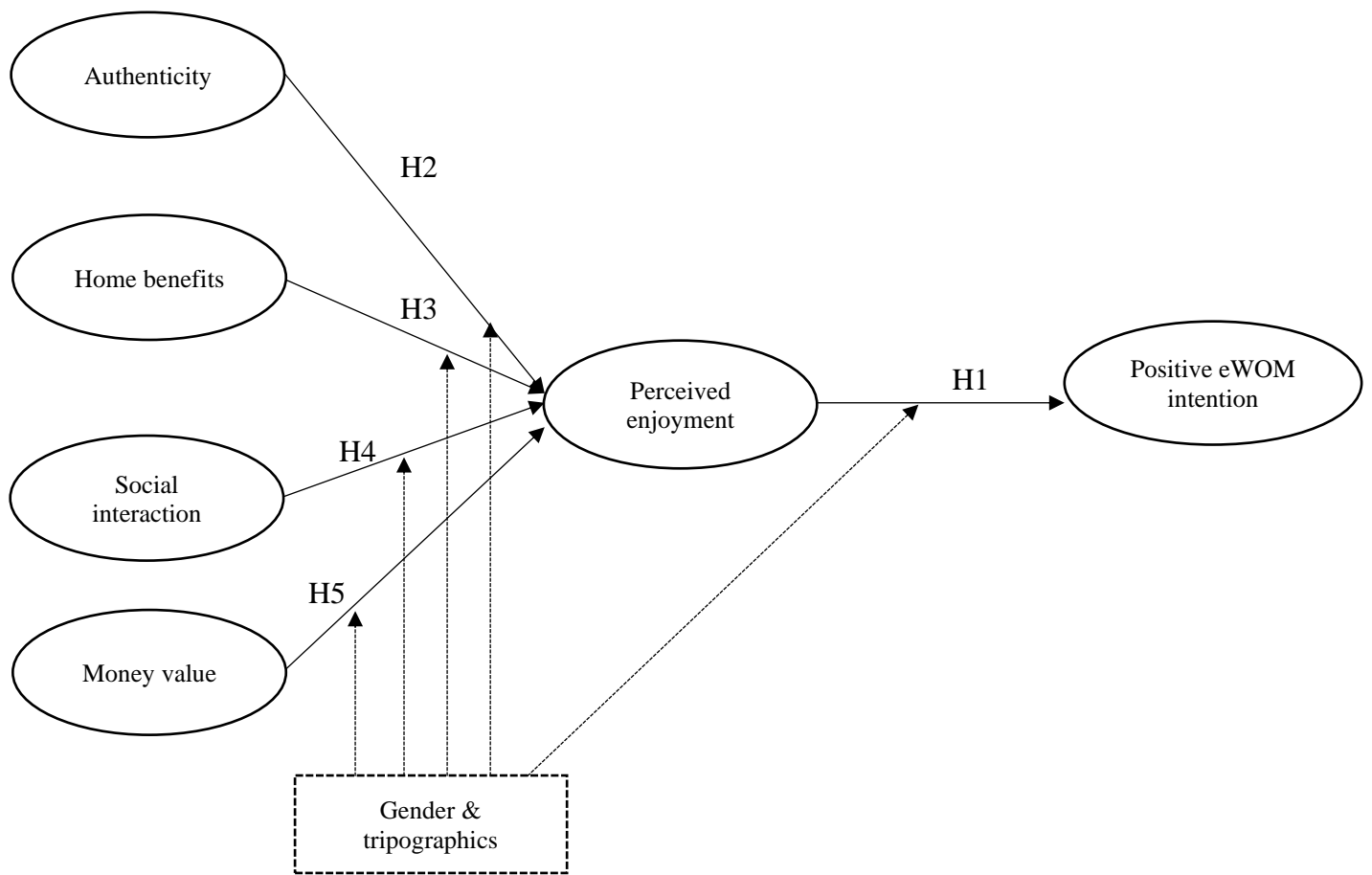
3.2.5 Gender and tripographics as the moderators

The notable differences between male and female behaviours have been well-documented in consumer research. According to Dedeoglu et al. (2016), the tourists' gender might impact their behaviours. Female customers are more loyal to a restaurant based on their emotional attachment (Jin et al., 2013). Moreover, customers who travel with different purposes or overnight at the different types of the peer-to-peer accommodation might also perceive their experiences and emotions dissimilarly (Poon & Huang, 2017). Therefore, it is expected that gender, type of accommodation and purpose of the trip might moderate the relationship between environmental attributes, monetary value, Airbnb consumers' perceived enjoyment and their positive eWOM intentions differently. Hence, it is expected that:

H6/H7/H8: Airbnb travelers' gender/ Type of Airbnb accommodation/ Purpose of the trip moderates the relationship among authenticity, home benefits, social interaction, monetary value, perceived enjoyment, and positive eWOM intentions.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the proposed conceptual framework for this study.

Figure 3.1: Proposed conceptual framework



3.3 Research methodology

3.3.1 Questionnaire

The survey began with a screening question to identify target respondents who had stayed at an Airbnb venue at least once in the last year. The first part of the questionnaire inquired about information regarding their most recent stay at Airbnb accommodation. The following part included questions of Vietnamese consumers' perceived environmental attributes, monetary benefit, enjoyment and their positive eWOM intentions towards the platform. The last section classified participants demographically. The scales for measuring the study constructs were well-investigated in the existing literature, so only minor adjustments in wording were tailored to the current study. To capture the environmental factors of the Airbnb accommodation experience, authenticity was measured with four items adapted from Guttentag et al. (2018), home benefits were evaluated by four items adopted from Guttentag

(2016), social interaction was assessed by three items from studies of Stors and Kagermeier (2015) and Tussyadiah (2015), three items from Sweeney and Soutar (2001) were used to evaluate monetary value, and customers' perceived enjoyment was measured with three items from Venkatesh et al. (2012) and Sweeney and Soutar (2001). Lastly, three items measuring customers' eWOM intentions were adapted from Chu and Kim (2011) and Maxham and Netemeyer (2002). All items were evaluated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). To ensure the accuracy, the survey was translated from English to Vietnamese and another linguistic expert was asked to translate it back to English.

3.3.2 Data collection and sample

A pilot test with five participants was conducted to verify the clarity and logical flow of the questionnaire. A minor revision to reduce the ambiguity of wording was made before finalizing the survey. An online self-administered questionnaire was posted on Google doc and distributed to potential participants using the non-probabilistic sampling method. The context of this research is to study the eWOM intentions of Vietnamese Airbnb consumers who must be familiar with using a desktop computer, smartphone, or other electronic device, so online data collection can be considered as an acceptable and suitable option (Birinci et al., 2018). Moreover, since the data collection happened during the pandemic when the Vietnam government implied strict social distancing practices, the online survey was deemed as the most accessible alternative. The questionnaire was sent individually to acquaintances through Facebook messenger, LinkedIn, Email, and posted on Facebook-based travel groups in Vietnam in order to approach target participants effectively. Due to the budget constraints, the respondents were encouraged to take part in the survey voluntarily without any monetary reward.

A priori sample size calculation for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to define an adequacy of eligible participants (Soper, 2020). Based on the number of observed items (20) and latent variables (6) in the measurement and structural model, anticipated effect size (0.30), the desired statistical power level (0.8) and probability level (0.05), a recommended minimum sample size was 161. Within two months of data collection (March and April, 2020), 352 respondents accessed the online survey, in which only 162 of them (46%) are Airbnb users who met the criteria to participate in this survey. The main reason which prevents Vietnamese Airbnb non-users from booking accommodation in the platform is unfamiliarity (63.1%). This

finding is in line with Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2018) study which explored consumers' unfamiliarity with Airbnb as one of the major demotivations in behavioral intentions.

3.3.3 Data analysis

The partial least squares (PLS) approach to SEM (PLS-SEM) with the application of SmartPLS 3.0 version was adopted in this study. This method is commonly suggested to test complex models or deal with non-normal data and relatively small-to-moderate sample sizes (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2017). Since all constructs were evaluated using the same scale, participants tend to be consistent in their answers and lead to the so-called common method bias (CMB) problem (Podsakoff et al., 2012). The CMB was evaluated using PLS-SEM. The results of all variance inflation factors (VIF) generated from a full collinearity test were not higher than 3.3 with regard to latent factors, which confirmed the non-existence of CMB (Kock, 2015).

3.4 Findings

3.4.1 Profile of respondents and trip characteristics

The sample of Vietnamese Airbnb travelers is unbalanced in terms of gender and marital status, since the majority of respondents are female (64.2%) and single (71%). The dominant age cohort is between 25 and 39 (74.1%), followed by the age range of ≤ 24 with 18.5%. Concerning education and income, the significant percentage of respondents hold a bachelor or postgraduate qualification (93.2%) and earn a monthly income which is above the national average income with approximately US\$3040 annually (72.2%). The respondents' demographic is supported by findings from previous surveys which found that the young adult and middle-aged population with higher income and education level are more engaged in sharing economy platforms (e.g. Eurobarometer, 2016; Smith, 2016).

Regarding the characteristics of the trip, 47.5% of the participants indicated that they shared the Airbnb accommodation with their friends, which was followed by family (24.7%). The main purpose of the trip was leisure (75.9%). The sample featured about 50% of Airbnb customers who chose an entire house, and 44.4% who stayed in a private room, while only 3.1% decided to share the room with other guests. **Table 3.1** summarizes the profile of respondents and their trip information.

Table 3.1: Sample profile & tripographics

| Variable | Categories | n | % |
|---------------------------------|--|----------|----------|
| Gender | Male | 58 | 35.8 |
| | Female | 104 | 64.2 |
| Age group (mean = 30.3) | ≤24 | 30 | 18.5 |
| | 25 - 29 | 54 | 33.3 |
| | 30 - 34 | 33 | 20.4 |
| | 35 - 39 | 33 | 20.4 |
| | ≥40 | 12 | 7.4 |
| Marital status | Single | 115 | 71.0 |
| | Married | 40 | 24.7 |
| | Others | 7 | 4.3 |
| Education | Highschool | 2 | 1.2 |
| | College | 8 | 4.9 |
| | Bachelor | 102 | 63.0 |
| | Post graduated | 49 | 30.2 |
| | Others | 1 | 0.6 |
| Income | Below the national average income | 27 | 16.7 |
| | At national average income | 18 | 11.1 |
| | Above the national average income | 117 | 72.2 |
| Main purpose of the trip | Holiday | 123 | 75.9 |
| | Business (non – holiday) | 15 | 9.3 |
| | Training (non – holiday) | 3 | 1.9 |
| | Visiting friends/ family (non – holiday) | 14 | 8.6 |
| | Others | 7 | 4.3 |
| Partner | Alone | 22 | 13.6 |
| | Family | 40 | 24.7 |
| | Friends | 77 | 47.5 |
| | Girlfriend/ Boyfriend | 21 | 13.0 |
| | Others | 2 | 1.2 |
| Type of Room | Shared room with others | 5 | 3.1 |
| | Private room | 72 | 44.4 |
| | Entire house | 81 | 50.0 |
| | Others | 4 | 2.5 |

3.4.2 Measurement model assessment

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the proposed constructs. Constructs reliability was assessed by observing factor loadings and composite reliability (Henseler et al., 2009). **Table 3.2** presents the loading of each measurement instrument on its respective construct that exceeds the threshold value of 0.707. The only exception is for the item “*Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me good social opportunities with the host*” of the construct Social Interaction (loading=0.600) that we decided to keep in the model to maintain the content validity of the construct, and because removing it would not improve the model. The composite reliability for all latent variables is from 0.829 to 0.943 (above 0.7) (Chin, 1998). Moreover, Cronbachs’ alpha of the proposed constructs surpassed 0.7 (ranged from 0.701 to 0.909). Therefore, the high internal consistency between a set of indicators in one construct is confirmed.

As shown in **Table 3.2**, the final AVE of each construct ranged from 0.563 to 0.846 (exceeding the threshold value at 0.5), which determined the convergent validity of the study construct (Henseler, 2017). In addition, factor loadings for all items are statistically significant (p -values= ≤ 0.001), which also indicate the excellent convergent validity. Later, a comparison of the square roots of AVE and the correlations of constructs was applied to provide support for the discriminant validity of the measures. Results showed that the square root of each AVE is higher than the inter-constructs correlation coefficients (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Moreover, the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratios (HTMT) for all constructs did not exceed 0.85 (see **Table 3.3**) which confirmed discriminant validity.

Table 3.2: Descriptive of measurement model

| Dimensions and items | Loading | CR | AVE | Mean (SD) | t | Sig. |
|--|---------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------|-------|
| Monetary value (CA: 0.817) | | 0.891 | 0.731 | | | |
| Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation was a good value for money | 0.854 | | | 3.69(0.05) | 16.054 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb offers a good product for a price | 0.854 | | | 3.88(0.04) | 18.593 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb accommodations are reasonably priced | 0.857 | | | 3.82(0.04) | 19.923 | 0.000 |
| Home benefit (CA: 0.809) | | 0.874 | 0.634 | | | |
| Airbnb offers spacious accommodation like homes | 0.776 | | | 3.95(0.06) | 13.040 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb listed accommodations that fulfilled my location needs for travel | 0.794 | | | 3.85(0.05) | 14.815 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb listed accommodations with up-to-date facilities to satisfy my travel needs | 0.811 | | | 3.66(0.04) | 20.676 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb provided a homely feel during the stay | 0.804 | | | 3.889(0.04) | 21.089 | 0.000 |
| Authenticity (CA: 0.744) | | 0.837 | 0.563 | | | |
| Airbnb provides an authentic experience | 0.701 | | | 3.52(0.08) | 8.893 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb offers an accommodation that integrates local culture | 0.720 | | | 3.71(0.07) | 9.501 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb provided an opportunity to stay in a less standardized accommodation environment. | 0.775 | | | 3.80(0.05) | 15.656 | 0.000 |
| Airbnb offered unique experiences | 0.802 | | | 3.86(0.04) | 18.112 | 0.000 |
| Social interaction (CA: 0.701) | | 0.829 | 0.623 | | | |
| Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me opportunities to interact more directly with local people | 0.881 | | | 3.54(0.03) | 30.243 | 0.000 |
| Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me opportunities to interact more with other guests. | 0.857 | | | 3.04(0.04) | 18.235 | 0.000 |
| Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me good social opportunities with the host. | 0.600 | | | 3.52(0.10) | 5.715 | 0.000 |
| Perceived enjoyment (CA: 0.804) | | 0.885 | 0.719 | | | |
| Airbnb offered an entertaining accommodation experience | 0.791 | | | 3.45(0.04) | 17.312 | 0.000 |
| Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation made me elated | 0.882 | | | 3.64(0.02) | 42.852 | 0.000 |
| Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation made me feel happy | 0.869 | | | 3.49(0.02) | 35.405 | 0.000 |
| eWOM intention (CA: 0.909) | | 0.943 | 0.846 | | | |
| I will mention Airbnb to others through social networks (Facebook, WhatsApp, Zalo...) | 0.907 | | | 3.35(0.02) | 38.685 | 0.000 |
| I will say positive things about Airbnb on online platforms (Tripadvisor, Airbnb Website...) | 0.925 | | | 3.39(0.02) | 51.666 | 0.000 |
| I will provide more positive online information about Airbnb in a more effective way. | 0.927 | | | 3.40(0.02) | 48.717 | 0.000 |

Table 3.3: Correlations among latent variables

| | Authenticity | Home benefit | Monetary value | Perceived enjoyment | Social interaction | eWOM intention |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Authenticity | 0.751 [*] | | | | | |
| Home benefit | 0.493 0.612 ^{**} | 0.796 [*] | | | | |
| Monetary value | 0.386 0.483 ^{**} | 0.505 0.627 [*] | 0.855 [*] | | | |
| Perceived enjoyment | 0.393 0.499 ^{**} | 0.393 0.479 [*] | 0.282 0.346 [*] | 0.848 [*] | | |
| Social interaction | 0.504 0.657 ^{**} | 0.262 0.336 [*] | 0.271 0.327 [*] | 0.430 0.494 [*] | 0.789 [*] | |
| eWOM intention | 0.419 0.498 ^{**} | 0.413 0.477 [*] | 0.371 0.432 [*] | 0.353 0.409 [*] | 0.297 0.390 [*] | 0.920 [*] |

* Diagonal values correspond to the squared root value of AVE for each latent variable in order to assess the Fornell-Larcker's criterion.

** HTMT values.

3.4.3 Assessing the structural model and testing hypotheses

In order to evaluate the good fit of the structural model, the significant level of path coefficient and the coefficient determination (R^2) were measured. R^2 value for customers' eWOM intentions was 0.119 which indicates a weak proportion of variance explained by perceived enjoyment. Environmental and external stimuli explained moderate variance ($R^2=0.259$) of customers' perceived enjoyment. The f^2 value of "home benefit" and "social interaction" on "perceived enjoyment" were 0.052 and 0.093, respectively, and "perceived enjoyment" on "customers' eWOM intentions" was 0.143 which exceed the cut-off value (0.02). In addition, Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value was generated by running the blindfolding procedure. The sufficient predictive power of this study model is confirmed because all the values are greater than zero (perceived enjoyment=0.184, eWOM=0.100) (Henseler et al., 2009).

The result of the direct test is presented in **Table 3.4**. The estimates for the path coefficient and t -values were determined through performing the PLS algorithm and bootstrapping procedures with 5,000 sub-samples. The path coefficients linking home benefit and social interaction to customers' perceived enjoyment (given by β_3 and β_4 , respectively) were positive and

statistically significant ($\beta_3=0.243$, $t=2.491$, $p=0.013$; $\beta_4=0.302$, $t=3.365$, $p=0.001$), which provide support for H3 and H4. Moreover, perceived enjoyment exerted a positive impact on customer eWOM intentions ($\beta_1=0.353$, $t=4.547$, $p=0.000$), which validates H1. However, the relationships between authenticity and monetary value with perceived enjoyment (given by β_2 and β_5 , respectively) were not significant, rejecting H2 and H5.

Table 3.4: Results of direct tests

| | β value | Bootstrap - t | p-value | Support |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------|---------|
| Perceived enjoyment (PE) -> eWOM intention (EWOM) | 0,353 | 4,547 | 0,000 | Yes |
| Authenticity (AUT) -> Perceived enjoyment (PE) | 0,108 | 1,020 | 0,308 | No |
| Home benefit (HB) -> Perceived enjoyment (PE) | 0,243 | 2,491 | 0,013 | Yes |
| Social interaction (SI) -> Perceived enjoyment (PE) | 0,302 | 3,365 | 0,001 | Yes |
| Monetary value (MV) -> Perceived enjoyment (PE) | 0,036 | 0,461 | 0,645 | No |

3.4.4 Testing the moderating effects of gender and trip characteristics

To test the moderating effect of gender (male and female), type of accommodation (private room and entire apartment), and purpose of the trip (leisure and business) on the associations between environmental stimuli, monetary value, customers' perceived enjoyment, and eWOM intentions, multi-group analyses were performed. As shown in **Table 3.5**, the non-parametric tests (Welch-Satterthwait test) revealed that the two groups involved in each analysis were not significantly different (all p -values >0.05). The exception was the effect of home benefits on customers' perceived enjoyment between Airbnb travelers with different purposes of the trip. Therefore, H6 and H7 are rejected and H8 is partially supported.

Table 3.5: Test for structural invariance

| Hypotheses | Group 1 | Group 2 | Difference | Non-parametric W- S test |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| Grouping variable | | | | |
| | Gender | | | |
| | Female | Male | Difference | W-S |
| H1: PE->EWOM | 0.450 | 0.298 | 0.153 | 0.789(p=0.435) |
| H2: AUT-> PE | 0.186 | - 0.014 | 0.201 | 0.948(p=0.347) |
| H3: HB-> PE | 0.286 | 0.160 | 0.125 | 0.572(p=0.569) |
| H4: SI-> PE | 0.244 | 0.388 | 0.143 | 0.782(p=0.437) |
| H5: MV-> PE | - 0.038 | 0.148 | 0.186 | 1.133(p=0.261) |
| | Type of accommodation | | | |
| | Shared place | Entire house | Difference | W-S |
| H1: PE->EWOM | 0.374 | 0.248 | 0.126 | 0.694(p=0.490) |
| H2: AUT-> PE | 0.067 | 0.025 | 0.042 | 0.196(p=0.845) |
| H3: HB-> PE | 0.441 | 0.130 | 0.311 | 1.723(p=0.089) |
| H4: SI-> PE | 0.230 | 0.360 | 0.130 | 0.723(p=0.472) |
| H5: MV-> PE | 0.068 | 0.009 | 0.059 | 0.341(p=0.734) |
| | Purpose of the trip | | | |
| | Holiday | Non-holiday | Difference | W-S |
| H1: PE->EWOM | 0.348 | 0.464 | 0.116 | 0.804(p=0.425) |
| H2: AUT-> PE | 0.168 | 0.169 | 0.001 | 0.007(p=0.995) |
| H3: HB-> PE | 0.101 | 0.512 | 0.411 | 2.461(p=0.017) |
| H4: SI-> PE | 0.318 | 0.308 | 0.011 | 0.038(p=0.970) |
| H5: MV-> PE | 0.106 | - 0.068 | 0.174 | 0.972(p=0.336) |

3.5 Discussion and conclusion

This study developed the hypothesized model to investigate the relationships between three environmental stimuli of Airbnb experience (authenticity, home benefits, social interaction) and monetary value with customers' perceived enjoyment, which finally drives customers spreading positive eWOM towards this peer-to-peer accommodation platform. The existing literature contains contradictory findings regarding the driving factors of Airbnb customers' emotional state or behaviour, which might be explained by the distinct culture of the different studied population. Grounding on existing studies that confirmed the critical role of Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment and eWOM, this paper intended to extend the M-R model with financial benefits to explore its antecedents. Firstly, this study confirmed the

significant positive effect of social interaction on Vietnamese customers' perceived enjoyment of the Airbnb experience. This result is in contrast with the study from So et al. (2021) which found the insignificant relationship between the social interactions and customers' perceived enjoyment toward Airbnb. This incongruence can be explained by the cultural difference, as a majority of Vietnamese follow collectivism which values harmony and leads to experiences of stronger emotional attachment with other members in the group (Triandis et al., 1988; Hofstede Insights). Moreover, this finding provides support for earlier studies which argued the facilitating role of social interaction in increasing customers' positive emotions (Shuqair et al., 2019; Lyu et al., 2018). Secondly, home benefits of Airbnb accommodation also constitute a higher level of customers' perceived enjoyment, which is similar with the findings of previous research (e.g. Chaudhury et al., 2017; So et al., 2021).

Contrary to our expectations, monetary value shows no influence in determining customers' emotional state. This is somehow in line with a prior finding which found the insignificant relationship between Malaysian Airbnb consumers' price consciousness and their feeling of attachment to Airbnb (Tiamiyu et al., 2020). The path coefficient between authenticity and perceived enjoyment is also insignificant which contradicts our hypothesis based on the prior research from So et al. (2021) and Li et al. (2019). This finding might be explained through the fact that Vietnamese are not familiar with this platform, so staying at an Airbnb accommodation can be categorized as an experience with a high level of novelty. According to Vittersø et al. (2017), the high level of novelty is more associated with the feeling of thrill or surprise, or eudaimonic experience, than hedonic experience. Moreover, Mao and Lyu (2017) also revealed the role of familiarity in providing Airbnb customers with a feeling of security and comfort, which enhances their perceived control or confidence over their behaviour.

The affective response of Airbnb customers, which derived from the above environmental stimuli, significantly lead them to spread positive eWOM. This finding once again confirms the critical importance of perceived enjoyment in customers' behavioral intentions towards Airbnb, which is largely consistent with existing Airbnb literature (Lee & Kim, 2018; So et al., 2021). Interestingly, results uncover that the relationships among authenticity, home benefits, social interaction, monetary value, perceived enjoyment and eWOM intentions mostly remain unchanged between Airbnb male and female travelers, or travelers with different trip characteristics. However, only the influence of home benefits in

customers' perceived enjoyment is stronger for Airbnb business customers. This finding supports the previous results which stated that the "tangibles" dimension of a hotel, comprising of physical appearance of facilities, is the best predictor of customers' perceived service quality towards the business hotel (Akbaba, 2006).

3.5.1 Theoretical implications

The findings of this study unfold important implications for accommodation sharing platform managers, academic scholars and contribute significantly to the body of Airbnb literature in the following ways. Firstly, while the vast majority of prior research studied Airbnb customers' repurchase intention, this study enriches further understanding of the influential factors of eWOM giving intentions. Particularly, this is a pioneer study that investigates Airbnb customers' intention to post positive eWOM in the Vietnamese context. The research's finding once again confirmed the role of perceived enjoyment in motivating customers leaving positive eWOM in the setting of Airbnb. Secondly, this study provides stronger evidence of the usability and suitability of the M-R model in examining Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions, which encourages further researchers applying or extending this model to study Airbnb consumer behaviours regardless of geographical contexts. Thirdly, this study found contradictory results regarding the relationship between social interaction, authenticity and perceived enjoyment compared to So et al. (2021) study, which proves the existence of cultural differences that significantly impact the influence of Airbnb experiential attributes on customers' emotion states, thus, requiring further cross-cultural investigation. Fourthly, the insignificant relationship between authenticity and enjoyment in this study is against the majority of existing Airbnb studies which indicate that Airbnb guests usually seek novelty during the stay (e.g. So et al., 2018). Nevertheless, this finding somehow supports Sthapit et al. (2021) recent study which found that Airbnb guests still achieve the feeling of joy from doing the same or similar activities as they do at home during their travel, as long as they spend quality time with friends and family at an Airbnb rental property. Thus, the perceived novelty value of Airbnb accommodation which significantly affects customers' enjoyment and subsequent behaviours should be addressed more cautiously regarding particular target segmentations. Last but not least, this study confirmed the stronger effect of home benefits on perceived enjoyment amongs Airbnb business travelers. Prior research confirmed that leisure and business travelers have different characteristics, demands and requirements from accommodation services (Yavas & Babakus, 2005). Therefore, future studies could delve into

investigating business travelers' expectation, value perception and behavioral intentions towards Airbnb to gain a more holistic comprehension of this Airbnb target demographic segment.

3.5.2 *Practical implications*

The current study sheds light on the understanding of Vietnamese Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions and provides practical insights to both Airbnb platform developers and service providers. With regards to implications for Airbnb hosts, this study emphasizes the role of perceived enjoyment in incentivizing customers' eWOM giving intention in the peer-to-peer accommodation settings. Therefore, hosts should add the joyful aspects to the Airbnb experiential attributes. More specifically, to evoke Airbnb customers' perceived enjoyment, social interaction and home benefits were affirmed to play the utmost important parts which require special attention and efforts from service providers to build the accommodation's competitive advantages. To enhance the social interaction, Airbnb hosts should have more friendly and supportive communications to build a positive relationship with guests. In terms of ensuring home benefits, Airbnb rental properties should at least provide the basic home amenities such as kitchen, cooking equipment, washing machine. However, these findings should be considered in the context of COVID-19 when health and safety issues will be even more important to tourists' accommodation decisions than ever before (Li et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020). Hence, providing home benefits should also take into account cleanliness and hygiene standards. To ensure the appropriate sanitation and hygiene standard yet still provide the memorable stay with meaningful interactions in the new normalcy, Airbnb hosts should apply new technologies and equipments in their daily operation such as self-check-in, automatic disinfectant system, hand sanitizer and mask provision, live-streaming video, or online cooking class, which could stimulate customers' pleasant emotion with the stay. Though the data collection occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, its findings can still be considered significant in the post pandemic, as a once-in-a-lifetime experience happening during one's life will adjust their long-term core value affecting their lives, preferences, attitude and behaviors (Meredith & Schewe, 2002).

The insignificant relationship between monetary benefit and customers' perceived enjoyment might also offer an interesting insight to Airbnb hosts. Price is commonly pronounced as the key motive travellers choose peer-to-peer accommodations over

conventional hotels, however, this advantage may also accumulate indirectly via the home benefits or accommodating more people (Young & Corsun, 2021). Therefore, the Airbnb platform is recommended to promote their competitive and unique offerings such as home amenities, cleanliness and social interaction interestingly and transparently on the website to attract more customers.

3.5.3 Limitation and further research recommendation

Despite its theoretical and practical contribution, this research still has some limitations which should be addressed in future studies. Firstly, since this study aims to investigate Airbnb customers' perception and behavioral intentions in Vietnam, the research is highly destination-specific and thus, findings can not be generalized. Future studies could replicate our conceptual framework across other countries with different cultural backgrounds to compare these preliminary results. Secondly, unfavorable environmental stimuli might also have an impact on Airbnb customers' negative emotions and subsequently lead them to write negative feedback, which should be examined in further research. Thirdly, this study found the insignificant relationship between monetary value and customers' perceived enjoyment, which might be explained that financial benefit only impacts customer happiness indirectly through the mediating role of customer satisfaction (Zhong & Moon, 2020). Therefore, future studies could test the indirect relationship between monetary value and customers' emotional state through a mediator such as customer satisfaction, or perceived value to draw a better conclusion.

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CHAPTER FOUR

STUDY 3: EXPLORING THE EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC WORD-OF-MOUTH ON AIRBNB CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTIONS: DO CONSUMERS' SENSE OF POWER AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK MATTER?

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ABSTRACTS

The influential role of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) on Airbnb customers' decision making process has been investigated predominantly. Nevertheless, customers' adoption of eWOM is distinct according to their subjective judgement of the eWOM conversation, psychological factors, and contextual factors. This study aims to provide empirical evidence on explaining the contradictory findings regarding the effect of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' behavioural intentions in the existing literature through examining the moderating role of consumers' sense of power and perceived psychological risk towards COVID-19. Moreover, this work also considers the important role of culture in Airbnb customers' behavioural intentions by conducting a cross-national study in Italy, Portugal and Vietnam. With a total sample of 1146 Italian, 262 Portuguese, and 441 Vietnamese Airbnb users and non-users, the findings confirm the differential moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in Airbnb customers' eWOM adoption process across these three research contexts. Interestingly, perceived behavioral control negatively impacts Airbnb customers' purchase intention. Moreover, desire to book the shared accommodation is the most influential factor in customers' purchase intention, which deems the suitability of utilizing the Model of Goal-directed Behavior (MGB) in studying Airbnb customers' behavioural intentions in the setting of a global pandemic.

Keywords: Airbnb, eWOM, Model of Goal-directed behavior, sense of power, psychological risk, cross-cultural study

4.1 Introduction

Nowadays, consumers have changed the way they share their experiences and exchange service and product information, in which electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has been a new recommendation approach among customers, thanks to the development of information and communication technology (Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2018). Especially in the context of the hospitality and tourism industry, due to the experiential nature of travel products, customers are increasingly depending on user-generated content (UGC) to make the best travel decisions and ensure their expected experience (Rageh et al., 2013). The vast majority of research confirmed significant influence of eWOM in consumer behaviors in the hospitality and tourism industry in general (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Brown et al., 2007; Daugherty & Hoffman, 2014), or among accommodation sharing platforms like Airbnb in particular (e.g. Cui et al., 2019; Chin et al., 2019). Pantelidis (2010) argued that potential customers are more likely to trust the experienced customers' reviews and comments on social media comparing to those provided by third party websites. During the (post) pandemic period, online reviews (are) were getting even more important than ever because they provide timely updates on how service providers are operating in a cautious and controlling manner to constrain the fast and easy spread of the virus, which might persuade or deter potential customers' purchase intentions (Luo & Xu, 2021). However, research on the influence of word-of-mouth on consumer decision making in the context of the emerging sharing economy, specifically in an Airbnb setting, is still limited. This is particularly evident when academic research, contextualized in a global health related crisis setting, is considered where there has been a recent call for further research to deepen our scientific understanding about interpersonal influence between various eWOM networks in consumer's risk attitude change during health-related crises (Chuo, 2014).

This study aims to further deepen this somehow overlooked research area. Traditionally, according to the literature review of the motivational factors in travelers' adoption of online reviews, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) are prevailingly used to study the relationship between eWOM and customer behavioral intentions (e.g. Assaker, 2020; Jalilvand & Samiei., 2012; Lee et al., 2021; Tapanainen et al., 2021). Nevertheless, these theories only comprise the rational and non-violational variables, while prior researchers found emotional factors are the utmost important

determinant in travelers' decision making process during the pandemic. To overcome this limit, this study applies the Model of Goal-directed Behavior (MGB) which comprises not only relational, but also emotional and motivational, factors to holistically study the role of eWOM. MGB was confirmed as the most powerful social psychology model to explain travel and tourist behavior in the fields of tourism and hospitality in uncertain situations (e.g. Kim et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2012). In addition, the construct of trust is also considered given the relevant role the existing literature attributes to it as being a major antecedent in shaping Airbnb customer behavioral intentions (e.g. Park & Tussyadiah, 2020) and, even more, as a variable that significantly mitigates the complexity, uncertainty and the risk travellers might perceive when traveling (Chen, 2013), especially when occurring during a health-related crisis scenario (e.g. Hassan & Soliman, 2021). Additionally, according to Yi et al. (2020), the experiential and uncertain nature of shared accommodation requires the incorporation of perceived risk in MGB to support the better understanding of Airbnb potential customer behavioral intentions. Hence, this research extends the MGB model with trust in Airbnb hosts and psychological risk in hope of better estimating the effect of eWOM on Airbnb customers' purchase intentions.

While the majority of existing research mainly focused on the properties of information and communication functions (Erkan & Evans, 2016; King et al., 2014), Cheung et al. (2008) stated that the effect of online reviews on the readers can be dissimilar from person to person due to their subjective judgement of the eWOM conversation. Previous research found contrasting findings regarding the influence of eWOM on customer behaviors. These differences can be explained by distinct research contexts, customer demographics, characteristics or psychological factors which might intervene the mechanism through which the influence of eWOM on customer behavioral intentions occurs. In line with these arguments, this paper aims to consider another perspective of personal characteristics that is the so-called sense of power consumers might express in their personality traits. Accordingly, to existing literature, powerful customers are likely to be more optimistic of risk, are action – oriented, and have an illusion of personal control over the results, whereas their powerless counterparts are more sensitive to risk and are inhibition – oriented (Anderson & Galinski, 2006, Fast et al., 2009), which might lead customers to different reactions towards eWOM during the challenging times. Considering that in the best of our knowledge, there is not any prior study considering the moderating role of sense of power in the influence of eWOM on consumer decision making in peer-to-peer accommodation platforms (i.e. Airbnb), this study also intends to attain further knowledge pertaining to this aspect.

For the purposes of the study, a quantitative study was conducted to examine the effect of eWOM on purchase intentions of a sample of Italian, Portuguese, and Vietnamese Airbnb users and non-users by adopting a SEM analysis. According to existing literature, Airbnb non-users might be classified in different categories, such as, “unaware of Airbnb”, “aware of but non-users” and “discontinuers” (Del Chiappa et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2020); this study refers to those individuals that are aware of the platform but do not use it (Del Chiappa et al, 2021). These three countries were purposively selected considering that they show relevant cultural differences among them, for example in terms of uncertainty avoidance (Italy=75, Portugal=99; Vietnam=30), thus meaning that they are differently “optimistic” of risk (Hofstede, 2022) which, in turn, might potentially cause a differential moderating effect of sense of power and psychological risks in the relationship between eWOM, MGB constructs and Airbnb consumer behavioral intentions. This study contributes to the large body of eWOM and consumer behavioural intentions related literature in the following ways. From the theoretical implication, this paper firstly extends the MGB with trust towards Airbnb hosts to have a better understanding about the new linkages through which the impact of eWOM on Airbnb customer behavioural intentions occurs in the prolonged global pandemic. Secondly, it assumes the moderating effects of sense of power and risk perception which might shape how eWOM indirectly impacts consumers’ intentions to book Airbnb accommodations dissimilarly through desire, perceived behavioural control, and trust in Airbnb hosts, especially with a consideration of cultural and situational differences. In other words, are these groups of Airbnb consumers equally affected by online reviews from others, which ultimately leads to their intentions to book accommodation with this sharing platform? From a managerial perspective, a deeper understanding about the influence of eWOM on Airbnb actual and prospect Airbnb users would provide useful insights to Airbnb marketers attempting to further boost their online-reputation and to sustain/recover their attractiveness and competitiveness onto the markets in the post-pandemic tourism context. Moreover, they can also be proactively prepared to cope with similar health-related crises that might appear in the future because any other type of virus could replicate a similar emphasis on hygiene and safety, as well as on social distancing.

4.2 Literature review & Hypotheses development

4.2.1 Airbnb and the impact of COVID-19 on accommodation sharing platform

Introduction

The sharing economy has witnessed a rapid development and burgeoning demand in which instead of buying and owning a product or service, people have been more interested in sharing and leasing them (Marzler et al., 2015). Thus, the growth of this sharing phenomenon has been said to affect the global economy in general, or to transform the traditional economic sectors in particular (Botsman & Roger, 2010; Koopman et al., 2014). The development of the sharing economy has even been more significant within the hospitality and tourism industry, where tourists nowadays are more accessible to the service provided by local people (Ert et al., 2016). As being recognized as the most dominant example of accommodation sharing platforms, Airbnb connects people who look to rent out their properties with those who search for affordable and unique accommodations. In more than a decade after its inception, the Airbnb platform, which self-promoted as the world's leading community-driven hospitality company has attracted millions of hosts and guests all over the world. Its development can be explained according to the parallel benefits that it contributes to generating returns on asset investment to the property owner on the one hand, and offering a more competitive-price accommodation to the guests on the other hand (Fang et al., 2016).

The impact of COVID-19 on accommodation sharing platform

COVID-19 has significantly disrupted the business operations of Airbnb (Dolnicar & Zare, 2020). The platform has experienced an exponential development in supply and demand worldwide till the appearance of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the beginning of 2020; this was even more clear when certain market segments, such as family/multi family travel (Zare & Dolnicar, 2021). The perceived health related risk induced by the outbreak significantly restrains customers to make any travel decision and book shared accommodation. Scholars affirmed that the COVID-19 pandemic has not only imposed new dynamics regarding the structures of shared accommodations on the one side, but also the choices, needs, necessities and uses of customers on the other side (Gossling et al., 2020). The competitive advantages of Airbnb over conventional accommodations were pronounced as unique experience, affordable price, and especially social and physical interactions. However, these

advantages might be redefined in the pandemic, when customers might emphasize the need of physical distance and prefer to rent a full flat to a shared room (Bresciani et al., 2021).

The role of electronic word-of-mouth on customer behavioral intentions

Hennig–Thurau et al. (2004) defined eWOM communication as any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customer about a product or a company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet. eWOM or online reviews are becoming increasingly important for consumers and organizations in various settings because customers usually search for peer evaluations about a specific product or service to reduce uncertainty in the purchase decision making process (Cheung et al., 2008; Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020). Especially in the context of peer-to-peer accommodation industry like Airbnb, due to a diverse array of properties and hosts and limited information regarding its quality prior to consumption, customers are more relied on the external signals such as online customer reviews in their accommodation booking process (Cui et al., 2019; Viglia et al., 2016). eWOM can be spread through a variety of media forms and types of peer-to-peer applications, and online customer reviews and ratings represent the most accessible and prevalent type of eWOM (Chatterjee, 2001). The volume of reviews represents the popularity of the product which customers utilize for screening choices (Zhang et al., 2013); whereas, the review valence or rating is considered as the more critical and credible source, which influences potential customers' impression or evaluations of the product and consequently guide their final decision (e.g. Sparks & Browning, 2011). Findings from previous articles proved that eWOM influences consumers' purchase intentions in different ways. For instance, buying intention of consumers with high skepticism is not influenced by argument quality and review volume, but for low skeptical consumers' purchase intention, it is more affected by the quantity of arguments than quality of online reviews (Sher & Lee, 2009). Ruiz-Equihua et al. (2020) argued that positive (vs negative) online reviews have a stronger influence on potential customers' higher (vs lower) booking intentions for less familiar hotels, especially amongst those customers from restrained cultures. Thus, understanding how eWOM influences customers with distinct cultural backgrounds such as Vietnamese, Portuguese and Italian, who might be different in the level of sense of power is undoubtedly necessary, especially in the setting of the pandemic.

The Model of Goal – directed Behavior

Previous scholars frequently utilized the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) or TPB to explain travellers' behavioral intentions. Despite their wide usage, these theories only consist of the rational part or cognitive variables of the decision-making process, disregarding the emotional and hedonic characteristics of consumer behaviors (Turel et al., 2010). Hence, in order to better predict consumer behaviors in uncertain situations (e.g. pandemic time), it is essential to combine emotions, goals and motivation in their decision-making process model (Bagozzi, 1992). The MGB was suggested by Perugini and Bagozzi (2001), in which the attitude is a consequence of a rational evaluation, and the desire is a comprehensive result from rational, emotional, and social aspects. In particular, the MGB reconstructs the TPB and assumes that attitude and subjective norms indirectly influence behavioural intentions through a desire factor (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001).

Researchers have extended the MGB in tourism and hospitality studies and argued that the expanded MGB can better explain variance of intentions and behaviours in uncertain contexts. For example, Lee et al. (2012) proposed an extended MGB that considers perceived risk from an influenza virus as a tourist's disinclination to make an outbound trip. Yi et al. (2020) also expanded the MGB to analyze risk effects on the adoption of the sharing economy – Airbnb, or Kim et al. (2020) extended the MGB with perceived risk as the antecedent of tourists' attitude, desire, behavioral intention; and intervention as a moderator to study international tourist behaviours during the Hong Kong protests. The findings of the previous studies have confirmed the significant influence of risk perception on consumer behavioural intentions in the challenging context, which argued the essential existence of perceived risk in examining Airbnb customers' booking intentions in the ongoing pandemic.

4.2.2 Theoretical hypotheses development

The association between eWOM, customer attitude and desire

Previous research indicated that eWOM is a basic and easily accessible information source for travellers and subsequently shapes their initial evaluation or attitude towards a destination or a service provider (e.g. Jalilvand et al., 2012). An unfavorable eWOM on a tourist destination has a negative effect on visitors' attitude towards visiting that place (Soliman, 2019). Goh (2015) found the significant relationship between eWOM and customers' evaluation towards booking shared accommodation. Based on the above discussion, it is possible to propose that positive eWOM which provides the timely information

about experiences at an accommodation in the pandemic will positively impact potential customers' favorable assessment towards this activity, as the following hypothesis:

H1a: eWOM has a direct relationship with customers' attitude towards Airbnb

In the MGB, attitude is one of the key components which shows a tendency of preference to a particular entity, while a desire shows the existence of motivation to perform or acquire something in mind (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). The extant literature confirmed the direct relationship between consumers' attitude and their intention to use shared accommodation (Goh, 2015; Sung et al., 2018). While the TPB asserts that attitudes toward a behaviour and subjective norms strengthens an individuals' intention to a particular behavior, the MGB redefines the role of attitude and subjective norms on intention formation through desire. The significant difference between travel desire and travel intention is the feeling or individual's wishes, cravings for the travel in the former case, while the later one refers to an idea that an individual plans to perform in the future (Prestwich et al., 2008). The latest hospitality and tourism related research in COVID-19 have also confirmed the role of travel desire on travelers' decision making process such as their travel intention, and thus, provides stronger support on the need of including desire in this study (e.g. Han et al., 2020). Moreover, the indirect relationship between attitude and behavioral intentions through desire has been confirmed in previous studies (Lee et al., 2012; Prestwich et al., 2008; Yi et al., 2020). Hence, it is possible to say that consumers' favorable attitude towards Airbnb indirectly increases their intention to book Airbnb accommodation through desire, as the following hypothesis:

H1b: Customers' attitude towards Airbnb positively influences their desire to use this accommodation platform.

The relationship between eWOM, subjective norms and desire

Besides the role of attitude, a person's opinion of a given situation tends to be impacted by the perceived idea of salient referents (Bearden & Etzel, 1982). Other people's opinions or subjective norms are usually recommendations generated by not only acquaintances, family or co-workers (Teo & Pok, 2003), but also from external resources such as media intelligences, impersonal information and expert opinions. Nowadays, people's desire to nurture social connections and build their own personal brand within a like-minded community through providing valuable eWOM on given social networking sites. These

recommendations or shared experiences of a particular product or service significantly influences the perceptions of other followers in the networks (Lee et al., 2021). Regarding the relationship between eWOM and subjective norms, existing literature found the influential role played by eWOM in customers' subjective norms in the context of peer-to-peer platforms (Goh, 2015), or generation Y's subjective norms towards the intentions to book luxury hotels (Lee et al., 2021). Thus, based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is supported:

H2a: eWOM positively affects Airbnb customers' subjective norms.

Due to the unexperiential nature of the shared accommodations, customers rely more on the aggregated opinions of peers and external influencers to stimulate their decision making-process (Cui et al., 2020; Hamari et al., 2015). The utmost important role of subjective norms was also found in inducing US traveller behavioural intentions for choosing safer destinations in the post COVID-19 period (Han et al., 2020). People outweigh the advice or opinions from critical others in forming a travel decision to reduce the uncertainty. However, through using the MGB, numerous scholars also proved the indirect relationship between subjective norms and intentions through desire (Kim et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2012; Prestwich et al., 2008; Yi et al., 2020). Therefore, it is strongly supported that Airbnb consumers' subjective norms directly influence desire, which ultimately motivates them to book Airbnb accommodation, as the below hypothesis:

H2b: Customers' subjective norms towards Airbnb are directly related to desire to use the platform.

The relationships among eWOM, customer positive/ negative anticipated emotions and desire

The following component of the MGB which might affect consumer desire is anticipated emotions. Consumers usually look forward to their affective reactions through their imagination of possible situations associated with a certain behavior. Their prior emotions about a certain experience might have occurred through searching information from other customers, or in other words, the emotional content in customers' feedback can induce readers' anticipated emotions towards the product or services. More simply, unpleasant online reviews make customers unhappy, and vice versa (Guo et al., 2020). Furthermore, based on the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm, customers' online reviews can be considered

as a kind of external stimuli which evokes the internal state of potential customers or specifically, their anticipated emotions in this study (e.g. Fang, 2014; Roy et al., 2021). Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that eWOM influences how potential customers anticipate their emotions towards a specific behaviour, as the following hypotheses:

H3a: eWOM is related to customers' positive anticipated emotions

H3b: eWOM is related to customers' negative anticipated emotions.

Either positive or negative anticipated emotions might positively affect customers' desire because it is related to the expectation to avoid situations of failing to achieve the goal (Yi et al., 2020). Therefore, the balance between positive and negative anticipated emotion about goal achievement significantly predicts the desire to perform a particular action (Bagozzi et al., 1998; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). According to this argument, the positive and negative anticipated emotions towards staying at peer-to-peer accommodation might influence customers' desire, which subsequently increases their likelihood to book Airbnb accommodation. Moreover, anticipated emotions were also confirmed as the most significant factor in stimulating travellers' desire and travel intentions during and after the pandemic. Grounded on the extant literature, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H3c: Customers' positive anticipated emotions directly influence their desire to use Airbnb significantly.

H3d: Customers' negative anticipated emotions directly affect their desire to use Airbnb significantly.

The relationship between eWOM, customers' perceived behavioural control and desire

The final component of the MGB is known as perceived behavioural control (PBC). Customers, especially potential ones who have not gained direct experience from a service provider, would rely heavily on eWOM or a shared review from prior customers to have indirect experience, which subsequently increases their confidence and perceived ease of making a final decision. Existing literature confirmed that eWOM has a significantly positive influence in individuals' PBC (Kwok & Yu, 2013; Lee et al., 2021). In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, travelers can access real-time information about the outbreak

seriousness through a large amount of travel eWOM posted on social media platforms, which can enhance their awareness and facilitate their control on coronavirus outbreak prevention. PBC was found to positively influence consumer intentions to book accommodation on the sharing platform (Goh, 2015), or effectively predict US international travelers' behavioural intentions to choose safer destinations in the post COVID-19 (Han et al., 2020). In the MGB, PBC was proved to strengthen desire and intention to behave in a certain way or even actual behaviour (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Prestwich, 2008). Thus, based on the strong support of the literature review, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H4a: eWOM has a positive impact on customers' PBC.

H4b: Customers' PBC is related to desire to use Airbnb.

H4c: Customers' PBC is related to purchase intentions with Airbnb accommodation.

The association between desire and customers' purchase intentions

As mentioned in the previous part, the TPB only comprises rational variables in predicting the customer decision – making process. It therefore excludes an important factor which is called desire, a motivation – based variable leading to intentions (Bagozzi, 1992). Desire was argued as the most significant proxy predictor of the intentions in the MGB, which was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, positive and negative anticipated emotions, PBC and customer behavioral intentions (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). Customers' desire to adopt the peer-to-peer accommodation affects their intentions accordingly (Yi et al., 2020). Based on the well-established MGB, it is strongly supported to propose the below hypothesis:

H5: Customers' desire to use Airbnb is positively related to their purchase intentions.

The antecedents and outcomes of customers' trust in hosts

In the context of sharing platforms, service providers and consumers confront security risks from uncertainty, as it is a physical transaction and requires the presence of customers at the premise for service experience (Lamberton & Rose, 2012). Before making any decision, both parties evaluate one another through prior users' reviews, which is an indication of what increases users' trust. Extant literature explored the impact of positive social referrals on strengthening consumers' trust, which ultimately increasing their likelihood of performing a certain action (e.g. Kong et al., 2020; Yoo et al., 2013). In the case of Airbnb, the antecedents

of consumers' trust in hosts are linked with the interactions between service consumer and provider, or hosts' reputation. Yang et al. (2019) found that host reputation, which achieved through reviews, comments, referrals, and recommendation, has the most powerful impact on users' trust in hosts. Especially in the setting of COVID-19, the mentioned cleanliness information in customer reviews was found to have the strongest influence in potential customers' trust toward the host (Godovykh et al., 2022). This trust subsequently leads to users' intentions or their actual participation in the sharing economy (Ert et al., 2016; Zervas et al., 2021). Based on the above discussion, authors assume that customers are more concerned about hygiene and sanitation standards to avoid being infected with the virus in a health related crisis, thus, online reviews which reveal service providers' commitments in following a strict cleaning protocol and providing a safe and clean place definitely increases their trust, and enhances their intentions to book the accommodation. Therefore, the present study is well-supported to hypothesize the below hypotheses:

H6a: eWOM positively influences Airbnb customers' trust in hosts.

H6b: Trust in hosts increases customers' purchase intentions.

The moderating influence of psychological risk perception

Perceived risk refers to an individual's felt uncertainty regarding the possible negative outcomes of using a product or service (Featherman & Pavlou, 2003). In hospitality and tourism related studies, prior researchers commonly considered perceived risk as a multi-dimensional construct which comprises four dimensions: privacy risk, physical risk, performance risk, and financial risk (e.g. Kim et al., 2020; Yi et al., 2020). Nevertheless, psychological risk which embraces travel concerns including fear, unnecessary tension, anxiety and discomfort are more significantly related to perceived risk in the context of a pandemic (Al-Ansi et al., 2019; Han et al., 2020). For instance, Olya and Han (2020) stated that the possibility of the death caused incidents during the trip highly increase tourists' perceived psychological risk. Hence, different from previous studies which extended the multidimensional perceived risk in the MGB, this paper considers the more appropriate and important role of psychological risk in forming Airbnb consumer behavioural intentions. Regarding the influence of the COVID-19 outbreak in Airbnb customers' perceived risk, Lee and Deale (2021) affirmed customers' higher risk perception during the pandemic, which is the main restraint of customers' participation in peer-to-peer accommodation (e.g. Liang et al.,

2018; Yi et al., 2020). Additionally, in the tourism sector, prior research also confirmed the moderating role of customers' risk perception in the associations between cognitive, affective, and motivational factors and behavioral intentions (Han et al., 2020; Han et al., 2019). In line with the above arguments, this study proposes the moderating nature of Airbnb customers' perceived psychological risk which might affect the relationship between eWOM, MGB constructs, trust in hosts and purchase intentions, as the following hypothesis.

H7: Airbnb customers' psychological risk perception moderates the hypothesized relationships.

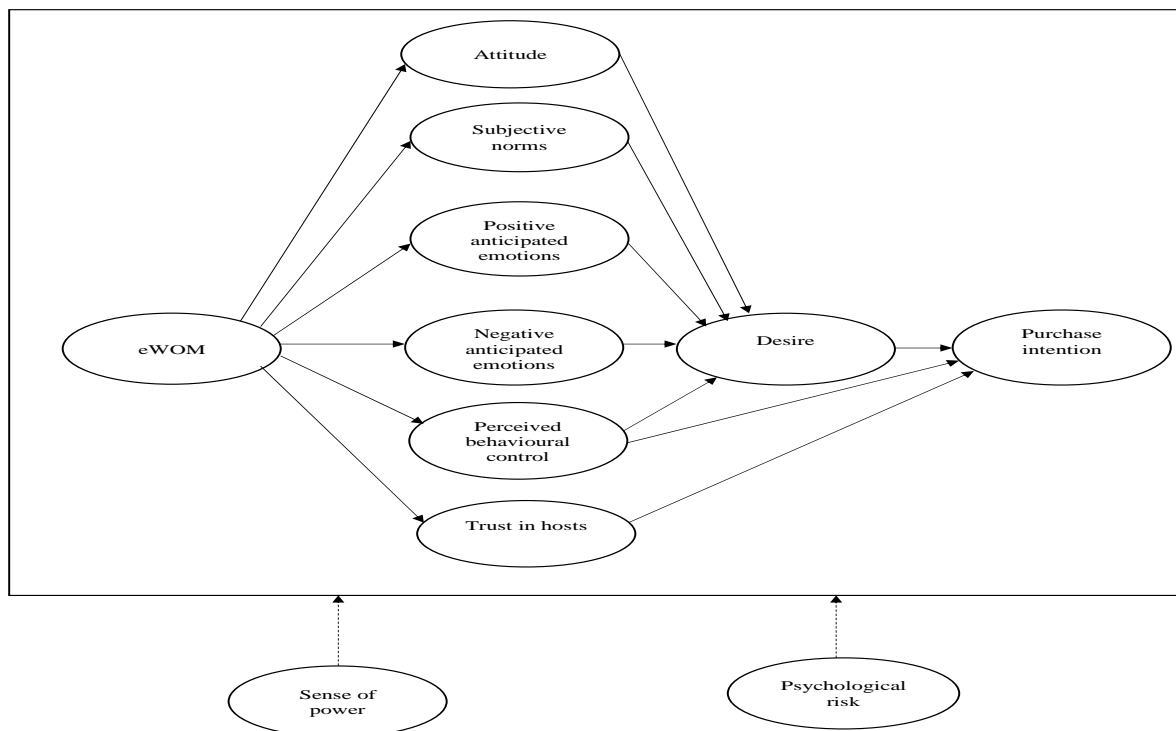
The moderating role of consumers' sense of power

Consumers' sense of power was confirmed to play a critical role in various hospitality settings. Power refers to individual demographic characteristics such as social status, income, age, and gender (Tucker, 2014). Individuals with high power fosters an agentic orientation, which is associated with dominant behaviors, enhancing need for control, and independence. On the contrary, powerless counterparts are more sensitive to risk and inhibition oriented (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006). Thus, it can be assumed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, perceived risk of being infected with the virus impulses these powerless customers to either avoid travel to a destination or rely more on the opinions of others in the travel decision-making process. Contrastingly, Lammer et al. (2012) argued that power increases social distance and consumers with a sense of power perceive their control over potential outcomes (Fast et al., 2009). Hence, existing literature confirmed that power leads people to be more self-oriented and become less likely to take the perspective of others (Galinsky et al., 2006). Based on the above argument, it can be assumed that powerful and powerless customers perceive the effect of online reviews from other customers dissimilarly, which lead to their distinct responses, as the below hypothesis:

H8: Consumers' sense of power moderates the hypothesized relationships.

Figure 4.1 demonstrates the proposed conceptual model of the relationships between eWOM, attitude, subjective norms, positive and negative anticipated emotions, PBC, trust in hosts, desire and Airbnb customers' purchase intentions, with sense of power and psychological risk as moderators.

Figure 4.1: Proposed conceptual framework



4.3 Research methodology:

4.3.1 Data collection and sample

The criteria for chosen participants are a native speaker of Italian, Portuguese, or Vietnamese who are above 18, have had experience of staying at an Airbnb accommodation before, or never stayed but having some knowledge of the platform. A web-based survey was applied for data collection as it is commonly used in hospitality research (Liang et al., 2018; Yi et al., 2020). Moreover, this study aims to investigate the effect of eWOM on Airbnb customers who must have searched travel information from other customers via Internet sites, therefore, the online survey is deemed as an appropriate method of data collection. Since it is almost impossible to have a sampling frame, this study collected data through a non-probability sampling approach (Buelens et al., 2018). A link of an online questionnaire on google form was then delivered to the target population through sharing the questionnaire link on social

platforms sites and snowball sampling by which acquaintances support to share the link to potential respondents.

Following the above criteria, 441 Vietnamese participants (54.4% female, 50.1% single and 53.5% in the age cohort 18 -30) were recruited. A vast majority of Vietnamese study participants held a bachelor degree or post- graduate degree (90.3%) and earn a monthly income which is above the nation's average (63%). Among them, 56.5% are Airbnb users. Using the same criteria, 1146 Italian respondents (61.7% female, 34.3% in the 18-30 age bracket, 47.6% married or cohabitant) were also recruited online. Approximately 59.1% held a bachelor's degree or higher qualification, however, about 27.1% reported an annual income above the nations' average. There are also slightly more Italian participants (56.2%) who have stayed at Airbnb accommodation. Compared to Vietnamese and Italian study participants, the characteristics of the Portuguese sample are slightly different in terms of demographics, in which there are more male (55.6%), a more mature sample (30.0% in the age cohort 40-50) and single (51.1%). Around 65.6% earned a bachelors' degree or higher and 38.5% reported an annual income above the nations' average. Moreover, Portuguese respondents perceived the highest level of sense of power with the median at 3.63, while the median of both Vietnamese and Italian samples is slightly lower at 3.50. The median value of perceived psychological risk is significantly different among the three samples, in which Vietnamese reported at a highest value (3.00), followed by Italian (2.33) and Portuguese (2.00). This finding is interesting when Portuguese register a very high score in uncertainty avoidance (99) in Hofstede Insight which means they are less optimistic of risk and usually hold higher risk perception in the uncertain setting. **Appendix A** illustrates the demographic information of the participants.

4.3.2 Measurement items

Researchers developed a preliminary version of the questionnaire after conducting an extensive review of related literature. More specifically, to capture how customers perceive the influence of eWOM, six items were originated from Jalilvand and Samiei (2012), and Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold (2011). All the constructs of the MGB were measured through adopting the measurement items from Lee et al. (2012); Perugini and Bagozzi (2001); Song et al., (2012); Yi et al. (2020). Particularly, all constructs were measured with four items each, except PBC that was assessed with three items. Psychological risk was evaluated with three items adopted from Han et al. (2020). Additionally, five indicators were adopted from Liang

et al. (2018) to measure customers' trust in Airbnb hosts. Lastly, an eight – item chronic scale adopted from Anderson et al. (2012) to measure consumer sense of power, in which negatively phrased measurement items were carefully reverse coded to avoid meaning distortions.

Since the proposed constructs and its measurement items in the study have never been validated in the setting of the global crisis previously, five hospitality researchers and five industry experts were invited to review the preliminary set of measurement items. Later, in order to increase the survey's understandability, a pretest with 20 participants who fulfilled the criteria of the study was followed before finalizing the questionnaire. All items were anchored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Since all the measurement items originated in English, back and forward-translation in Italian, Portuguese and Vietnamese questionnaires were conducted to ensure the accuracy of the meaning.

4.3.3 Data analysis

The collected data was analyzed using the IBM SPSS statistics to profile the sample, which was followed by the application of Partial Least Square approach to SEM to test the hypothesized relationships. The adoption of SmartPLS was appropriate with the objective of this research to predict the effect of exogenous variables on endogenous variables and maximize its explained variance. Moreover, this technique was also recommended in testing the complex conceptual models with non-normal data or an extension of an existing theory like the one in this current research (Hair et al., 2017). Since data was collected using the same Likert-scale and a cross-sectional method from the same participants, common method variance (CMV) which negatively affects the findings might happen. To check for this problem, a full collinearity test was performed to detect if there exists any constructs with variance inflation factor (VIF) values exceeding 3.3 (Hair et al., 2017). The results confirmed the non-existence of CMV, because the pathological VIFs for all latent factors were in the range of 1.000 – 2.191.

According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a two-stage approach was followed to measure the model. First, the relationship between latent factors and its relevant indicators was evaluated to test the measurement model. Second, the associations between the proposed constructs were assessed to evaluate the structural model (Hair et al., 2017). Moreover, this study also suggests the moderating role of consumers' sense of power and psychological risk

in the effect of independent variables on dependent variables, measurement and structural variance were proceeded through multi-group analyses.

4.4 Findings

4.4.1 Assessment of the measurement model

To assess the quality of the measurement model, we tested the validity and reliability of the reflective constructs. First, the convergent validity was examined through two indicators: factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). As shown in **Table 4.1**, the loading of each item on its assigned constructs exceeded the ideal level of 0.707, except the only item (eWOM5) with loadings at 0.626, thus, all these indicators were retained in the model (Hair et al., 2017). Moreover, the AVE values of all the constructs ranged from 0.686 to 0.907 which far exceeded the threshold value at 0.5, providing support for convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Second, Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A) value was used to evaluate the internal consistency reliability. The results showed that the lowest rho value is at 0.814, implying adequate construct validity (Henseler et al., 2015). Finally, we tested discriminant validity with Heterotrait – Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT). As illustrated in **Table 4.2**, all HTMT values were lower than 0.85, confirming the discriminant validity of the measured constructs.

Table 4.1: Descriptives and results of the measurement model

| Dimensions & Items | Mean(Standard Deviation) | Loading | AVE | t |
|---|--------------------------|---------|--------------|------------|
| EWOM (rho_A: 0.922) | | | 0.686 | |
| Read eWOM to know what Airbnb accommodations make good impression | 4.306(0.895) | 0.847 | | 80.034*** |
| To ensure choosing the right Airbnb accommodation, I read eWOM | 4.300(0.906) | 0.904 | | 141.349*** |
| I consult eWOM to help me choose a good Airbnb place | 4.271(0.894) | 0.895 | | 114.171*** |
| I gather information from eWOM before choosing a certain Airbnb | 4.134(1.002) | 0.834 | | 74.231*** |
| If I don't read eWOM from others, I will worry about my decision | 3.651(1.169) | 0.626 | | 30.523*** |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------|-------|--------------|------------|
| Others' eWOM make me confident in staying at the accommodation | 4.153(0.935) | 0.832 | | 74.551*** |
| Attitude (rho_A: 0.896) | | | 0.760 | |
| Using Airbnb is a desirable behavior | 3.649(0.891) | 0.869 | | 113.972*** |
| Using Airbnb is useful | 3.873(0.869) | 0.866 | | 116.894*** |
| Using Airbnb is a wise behavior | 3.496(0.927) | 0.891 | | 154.889*** |
| Using Airbnb is valuable | 3.567(0.920) | 0.859 | | 97.615*** |
| Subjective norms (rho_A: 0.899) | | | 0.769 | |
| Most people who are important to me will highly recommend using Airbnb | 2.915(1.099) | 0.894 | | 141.882*** |
| Most people who are important to me will actively consider using Airbnb | 3.021(1.099) | 0.916 | | 192.990*** |
| Most people who are important to me will use Airbnb | 3.005(1.063) | 0.908 | | 160.955*** |
| Most people who are important to me will agree with that I use Airbnb | 3.413(1.015) | 0.783 | | 58.733*** |
| Positive anticipated emotions (rho_A:0.913) | | | 0.788 | |
| If I use Airbnb, I will be satisfied | 3.513(0.884) | 0.884 | | 122.492*** |
| If I use Airbnb, I will be happy | 3.368(0.922) | 0.922 | | 206.431*** |
| If I use Airbnb, it will be memorable for a long time | 3.184(0.971) | 0.875 | | 118.961*** |
| It will be fun to use Airbnb | 3.394(0.939) | 0.870 | | 101.523*** |
| Negative anticipated emotions (rho_A: 0.951) | | | 0.859 | |
| If I can't use Airbnb, I will be worried | 2.404(1.110) | 0.908 | | 128.050*** |
| If I can't use Airbnb, I will be disappointed | 2.438(1.130) | 0.948 | | 233.028*** |
| If I can't use Airbnb, I will be sorry | 2.507(1.142) | 0.933 | | 208.081*** |
| If I can't use Airbnb, I will be sad | 2.275(1.116) | 0.919 | | 145.542*** |
| Perceived behavioral control (rho_A: 0.814) | | | 0.728 | |
| I am confident that it's up to my will to use Airbnb | 4.134(0.908) | 0.870 | | 71.735*** |
| The decision to use Airbnb is relied entirely on me | 4.155(0.936) | 0.886 | | 77.274*** |
| There is no impediment to my use of Airbnb | 4.091(0.963) | 0.802 | | 56.610*** |
| Trust in hosts (rho_A: 0.926) | | | 0.769 | |
| I think the hosts are honest | 3.734(0.809) | 0.828 | | 82.951*** |
| I think Airbnb hosts care about their customers | 3.571(0.809) | 0.875 | | 94.173*** |
| I think the hosts are consistent in quality and service | 3.603(0.841) | 0.884 | | 124.533*** |
| I believe the hosts are trustworthy | 3.647(0.808) | 0.898 | | 143.998*** |
| I think the hosts are dependable | 3.643(0.824) | 0.898 | | 141.378*** |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------|-------|--------------|------------|
| Desire (rho_A: 0.921) | | | 0.807 | |
| If I travel, I want to choose to stay at Airbnb | 3.488(0.945) | 0.893 | | 145.968*** |
| I would like to use Airbnb in the near future | 3.526(0.982) | 0.919 | | 180.366*** |
| My desire for using Airbnb in the near future is strong | 3.165(1.103) | 0.900 | | 172.110*** |
| If I can use Airbnb in the near future, I won't miss that opportunity | 3.476(1.029) | 0.879 | | 126.554*** |
| Purchase intention (rho_A: 0.967) | | | 0.907 | |
| I think I will be using Airbnb in the next 6 months | 3.149(1.126) | 0.952 | | 261.974*** |
| I plan to use Airbnb in the next 6 months | 3.093(1.151) | 0.965 | | 291.507*** |
| I am thinking of using Airbnb in the next 6 months | 3.122(1.175) | 0.952 | | 220.364*** |
| I intend to try and use Airbnb within 6 months | 3.135(1.171) | 0.941 | | 206.485*** |

Table 4.2: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

| | Attitude | Desire | NAE | PAE | PBC | Purchase intention | Subjective norms | Trust in hosts |
|------------------------------|----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Attitude | | | | | | | | |
| Desire | 0.709 | | | | | | | |
| NAE | 0.345 | 0.495 | | | | | | |
| PAE | 0.684 | 0.810 | 0.554 | | | | | |
| Perceived behavioral control | 0.428 | 0.280 | 0.040 | 0.244 | | | | |
| Purchase intention | 0.539 | 0.786 | 0.507 | 0.684 | 0.168 | | | |
| Subjective norms | 0.709 | 0.665 | 0.458 | 0.642 | 0.231 | 0.543 | | |
| Trust in hosts | 0.670 | 0.573 | 0.295 | 0.615 | 0.430 | 0.435 | 0.529 | |
| eWOM | 0.357 | 0.241 | 0.067 | 0.244 | 0.335 | 0.155 | 0.215 | 0.310 |

4.4.2 Assessment of the structural model

To assess the explanatory power of the structural model, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was computed. The R^2 of purchase intention was 0.553 which indicates a substantial proportion of variance explained by its determinants (desire, trust in hosts, PBC). Attitude, subjective norms, positive and negative anticipated emotions, and PBC together also explained a significantly large variance ($R^2=0.629$) of customer desire. However, eWOM only

provides small variance to the constructs in MGB model or trusts in hosts (with R^2 value ranging from 0.036 to 0.105). Additionally, we calculated the effect size f^2 of each exogenous latent variable on MGB constructs, trusts in hosts and purchase intention. The results showed the small effect size for eWOM on attitude, subjective norms, positive and negative anticipated emotions, PBC and trusts in hosts (f^2 value ranged from 0.038 to 0.118), a small to medium effect size for MGB constructs (f^2 ranged from 0.003 – 0.281) on desire. We also found a small effect size for trust in hosts ($f^2=0.003$), PBC ($f^2=0.004$), and large effect size for desire ($f^2=0.858$) on purchase intention. Finally, we run the blindfolding procedure to generate the Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value. The sufficient predictive power of this proposed model is confirmed because the Q^2 value for all endogenous latent variables are greater than zero (ranged from 0.026 – 0.504).

After the assessment of the measurement model, the hypothesized relationships among eWOM, MGB constructs, trust in hosts and purchase intention were examined using path coefficients, t-values by performing bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 sub-samples. As seen in **Table 4.3**, almost all the proposed hypotheses are supported. The only exceptions are the insignificant influence of eWOM on negative anticipated emotion ($\beta=-0.007$, $t=0.273$, $p=0.785$), or the significant but negative relationship between PBC and purchase intention ($\beta=-0.045$, $t=2.429$, $p=0.043$) which is different in the expected sign compared with the hypothesis. Thus, there is no empirical evidence to support H3b and H4c. **Table 4.3** summarized the detailed evaluation of the structural model.

Table 4.3: Assessment of structural model

| Hypothesized relationships | b value | p-value | Supported |
|--|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| H1a: eWOM -> Attitude | 0.324 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H1b: Attitude -> Desire | 0.215 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H2a: eWOM -> Subjective norms | 0.191 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H2b: Subjective norms -> Desire | 0.149 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H3a: eWOM -> Positive anticipated emotions | 0.222 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H3b: eWOM -> Negative anticipated emotions | -0.007 | 0.785 | No |
| H3c: Positive anticipated emotions -> Desire | 0.465 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H3d: Negative anticipated emotions -> Desire | 0.096 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H4a: eWOM -> Perceived behavioural control | 0.299 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H4b: Perceived behavioural control -> Desire | 0.039 | 0.022 | Yes |
| H4c: Perceived behavioural control -> Purchase intention | -0.045 | 0.015 | No |
| H5: Desire -> Purchase intention | 0.731 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H6a: eWOM -> Trust in hosts | 0.290 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H6b: Trust in hosts -> Purchase intention | 0.042 | 0.043 | Yes |

4.4.3 *Testing the moderating effects of sense of power and psychological risks across the different cultural contexts*

To test the moderating effect of sense of power in consideration of cultural difference, the median was used as a referent to categorize the sample in each country into two groups: one for those respondents with a value sense of power lower than the median (powerless customers) and another one presenting a higher value (powerful customers). Multi-group analyses were performed to investigate the differential moderating role of sense of power in different cultural contexts. As shown in **Table 4.4**, the non-parametric tests (Welch-Satterthwait test) revealed that the moderating effect of consumers' sense of power in the relationships among eWOM, MGB constructs, trusts in hosts and purchase intentions vary significantly across cultures. More specifically, regarding the Vietnamese sample, negative anticipated emotions hold a stronger influence on the desire of Airbnb consumers with a higher level of

sense of power, compared to their counterparts (p -values <0.05). Contrastingly, the PBC of these powerful consumers is less influenced by the opinions of others (p -values < 0.05). However, in the context of the Italian sample, the effect of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' attitude, positive anticipated emotion and trust in hosts is significantly mitigated in the group of powerful consumers, compared to a powerless one (p -values < 0.05). The only exception belongs to the Portuguese sample in which powerful and powerless consumers showed no dissimilarity in their perceptions and responses towards the online review from other customers (all p -values > 0.05).

Similarly, the median value of psychological risk in each country was also applied to divide the sample into groups of respondents with low perceived psychological risk (with a value lower than the median) and those presenting high risk perception (with higher value). With respect to the moderating nature of psychological risk (as shown in **Table 4.5**, the positive influence of eWOM on Vietnamese Airbnb consumers' attitude, subjective norms and trusts in hosts is significantly weakened when consumers perceive higher psychological risk in using the accommodation (p -values <0.05). On the contrary, in the context of the Italian sample, higher psychological risk perception reduces the effect of eWOM on negative anticipated emotions, compared to groups of lower risk perception (p -value <0.05). Once again, Portuguese respondents also report no difference in their perception, emotion and behavioural intentions towards online reviews regardless of psychological risk perception (all p -values >0.05). Due to the word limitation, we only presented the significant interaction effects of sense of power and psychological risk in the association among eWOM, MGB constructs, trust in host and purchase intention in three respective countries.

Table 4.4: Multi-group analysis – consumers’ sense of power

| Significant interaction effect | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-value | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-value | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-value |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | Vietnamese | | Italian | | Portuguese | |
| H1a: eWOM -> Attitude | -0.191 | 0.119 (No) | -0.174 | 0.005 (Yes) | -0.081 | 0.665 (No) |
| H3a: eWOM -> Positive anticipated emotions | -0.065 | 0.634 (No) | -0.125 | 0.043 (Yes) | -0.12 | 0.459 (No) |
| H3d: Negative anticipated emotions -> Desire | 0.191 | 0.016 (Yes) | -0.008 | 0.856 (No) | 0.097 | 0.290 (No) |
| H4a: eWOM -> Perceived behavioural control | -0.255 | 0.048 (Yes) | -0.097 | 0.166 (No) | 0.141 | 0.370 (No) |
| H6a: eWOM -> Trust in hosts | -0.228 | 0.086 (No) | -0.141 | 0.020 (Yes) | -0.042 | 0.818 (No) |

Table 4.5: Multi-group analysis – psychological risk

| Significant interaction effect | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-values | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-values | b Value (High Vs Low) | p-values |
|--|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | Vietnamese | | Italian | | Portuguese | |
| H1a: eWOM -> Attitude | -0.398 | 0.002 (Yes) | -0.053 | 0.386 (No) | -0.019 | 0.604 (No) |
| H2a: eWOM -> Subjective norms | -0.307 | 0.011 (Yes) | -0.101 | 0.076 (No) | -0.009 | 0.830 (No) |
| H3b: eWOM -> Negative anticipated emotions | -0.149 | 0.222 (No) | -0.123 | 0.035 (Yes) | 0.056 | 0.753 (No) |
| H6a: eWOM -> Trust in hosts | -0.377 | 0.006 (Yes) | 0.004 | 0.950 (No) | 0.003 | 0.836(No) |

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 *Concluding discussion*

The importance of emotion and desire in influencing travelers' decision making process has been critically emphasized in most recent COVID-19 related hospitality and tourism research (e.g. Das & Tiwari, 2021; Xu et al., 2021). Thus, unlike prior research, which predominantly utilized the TAM and TPB to study the motivational factors of travellers' online review adoption (e.g. Assaker, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Tapanainen et al., 2021), this study extends the MGB to provide a holistic understanding of how online reviews influences Airbnb consumers' perception and behavioural intentions, especially in the context of the global pandemic. More importantly, our study contributes to a greater understanding of the contradictory and incomplete findings regarding the role of eWOM in Airbnb customers' purchase intention through considering the moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk perception across three different cultural contexts: Italy, Portugal and Vietnam.

The study's findings reveal that eWOM positively triggers Airbnb consumers' favorable assessment towards the platform activity, their perceived social pressure, positive anticipated emotion, PBC and trust in hosts. These results once again confirmed the role of eWOM on consumers' cognitive, affective and behavioural factors, which are in line with prior studies (e.g. Godovykh et al., 2022; Goh, 2015; Guo et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Soliman, 2019). These rational, social and emotional factors subsequently increase Airbnb consumers' purchase intention directly or indirectly through desire, which also corroborate closely with extant literature (e.g. Ert et al., 2016; Han et al., 2020; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001; Yi et al., 2020). As findings indicate, purchase intention towards Airbnb is mainly affected by the motivational factor – desire, which is followed by trusts in hosts. The critical role of desire in consumer behavioural intention has been affirmed in previous studies which were conducted in relation to the crises (Kim et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2012; Yi et al., 2020), thus, the findings of this study concurs with this literature. Nevertheless, while extant literature has widely confirmed the alleged positive relationships between PBC and customer behavioural intentions (e.g. Goh, 2015; Han et al., 2020), our study found the significant but negative association between these two constructs, which is surprisingly exciting. The possible explanation for this surprising finding can be the consequences of situational factor – the COVID-19 pandemic. This health-related crisis is an external shock which has been lasting for years and leaving

serious impacts to the global and individuals' life, thus, the well-understanding of the limited behavioural control under the unexpected situation might constrain travelers' decision making process.

Moreover, consumers' sense of power and psychological risk perception generally weaken the effects of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' attitude, subjective norms, anticipated emotions, PBC and trust in Airbnb hosts. Nevertheless, the moderating effect of these constructs vary significantly across the three countries. More specifically, the influential role of eWOM on attitude, positive anticipated emotions, trust in Airbnb hosts is reduced among Italian powerful consumers, while these effects show no dissimilarity in Vietnamese and Portuguese powerful and powerless customers. Relying on Hofstede Insights (2022), the difference can be explained by the fact that Italians register a lower score in power distance (50) and higher in individualism (76) which means they are less likely to accept and expect inequality power distribution and that they tend to express lower trust towards the "others" (Zeffane, 2020). Consequently, they are found to be less influenced by the opinions of significant others, especially those with a high sense of power. On the contrary, Vietnamese and Portuguese registered high scores in power distance (70 and 63 respectively) and low in masculinity (40 and 31 respectively). The high power distance and low masculinity present stronger reliance on social influence or online reviews from others, as it refers to compliance and desire to gain positive reactions from superiors regardless of their level of sense of power (Srite & Karahanna, 2006). Contrastingly, negative anticipated emotions trigger stronger desire in Vietnamese Airbnb consumers with higher sense of power, while this group is less impacted by eWOM on enhancing their PBC. These findings can be understood that Vietnamese powerful customers relied more on their own experience, knowledge or self-efficacy to enhance PBC.

With respect to the moderating nature of perceived psychological risk, its effects on the relationship between eWOM, MGB constructs, trust in hosts and purchase intention are also dissimilar among the three countries. Particularly, the high perception of psychological risk reduces the effect of eWOM on Vietnamese Airbnb customers' favorable evaluation towards the platform, subjective norms and trust in Airbnb hosts, while the strength of these relationships remains similar among the low and high psychological risk groups of Italian and Portuguese respondents. These results contradict the uncertainty avoidance dimension amongst the three countries, as Vietnam registered low scores in this dimension which means they are

more willing to take risk and may even totally disregard eWOM (Schumann et al., 2010). However, these surprising differences can be the results of contextual factors beyond cultural effects, as Vietnam was experiencing the serious outbreak only a few months before the data collection. On the other hand, the high psychological risk perception of Italian Airbnb customers weakens the influence of online reviews on their negative anticipated emotions. Exceptionally, the moderating role of psychological risk is insignificant in affecting how Portuguese Airbnb customers respond towards eWOM.

4.5.2 Theoretical contribution

Although many studies have investigated the role of online reviews on customer behavioural intentions (e.g. Goh 2015; Lee et al., 2021; Tapanainen et al., 2021), our research is among the first to delve into the understanding of how customers perceive and respond to eWOM with a specific emphasis on the accommodation sharing sector, especially in a context highly influenced by a global pandemic and its subsequent long lasting objective and subjective/psychological effects. Furthermore, prior cross-cultural research with Airbnb customers also revealed that customer behavior may be culturally-driven (e.g. Tran et al., 2022). All this said, our findings provide four main contributions to the literature of Airbnb and eWOM as follows. First, this study offers the strong evidence on explaining the contrasting findings regarding the effect of eWOM on consumers perception and behavioural intentions in the existing literature, as it confirms the differential moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in the relationships between eWOM and Airbnb consumers' rational, cognitive, affective factors, or the relationships between these constructs with their purchase intention by taking cultural and contextual difference into consideration. Second, even though perceived risk have been commonly investigated as the constraints of using the accommodation sharing platform, its moderating role was not often examined and remains unclear (Lho et al., 2022). Therefore, this study has deepened the existing knowledge on moderating effect of risk perception in consumers' behaviour in the setting of the sharing economy. Third, another novel finding of this study is the negative relationship between PBC and Airbnb customers' purchase intention which is totally contrast to the extant literature. For this reason, the finding reflects that the well-established relationship between customers' cognitive factors and their behavioural intentions can be counterintuitive in different situations, which requires further investigation to have a better comprehension of consumer behaviours. Fourth, though PBC negatively impacts Airbnb customers' purchase intention, it still plays a significant role in

boosting their desire to use the platform. Once again, this finding supports the critical role of travel desire in customers decision making process in challenging situations (e.g. Fedeli et al., 2022; Gursoy et al., 2022). Thus, we argue that the MGB is an appropriate theoretical background to investigate how eWOM affects Airbnb consumers' purchase intention in a health-related crisis, especially when desire also explains a large variance in their intention to book Airbnb accommodation in the future, compared to trust in hosts and PBC.

4.5.3 Practical implications

By investigating the effect of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' purchase intention in a global pandemic, our findings provide meaningful managerial implications for Airbnb management platform and its accommodation service providers – Airbnb hosts. The finding reveals that the online reviews from previous customers are positively related to Airbnb customers' attitude, perceived social pressure, anticipated emotions, PBC and trust in hosts, which subsequently increase their desire to use the platform services. Therefore, Airbnb platforms should provide an accessible, easy-to-use mechanism, and offer monetary or non-monetary rewards to encourage customers to leave their feedback after the stay. More importantly, Airbnb hosts must ensure the service quality that meets or exceeds customer expectation to gain their satisfaction which consequently motivates them writing a positive review or recommending the services to potential customers. In the post COVID-19, people are more concerned about hygiene and cleanliness, especially for those with high perception of psychological risk, hence, Airbnb hosts should put extra effort in providing safe and clean accommodation such as following a strict cleaning protocol, or offering additional amenities to fulfil personal disinfection needs. This information should be well-presented to customers while they are searching the listings to reduce their psychological risk perception.

Furthermore, the findings also found that Italian Airbnb customers with a high sense of power are less influenced by the effect of online reviews. According to Rucker et al. (2012), power is related to structural factors in an individual's social environment. Therefore, the belongingness appeal of a sharing accommodation should be targeted to powerless customers, while uniqueness should be highlighted to their counterparts (Liu & Mattila, 2017). In summary, to attract the consumers with a high level of sense of power, Airbnb hosts must definitely provide a unique and novel staying experience which can enhance their social recognition. Overall speaking, the result of this cross-cultural study can assist Airbnb managers and service providers in these three countries or countries with similar cultural backgrounds in

understanding the insights of their target customers. These insights can be used to formulate the types of marketing strategies which are more attractive to these markets.

4.5.4 Limitations and Further research recommendations

As with any quantitative research, this study is not without limitations. First, the study is based on the usage of convenience samples, thus rendering findings hard to generalize. Second, due to the complexity of the conceptual model, the comparison between Airbnb users and non-users' behavioural intentions was not included in the scope of this study. Future researchers can explore whether the effect of eWOM remains unchanged on Airbnb users and non-users' purchase intention. Third, this study investigated the different moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in the relationships between eWOM and Airbnb consumers' perception and behavioural intentions across the different cultures. Further studies can propose and test the moderating role of other customers' characteristics such as using the Big Five personality model to re-test these hypotheses in these countries. Finally, consumers often change their behaviours along with changing situations, thus, measuring their behavioural intentions longitudinally especially in the post COVID-19 is highly recommended to enhance this study's findings reliability and validity.

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Appendix A: Profile of respondents

| Profile of dominant respondents | | Vietnamese (n=441) | Italian (n=1146) | Portuguese (n=262) |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Gender | Female | 54.40% | 61.70% | 44.40% |
| Age cohort | 18-30 | 53.50% | 34.30% | 28.60% |
| | 30-40 | 33.60% | 33.40% | 20.80% |
| | 40-50 | 12.00% | | 30.50% |
| Marital status | Married/ Cohabitant | 47.80% | 47.60% | 40.50% |
| | Single | 50.10% | 47.40% | 51.10% |
| Education level | Highschool/ College | 9.80% | 36.30% | 19.80% |
| | Bachelor degree | 66% | 46.70% | 65.6 |
| | Post graduate | 24.30% | 12.40% | |
| Income | Below nation’s average | 17.70% | 41.30% | 24.80% |
| | At nation’s average | 19.30% | 31.60% | 20.20% |
| | Above nation’s average | 63% | 27.10% | 38.50% |
| Have stayed at Airbnb? | Airbnb users | 56.50% | 56.20% | 47.70% |
| | Airbnb non-users | 43.50% | 43.80% | 52.30% |
| Median of consumers’ sense of power | | 3.50 | 3.50 | 3.63 |
| Median of perceived psychological risk | | 3.00 | 2.33 | 2.00 |

CHAPTER FIVE
STUDY FOUR: THE ROLE OF SUPERHOST BADGE IN AIRBNB HOSTS’
CONTINUANCE INTENTION

(This paper is presented in “Covid-19, Digital Transformation and Tourism Resilience” at Hue University, Vietnam. The paper is published in the journal ANATOLIA and its structure follows the journal style. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2023.2186903>)

ABSTRACT

Based on the theory of planned behavior (TPB), this study examines the antecedents of Airbnb hosts’ continuance intention by extending TPB with trust towards Airbnb and the moderating effect of the Superhost badge. A sample of 160 Vietnamese Airbnb hosts was collected through a web-based survey and data were analyzed with PLS-SEM. Findings revealed that Airbnb hosts’ attitude, perceived behavioral control and trust towards Airbnb significantly impact their intent to continue sharing on the platform. Furthermore, results also confirmed the existence of the moderating role of Airbnb hosts’ status in their decision-making process in an unprecedented pandemic. These findings subsequently lead to practical recommendations for the platform management in enhancing Airbnb hosts’ continuance intention during the prevailing disaster.

Keywords: Airbnb hosts, extended theory of planned behavior, trusts towards Airbnb, continuance intention, Superhost badge

5.1 Introduction

The worldwide society and economy experienced an unprecedented exogenous shock caused by the severe Covid–19 pandemic, which has especially left a substantial effect on the hospitality and tourism industry. However, crisis management in the tourism industry does intentionally focus on large corporations, while small and medium-sized businesses which are usually known for having a lack of resources, knowledge and experience are more vulnerable to crisis’ impact. The peer-to-peer accommodation platforms such as Airbnb were also claimed as lacking strategic thinking in the Covid-19 pandemic (Carpenter, 2020). Particularly, one of the key users in Airbnb platforms are Airbnb hosts who are considered as being inexperienced in dealing with the ongoing crisis, which lead them to

engage in different strategies including service adjustment in the platform (Carville, 2020; Recode Decode, 2020), or listing their accommodation on the long-term rental market (O' Sullivan, 2020). According to the AirDNA report (2020), Airbnb has been witnessing a significant loss of number of hosts as a consequence of failing to provide sufficient support to hosts.

Regarding the development of Airbnb in Vietnam, this business model firstly appeared in 2015 with the beginning of over one thousand listings. However, the number of listings fastly reached over 80,000 in early 2020, and later gradually decreased due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Interestingly, the vast majority of the booking (84%) was from the inbound market, while domestic visitors only accounted for 16% (My My, 2019). The heavy dependence of the business on the inbound market has even more emphasized the negative impact of the pandemic on the operation of Airbnb in Vietnam, since the country closed down the international borders in March 2020 to control the outbreak of the virus. In order to survive during this health related crisis, many hosts sold out their assets, while other hosts diversified their business strategies such as listing their accommodations in other types of platforms such as Booking.com, or promoting their services to more domestic visitors (Nguyen & Van, 2021). Thus, understanding the measures which Airbnb hosts take to deal with the challenges is undoubtedly vital to sustain the sharing accommodation platform throughout the prevailing crisis (La et al., 2021).

The TPB, which central factor is an individual's intention to perform a given behavior, is commonly used to investigate the antecedents of behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). Previous researchers have applied or extended the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to understand business leaders' intention to perform a certain behavior in different contexts. For instance, Huang and Kou (2020) applied this theory to study the influential factors of people's intention to be first-time asset suppliers in the sharing platform. To investigate the key determinants of accommodation owners/ managers' intention to implement crisis planning activities, Wang and Richie (2012) extended the TPB by adding past crisis experience. This well-known theory has been applied widely and successfully in various research contexts for decades. However, to the best of our knowledge, there is not any prior research applying this theory to study micro-entrepreneurs, such as Airbnb hosts' business continuity intentions in a health related crisis. Additionally, the existing literature has emphasized the role of trust in the success of the sharing economy or ensuring the sustainable future of peer-to-peer accommodation platforms

(e.g. Ert et al., 2016). Thus, the present study will extend the TPB model with trust towards Airbnb to explore the antecedents of Airbnb hosts' decision-making process.

Prior research largely studied the predicting factors of Airbnb hosts' behavioral intentions, whereas there has been a lack of study about the moderating factors which might influence the relationships between antecedents and outcomes. This paper aims to bridge this gap by assuming the moderating role of the Superhost badge. Airbnb hosts with the Superhost badge which similarly function to brand (Hardy & Dolnicar, 2018) are considered to be more experienced, have high response rates to customers' inquiries, and achieve high overall rating scores. Thus, they are expected to react differently to ordinary hosts under the impact of a worldwide pandemic. While existing studies mainly investigated the impact of the Superhost badge on Airbnb consumer's purchase making decision (e.g. Xie & Mao, 2016), the novelty of this study is considering the salient role of this status as a moderator from Airbnb service providers' perspective.

Based on the aforementioned research gaps, this paper conducted a web-based survey with Vietnamese hosts who have been listing their accommodation on the Airbnb platform for more than 12 months, which aims to investigate how Airbnb hosts responded to the global pandemic. The current study provides the following theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical contribution, this paper adds to the body of knowledge about Airbnb hosts' crisis response through examining the determinants of Airbnb hosts' continuance intentions. Additionally, the Superhost badge will be firstly tested as a boundary condition that differentiates the strength of the relationships between psychological predictors and continuance intention among a Superhost and an ordinary host. Lastly, according to Schiffman and Kanuk (2010), culture critically affects every aspect of people's value, logical thinking, and behavior, hence, Airbnb users with different cultural backgrounds might respond dissimilarly under a particular event. However, the existing empirical studies in sharing accommodation platforms have been overwhelmingly conducted in the Western context, understanding of Airbnb hosts in a developing country such as Vietnam is definitely a real need and added value to the extant literature. From the practical side, Botsman and Rogers (2010) stated that commercial sharing platforms need to encourage enough both service-sharing users and suppliers to sustain successfully.

5.2 Literature review and Hypotheses development

5.2.1 Peer-to-peer accommodation platform (Airbnb) in the COVID-19 outbreak

Peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation platforms with the most dominant example – Airbnb – provides a platform where travelers (Airbnb guests) and owners (Airbnb hosts) can share resources and information. They allow Airbnb hosts to earn extra income through sharing their available rooms, apartments, and houses, while travelers have a chance to choose a satisfactory accommodation (Fang et al., 2016). According to Forgacs and Dolnicar (2018), Airbnb hosts are usually considered as micro-entrepreneurs and not professionally trained in hospitality management. Additionally, the platform has been associated with regulatory issues such as the absence of strict health and safety regulations, or lack of emergency management strategies, which make the peer-to-peer accommodation market even more highly vulnerable to crises, compared to hotels (Guest Ready, 2018).

The serious impact of the Covid-19 outbreak on accommodation sharing platforms' business has been attracting a great number of scholars who studied service consumers and provider's perception and behavioral intentions. From the P2P accommodation providers' perspective, Zhang et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study to explore how sharing accommodation hosts in China have responded towards the Covid-19 pandemic. Another example is the Farmaki et al. (2020) study which aims to explore P2P accommodation hosts' perception and response towards the impact of the pandemic in Mediterranean countries. However, the cultural differences or hosting experiences might cause the dissimilar responses from hosts in another context. Thus, underpinned by TPB, the present study will explore the mechanism through which the effect of individual psychological factors on the continuance intention of Airbnb hosts in Covid-19 occurs, especially in an understudied market – Vietnam.

5.2.2 Conceptual framework and hypotheses development

Airbnb hosts' attitude and continuance intention

Attitude refers to the degree of a person's favorable or unfavorable appraisal of the behavior in question, which impacts his/ her behavioral intention and consequently influences their actual behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In the scenario of the Airbnb platform, attitude is the overall evaluation of sharing travel accommodation with strangers through an online P2P

platform. The relationship between attitude and intention has been examined in numerous articles which demonstrated that attitude predicts future behavior. For instance, Sung et al. (2018) confirmed that accommodation providers' attitude to Airbnb positively impacts their supply intention on the platform. Huang and Kuo (2020) also found the positive influence of individuals' attitude toward providing assets in their intention to share on Airbnb and Uber platforms. In the context of crises, Elsubbaugh et al. (2004) concluded that managers' attitude is a significant antecedent of their crisis preparation, or the positive attitude of entrepreneurs is critically important in the business resilience (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992). Hence, Airbnb hosts with a favorable attitude towards continuance behavior may recognize and judge more business opportunities in the current pandemic, which more likely encourage them to continue listing their accommodations on the platform. Considering the strong support in the existing literature of the relationship between attitude and intention, authors proposed the following hypothesis:

H1: Airbnb hosts' attitude towards business continuity positively impacts their continuance intention with the sharing platform.

Airbnb hosts' perceived behavioral control and continuance intention

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) involves the individual's perception of ease or difficulty in performing a specific behavior (Henle et al., 2010). It is connected with beliefs about the presence or absence of control factors that may facilitate or hinder people to perform the studied behavior. PBC was usually confirmed as a strong predictor of intention in the previous TPB studies. For example, Huang and Kuo (2020) suggested that facilitating technological conditions are positively associated with property providers' perceived behavioral control, which subsequently increase their intention to share assets with strangers. The rapid spread of the Covid-19 virus impules the application of hygiene and cleaning protocols as a required factor for the tourism and hospitality industry. Hence, to control the outbreak of the virus and guide hosts in operating the business safely, Airbnb released The Host Cleaning Protocol which includes specific guidelines on Covid-19 protection (Airbnb, 2020). From the hosts' perspective, the presence of this detailed handbook can be a perceived control factor which boosts their confidence in reducing the risk of host and guests being infected with the virus, and subsequently affect their continued use of the platform. Based on the above discussion, authors argued the following hypothesis:

H2: Airbnb hosts' PBC positively affects their continuance intention.

Airbnb hosts' subjective norms and continuance intention

Subjective norms refer to one's perceived social pressure from salient referents to perform or not to perform the target behavior, more particularly, the Airbnb hosts' intent to continue listing on Airbnb in this study context (Francis et al., 2004). According to Wang et al. (2020), people who have contributed to and become a part of sharing platforms is a current social trend which is affected by subjective norms and social influence. Moreover, they also found that the social utility of sharing positively impacts Airbnb hosts' trust towards the sharing economy platform. The current health epidemic has left a severe challenge to Airbnb businesses in terms of the declining number of tourists and loss of revenue due to travel restriction policies, which might increase financial, safety, and security risks of Airbnb hosts' perception. People are more likely to seek the company of others when they feel threatened, or simply stating they will communicate with others for advice amid uncertainty (Hossain et al., 2013). Airbnb hosts are mostly considered as informal businesses which has restricted them from receiving the formal support from government or industry associations in the crises. Thus, to survive throughout the challenging times, they are even more reliant on their close networks.

Furthermore, prior authors also confirmed an association between subjective norms and attitude. For instance, Mao and Lyu (2017) found that subjective norms have a positive impact on the attitude of Airbnb users, while Bock et al. (2005) argued that subjective norms are an antecedent of attitudes toward sharing knowledge. Therefore, the authors proposed the following hypotheses:

H3: Subjective norms influence Airbnb hosts' continuance intention

H4: Subjective norms impact Airbnb hosts' attitude towards business continuity

H5: Subjective norms affect Airbnb hosts' trust towards the platform.

Trust towards Airbnb and continuance intention

According to Morgan and Hunt (1994), trust is defined as one party's confidence that the other party will keep his promises based on three main dimensions: competence, benevolence, and

integrity. Trust is undoubtedly necessary in building sustainable relationships, especially in online businesses where distant relationships exist. In the context of accommodation sharing platforms, Wang et al. (2020) documented that hosts' trust towards Airbnb is an antecedent of their continuance intention. This relationship can be further explained through the theoretical view of dedication – based mechanism, more specifically, trust in Airbnb is positively related to users' affective commitment, which subsequently enhances their desire to develop and maintain the sustainable relationship with the platform (Kim & Kim, 2020). The Covid-19 outbreak has been impacting severely the tourism and hospitality industry in general, and Airbnb accommodation service providers in particular. The role of trust in a crisis is even more significant, as it mitigates complexity and uncertainty through an individual's acceptance of risk (Chen, 2013). Based on this evidence, it can be assumed that Airbnb hosts' trust towards Airbnb increase their willingness to take a risk in business continuity, according to the belief that the platform is competent, open, concerned, and reliable in supporting hosts in Covid-19. More simply, a high level of trust towards the platform induces Airbnb hosts' confidence in the platform's effective mechanism to protect them from the consequences of unexpected events, thus, subsequently increasing their continuing intention. Hence, it is possible to propose the below hypothesis:

H6: Trust towards Airbnb positively affects hosts' business continuity intention.

Superhost badge as a moderating variable

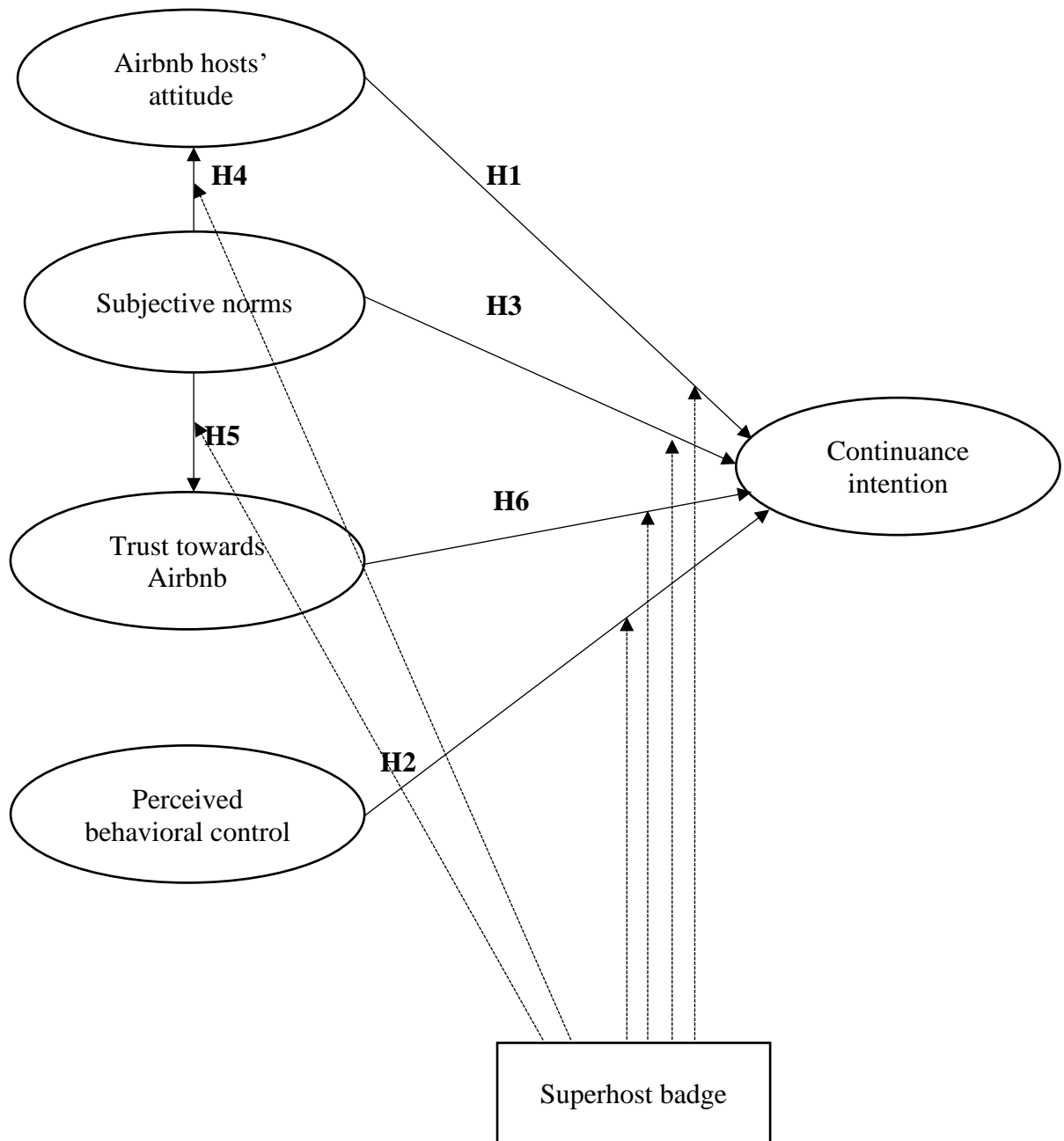
Airbnb accommodations are not categorized differently by star or brand as other commercial hotels, however, Airbnb service providers are recognized by newly developed quality indicators – the Superhost badge. Superhosts are those who have been reviewed by more than half of their guests and achieved at least 4.8 overall rating (Airbnb, 2020). Thus, an accommodation with the Superhost badge is more likely to receive positive reviews and higher ratings. Practically, the “Superhost” qualification is automatically assessed quarterly, hence, the hosts must devote more energy to the listings through constantly improving facilities and service quality to obtain or retain the badge (Liang et al., 2017). Therefore, it can be justified that the hosts with Superhost badge, who are more experienced and passionate about making guests' trips memorable, might have different reactions towards business continuity with the platform, compared to ordinary hosts (Airbnb, 2016).

Prior research also confirmed the role of experience in an individual's future behavior and its influence in changing the level of his/ her familiarity with goods, services, or travel destinations (Baloglu, 2001). The increased familiarity with an object or situation may affect an individual's attitude towards the related behavior. Furthermore, Baldick and Jang (2020) found that influence of social referents towards a particular behavior on an individual's cognitive evaluation varied by own experience. Connecting this argument to the current study, Superhosts who are usually considered as more experienced and more familiar in dealing with uncertain situations, may not consider cognitive evaluation towards the opportunity of listing the accommodation during the crisis as seriously as ordinary hosts who are less experienced. Moreover, the degree of the effect of favorable subjective norms regarding business continuity on Airbnb hosts' attitude may vary across ordinary hosts and Superhosts. On the other hand, the Superhost Relief Fund from Airbnb aims to provide financial support to only Superhosts, and Airbnb Experience hosts may also impact the level of trust towards the platform amongs hosts. Thus, it is possible to assume the below hypotheses:

H7: Superhost badge moderates the relationships between Airbnb hosts' attitude, subjective norms, PBC, trust towards Airbnb and their continuance intention.

Figure 5.1 illustrates a visual diagram that conceptualizes the proposed constructs of this research.

Figure 5.1: Proposed Conceptual Framework



5.3 Research methodology

5.3.1 Measurement instrument

This study used a quantitative research approach to empirically test the proposed hypotheses. Based on an extensive review of existing literature, a questionnaire was developed with five main constructs, including: Airbnb hosts' attitude towards continuance intention,

subjective norms, PBC, trust towards Airbnb and continuance intention. Five academic experts and five practitioners were invited to review the initial set of items to ensure content validity, question clarity and question mistakes. Before finalizing the survey instrument, it was pre-tested in a sample of 10 Airbnb hosts to purify the measurement scale and identify if there existed any problem related to comprehension. Since all of the measurement items were written in English originally, a forward–backward translation method was applied to ensure the equivalence of meaning in the instrument.

The questionnaire included three major parts. The first part is a combination of questions related to Airbnb hosts' experience and listing information. The second part included the five main constructs with 19 items. More specifically, five items assigned to Airbnb hosts' attitude based on the studies of Hamari et al. (2016) and recommendation from experts. Three items of subjective norms and four items of perceived behavioral control were formulated from the Zhang and Ng (2013) study. Trust towards Airbnb comprised four items according to the study of McKnight et al. (2002) and Airbnb hosts' continuance intention was measured by three items based on Bhattacharjee and Premkumar (2004) and Deng et al. (2010) studies. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree; 7= strongly agree). The final part of the questionnaire collected Airbnb hosts' demographic information.

Data collection

A web-based survey was conducted on the target population of all Vietnamese Airbnb hosts with more than one year of activity before the data collection. Since this is a rare, specific and hard–to–reach population, the survey was administered on Google doc and electronically distributed to eligible respondents through a convenience sampling method . The questionnaire was posted on Facebook based Airbnb host communities such as: Vietnam Airbnb hosts community, Airbnb hosts in Hanoi, among others. In addition, participants were also informed that their answers would be treated confidentially and anonymously. During the challenging data collection process which conducted from December 2020 to April 2021, 204 participants answered the questionnaire. However, only 160 respondents (78.4%) were Airbnb hosts who fulfilled the criteria and were eligible to participate in this study. This sample size was also considered adequate to proceed with a PLS-SEM data analysis.

5.3.2 *Data analysis*

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). Descriptive data analysis was run to profile the sample with the IBM SPSS Statistics 26. Later, the SmartPLS 3.0 was applied to test the conceptual model. PLS was chosen over the first-generation techniques due to its minimal requirements on measurement scales, residual distributions and sample size. Since the data was collected from a cross-sectional sample and using the same likert-scale, common method bias (CMB) which negatively impacts the findings might exist (Podsakoff et al., 2012). PLS-SEM was applied to assess this problem. All variance inflation factors (VIF) with regard to latent variables resulting from a full collinearity test did not exceed 3.3, thus, the model is confirmed free of CMB (Kock, 2015).

5.4 Findings

5.4.1 *Profile of respondents and listing characteristics*

The respondents in this study are predominantly female (65.6%), married (53.1%), and holding a bachelor degree or postgraduate (90%). The average age of the participants is 32.76 years (standard deviation: 6.365) and the median is 32 years old. The largest percentage of respondents is in the age cohort between 25 and 34 (60.6%), followed by the age range from 35 to 39 with 21.3%. The majority of participants consider being an Airbnb host as their part-time job (75.6%). Approximately 66% of Vietnamese hosts participating in this study revealed that they have been listing their accommodation on the Airbnb platform for less than three years. Moreover, more than 60% of respondents are rewarded as Superhost.

Regarding the characteristics of the sampled listings, the main types of Airbnb accommodation are private apartments (57.5%) and sharing houses with other travellers (28.8%). The key motivation to be an Airbnb host is related to financial benefits (90.0%), which is followed by gaining social interactions (39.9%). Before the Covid-19 outbreak, the average number of listings of each host was at 4.52, which dropped to 2.68 at the time of data collection. See **Appendix B and C** for more details about the profile of study participants, their hosting experience, and listing characteristics.

5.4.2 *Measurement model assessments*

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement scales. Table 5.1 shows the loading of each item on its assigned construct, in all cases, which are above the threshold value of 0.707 (Hair et al., 2011). Moreover, construct reliability (CR) was also evaluated by observing the composite reliability indexes. In our model, these are from 0.912 to 0.957, which surpass the threshold value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2011). Cronbach alpha of the latent factors are also found to vary from 0.855 to 0.932 (above 0.7). Thus, a high internal consistency between a set of measurement items in one construct is confirmed. Table 5.1 also illustrates descriptive statistics for each indicator.

To confirm convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) that shows the average amount of variance between the constructs and its indicators should exceed the threshold value of 0.5 (Henseler, 2017). **Table 5.1** presents the final AVE of each proposed construct ranging from 0.743 to 0.881, which fulfill this criterion. Furthermore, factor loadings also show the significance of all indicators (p -values <0.001), which again confirm the excellent convergent validity. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity was evaluated through a comparison of the square root of each AVE and the correlations between each construct and other latent variables. As shown in **Table 5.2**, the square root of AVE for each construct was found to exceed the correlation coefficients for the inter-constructs. Additionally, the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratios (HTMT) for all constructs were lower than 0.85 (see **Table 5.2**) which also confirm discriminant validity.

Table 5.1: Descriptives and results of the measurement model

| Dimensions and items | Loading | CR | AVE | Mean SD | t |
|--|---------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| Airbnb hosts' attitude (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.92) | | 0.94 | 0.76 | | |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation is a wise move | 0.84 | | | 3.61 1.40 | 27.40*** |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation is a positive thing | 0.87 | | | 3.52 1.40 | 39.83*** |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation is a profitable thing | 0.89 | | | 3.20 1.36 | 47.41*** |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation is a better mode of exchange | 0.83 | | | 3.18 1.33 | 21.67*** |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation makes sense | 0.91 | | | 3.29 1.40 | 60.11*** |
| Subjective norms (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.85) | | 0.91 | 0.77 | | |
| People who are important to me think that I should continue sharing my accommodation | 0.88 | | | 2.96 1.26 | 40.67*** |
| People who may influence my behavior think that I should continue sharing my accommodation | 0.90 | | | 3.07 1.24 | 46.87*** |
| People whose opinions I value think that I should continue sharing my accommodation | 0.84 | | | 3.18 1.26 | 18.58*** |
| Perceived behavioral control (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.88) | | 0.92 | 0.74 | | |
| I am able to continue sharing my accommodation in the sharing economy | 0.86 | | | 3.70 1.34 | 41.01*** |
| Continuing sharing my accommodation is within my control | 0.90 | | | 3.75 1.31 | 42.00*** |
| I have the resources to support continuing sharing accommodation | 0.82 | | | 3.43 1.34 | 24.56*** |
| I have the opportunities to continue sharing my accommodation | 0.86 | | | 3.50 1.28 | 31.13*** |
| Trust towards Airbnb (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.91) | | 0.94 | 0.80 | | |
| I believe Airbnb has enough safeguards to make me feel comfortable continuing using it | 0.88 | | | 3.74 1.31 | 40.64*** |
| I feel assured that legal and technological structures adequately protect me from problems on Airbnb | 0.91 | | | 3.81 1.29 | 60.38*** |
| I feel confident that encryption and other technological advances on Airbnb make it safe for me to use | 0.92 | | | 3.85 1.28 | 68.37*** |
| Airbnb provides a robust and safe environment to share private information | 0.85 | | | 3.99 1.28 | 23.33*** |
| Hosts' continuance intention (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.93) | | 0.95 | 0.88 | | |
| I intend to continue sharing my accommodation on Airbnb platform | 0.95 | | | 3.86 1.38 | 106.87*** |
| I will always try to share my accommodation on Airbnb in my daily life | 0.93 | | | 4.07 1.42 | 35.48*** |
| I will keep sharing my accommodation on Airbnb as regularly | 0.92 | | | 3.82 1.52 | 51.90*** |

*** p -value<0.001

Table 5.2: Correlations among latent variables

| | Attitude | Continuance intention | Perceived behavioral control | Subjective norms | Trust towards Airbnb |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Attitude | 0.87* | | | | |
| Continuance intention | 0.59* 0.64** | 0.93* | | | |
| Perceived behavioral control | 0.60* 0.66** | 0.65* 0.71** | 0.86* | | |
| Subjective norms | 0.46* 0.51** | 0.40* 0.44** | 0.46* 0.53** | 0.88* | |
| Trust towards Airbnb | 0.50* 0.54** | 0.61* 0.66** | 0.62* 0.69** | 0.23* 0.26** | 0.89* |

*Diagonal values correspond to the squared root value of AVE for each latent variable in order to assess the Fornell-Larcker's criterion.

** HTMT values

5.4.3 Assessing the structural model and testing hypotheses

In order to quantify the predictive capabilities of the structural model, the coefficients of determination (R^2) for the endogenous constructs were measured. The R^2 for the final endogenous construct of the model (“continuance intention”) was 0.541, which indicates a large proportion of variance explained by its predictors including: attitude, PBC, and trust towards Airbnb. For Airbnb hosts’ attitude towards business continuity and trust towards Airbnb platform, subjective norms explain a moderate proportion of its variance ($R^2=0.213$ and $R^2=0.054$, respectively).

Table 5.3 shows the estimated path coefficients of the structural model. The significance of the paths was examined through calculating the corresponding p-values using bootstrapping procedures with 5,000 sub-samples. As presented in **Table 5.3**, trust towards Airbnb holds the most significantly positive effect on continuance intention ($\beta_6=0.298$, $t=3.330$, $p=0.001$), which confirms hypothesis H6. In addition, the path coefficients linking attitude and PBC to Airbnb hosts’ continuance intention are also positive and significant ($\beta_1=0.240$, $t=3.322$, $p=0.001$; $\beta_2=0.273$, $t=2.934$, $p=0.003$). Thus, H1 and H2 are supported. Results also reveal that subjective norms exert a positive effect on both Airbnb hosts’ attitude and trust towards Airbnb ($\beta_4=0.461$, $t=5.543$, $p=0.000$; $\beta_5=0.232$, $t=2.193$, $p=0.028$), which validates H4 and H5. Nevertheless, results show that subjective norms do not hold significant impact on continuance intention (given by $\beta_3=0.093$, $t=1.488$, $p=0.137$), rejecting H3.

Table 5. 3: The result of direct tests

| | β value | Bootstrap - t | p-values | Support |
|---|---------------|---------------|----------|---------|
| H1: Attitude -> Continuance intention | 0.24 | 3.32 | 0.001 | Yes |
| H2: Perceived behavioral control -> Continuance intention | 0.27 | 2.93 | 0.003 | Yes |
| H3: Subjective norms -> Continuance intention | 0.09 | 1.48 | 0.137 | No |
| H4: Subjective norms -> Attitude | 0.46 | 5.54 | 0.000 | Yes |
| H5: Subjective norms -> Trust towards Airbnb | 0.23 | 2.19 | 0.028 | Yes |
| H6: Trust towards Airbnb -> Continuance intention | 0.29 | 3.33 | 0.001 | Yes |

5.4.4 Testing the moderating effect of Superhost badge

Table 5.4 presents results of a non-parametric test to examine whether the proposed relationships between attitude, subjective norms, PBC, trust towards Airbnb, and Airbnb hosts' business continuity intention (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6), were being affected by Superhost badge status. Results from the Welch – Satterthwait test confirmed that there are interestingly significant differences in the proposed relationships among the ordinary Airbnb hosts and those hosts with Superhost badge. More particularly, Airbnb ordinary hosts perceived stronger impact of attitude on continuance intention or stronger influence of subjective norms on attitude and trust towards the platform compared with Airbnb Superhosts. Contrastingly, trust towards Airbnb has a stronger influence in continuance intention among Superhosts. Exceptionally, the associations among perceived behavioral control, subjective norms and continuance intention were not significantly different in these two groups (p-values >0.05). Thus, H7 is partially supported.

Table 5.4: Test for structural invariance

| Hypotheses | Ordinary hosts (β_1) | Superhosts (β_2) | Difference ($\beta_1 - \beta_2$) | W-S test |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| H1: Attitude -> | | | | |
| Continuance intention | 0.458 | 0.074 | 0.383 | 2.654 [p= 0.010] |
| H2: Perceived behavioral control -> Continuance intention | 0.160 | 0.367 | -0.207 | 1.085 [p= 0.281] |
| H3: Subjective norms -> | | | | |
| Continuance intention | 0.176 | 0.085 | 0.091 | 0.549 [p= 0.585] |
| H4: Subjective norms -> | | | | |
| Attitude | 0.630 | 0.352 | 0.278 | 1.993 [p= 0.050] |
| H5: Subjective norms -> | | | | |
| Trust towards Airbnb | 0.461 | 0.071 | 0.390 | 2.055 [p= 0.043] |
| H6: Trust towards Airbnb -> Continuance intention | 0.088 | 0.418 | -0.330 | 2.008 [p= 0.049] |

5.5 Discussion and conclusion

The findings of this study have shown that Airbnb hosts' attitude, PBC and trust towards the platform are positively related to their business continuity. More specifically, Airbnb hosts' favorable attitude was found to hold a significant impact on their intention to continue listing accommodations on the platform. This finding coincides with prior research from Huang and Kuo (2020) and Sung et al. (2018) which argued the influential role of service providers' attitude towards sharing platforms in their supply intention. Additionally, the role of favorable evaluation towards the P2P rental platform was also proven in the Farmaki et al. (2020) study which was conducted in Mediterranean countries in Covid-19. They found that the "optimistic hosts" believe the possibility of the pandemic in positively transforming the accommodation sharing economy, when customers may change their preferences to more isolating types of lodges with less personal contact.

Regarding the positive impact of PBC on Airbnb hosts' continuance intentions, this study confirms the proposed hypothesis, which is in line with extant studies (Davis et al., 2002; Huang & Kuo, 2020). Similarly, the capabilities of accommodation service providers were also found as one of the key determinants which distinguishes the decision making process among

different types of hosts in China, in which speculators who are short on external and internal capabilities, will more likely to quit the market (Zhang et al., 2021). Therefore, the findings of this study prove that the impact of attitude and PBC on Airbnb users' behavioral intention remains significant regardless of different cultural backgrounds or various situations.

This paper also confirmed the most significant importance of trust towards the platform on Airbnb hosts' business continuity intention. The more Airbnb hosts perceive the trustworthiness of the platform, the more they are likely to continue providing their accommodation on Airbnb even in the prevailing disaster. This finding provides support for earlier research which confirmed the relationship between Airbnb users' trust and their loyalty towards the platform (e.g. Kim & Kim, 2020; Wang et al., 2020). The result once again confirms the significant role of a dedication-based factor in enhancing Airbnb users' continuance intention. While the original TPB does not consider the trust variable as a driving factor of intention, trust was found to play the most important role in motivating Airbnb hosts' business continuity, which acknowledged the need of expanding the extant theories to better predict individual's behavioral intentions.

The path coefficient between subjective norms and continuance intention is not significant which is in contrast to our proposed hypothesis. This finding is consistent with Cho et al. (2010), which found the weak effect of subjective norms on online communities, or Huang and Kuo (2020), which also confirmed the insignificant impact of subjective norms on intention to share among potential sharing service providers. This insignificant relationship can be further explained by the fact that Airbnb is not familiar to the majority of Vietnamese population, thus, Airbnb hosts are aware that their significant ones do not really understand about the business to provide wise advice in this situation. Though subjective norms are not positively related to Airbnb hosts' continuance intention, it does significantly affect Airbnb hosts' favorable evaluations towards the business continuity or increases their trust towards the platform. These results are in line with earlier studies which pronounced the effect of social utility of sharing or subjective norms in enhancing sharing platform users' attitude and building up trust (Mao & Lyu, 2017; Wang et al., 2020).

With respect to the moderating role of Superhost badge, the effect of Airbnb hosts' attitude on their continuance intention, or the impact of social influences on Airbnb accommodation providers' attitude and trust in the platform are stronger for ordinary hosts

compared to Superhosts. On the other hand, Superhosts are more likely to continue their business with Airbnb when they find the sharing platform more trustworthy. Exceptionally, the influences of PBC and subjective norms in continuance intention are not significantly different between Airbnb ordinary hosts and Superhosts.

5.5.1 Theoretical implications

First, this study enriches the emerging literature on the accommodation sharing industry from the lens of service providers and advances the theory in the field of micro – entrepreneurs' response towards crises by providing the following theoretical implications. This study firstly investigates the determinants which significantly affect micro business owners' continuance intention through the extension of the TPB model with a dedication-based factor. The findings of this paper not only support the applicability of TPB in the global pandemic but also provide strong evidence that trust is a key influential factor in an individual's decision making process in relation to the uncertain situation.

Second, the novelty of this study also lies in testing the moderating role of Superhost badge in Airbnb hosts' motivations and behaviors, which approaches the call from Kwok and Xie (2018). More specifically, the current paper confirmed the moderating effect of Superhost badge which significantly impacts the relationships between Airbnb hosts' psychological factors and their continuance intention. Findings reveal that the favorable attitude towards the business continuity exerts a stronger effect on the likelihood to continue sharing accommodation on the platform among Airbnb ordinary hosts. In the same vein, the positive opinions of critical others lead to a more favorable evaluation towards continuance intention and enhances trust towards the platform among ordinary hosts, compared to those with Superhost status. Thus, these findings support the previous study which stated that subjective norms became less important when people are more experienced (Karahanna et al., 1999), or the effect of social referents on attitude varied by past experience (Baldick & Jang, 2020). On the contrary, Airbnb Superhosts who are deemed to receive the relief fund, place more weight on trust towards the platform which ultimately results in higher intention to continue throughout the global pandemic. Hence, the confirmed moderating effect of Superhost badge in Airbnb hosts' behavioral intentions offers theoretical background for future P2P accommodation service provider related studies.

5.5.2 *Practical implications*

Understanding the determinants of P2P accommodation providers' continuance intention in the global pandemic could benefit the sustainable development of the emerging sharing economy. Trust towards the platform was found to be the most influential factor in stimulating Airbnb hosts' intention to continue sharing. Nevertheless, the policy of cancelling bookings with a full refund from Airbnb during the outbreak, or the unequal support to ordinary hosts, has reduced Airbnb hosts' trust in the crisis response strategies of the platform. Thus, Airbnb should balance their strategies in terms of ensuring equal benefits to both Airbnb consumers and providers. Furthermore, Airbnb needs to promote and provide the appropriate safeguards, technological advances, prompt support' and a safe business environment to increase hosts' trust and encourage them to maintain listings on the platform.

The platform management should also provide more tool kits, or online training and workshops about how to maintain short-term rental safely and sustainably in order to enhance Airbnb hosts' perceived behavioral control. The platform should also work closely with local authorization regarding the real impact of Covid-19 in the area and the opportunities of remaining listings, which might improve Airbnb hosts' favorable evaluation towards the business continuity. Though social norms do not directly influence Airbnb hosts' continuance intention, this construct still plays a significant role in Airbnb hosts' attitude and trust towards the platform, especially among Airbnb ordinary hosts. Thus, peer reviews or Airbnb forums should be well managed to exchange the ideas and crisis management experiences among hosts, which finally influence their likelihood of continuance intention through improving their positive attitude and trust towards the platform.

5.5.3 *Limitations and future study*

Although the paper provides theoretical and practical implications, it still has limitations which offer opportunities for future studies. Firstly, the purpose of this research is to delve into Vietnamese Airbnb hosts' continuance intention, thus, the research is highly destination-specific and might not generalize these findings to other countries with different cultural backgrounds. Secondly, this study only extends the TPB model with trust towards Airbnb and confirms their predicting role in Airbnb hosts' intention. As mentioned earlier, trust in Airbnb refers to a dedication-based factor, while previous research argued that the continued intention

of customers is more strongly related to constraint-based factors, which usually create a “lock-in” and mitigate customers’ interest in other alternatives (Kim & Son, 2009; Lin et al., 2015). Hence, further research could add in more constraint-based factors (such as relative attractiveness, switching costs, calculative commitment, among others), which might improve the explained variance of Airbnb hosts’ continuity intention.

Thirdly, the majority of study participants were female (65.6%), which generally represents the whole population of Airbnb hosts. However, Airbnb hosts' gender might be an important factor which can explain their distinct responses towards the crisis. Therefore, future research should purposely recruit participants with a more appropriate ratio of different genders and motivations, or consider hosts’ personality as moderators in studying the relationship between their psychological factors and behavioral intentions. Finally, the scope of this study is to examine the influencing factors of Airbnb hosts’ intent to continue listing their accommodation on the platform, which findings can support the sustainable development of the sharing economy, future researchers might also focus on studying Airbnb hosts’ discontinuance or switching intention in this global pandemic.

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Appendix B: Profile of study participants

| Variable | Categories | % |
|--|----------------|------|
| Gender | Female | 65.6 |
| | Male | 34.4 |
| Age group (mean= 32.76, median= 32) | ≤24 | 4.4 |
| | 25-29 | 30.6 |
| | 30-34 | 30.0 |
| | 35-39 | 21.2 |
| | ≥40 | 13.8 |
| Marital status | Single | 45.0 |
| | Married | 53.1 |
| | Others | 1.9 |
| Education | Highschool | 1.9 |
| | College | 8.1 |
| | Bachelor | 63.1 |
| | Post graduated | 26.9 |

Appendix C: Hosting experience and characteristics of the listings

| Variable | Categories | % |
|---|---|------|
| Duration of being a host | 12 months - 18 months | 20.1 |
| | 19 months - 24 months | 16.3 |
| | 25 months - 36 months | 29.6 |
| | 37 months - 48 months | 25.2 |
| | > 48 months | 8.8 |
| Being a host is | Full-time job | 24.4 |
| | Part-time job | 75.6 |
| Being a Superhost | Yes | 60.6 |
| | No | 39.4 |
| Main type of listings | Sharing rooms with host family | 10.4 |
| | Private apartments | 57.5 |
| | Sharing houses with other travellers | 28.8 |
| | Others | 3.3 |
| Type of ownership | All are my assets | 36.2 |
| | Some are mine and some I rent from others | 26.3 |
| | I rent all the assets and re-rent in Airbnb | 37.5 |
| Location of listings | Ho Chi Minh City | 66.3 |
| | Da Nang/ Hoi An | 6.9 |
| | Hanoi | 11.3 |
| | Nha Trang | 5.6 |
| | Others | 10.0 |
| Motivations to become a host | Financial benefits | 90.0 |
| | Social interactions | 39.9 |
| | Sustainable values | 25.6 |
| | Others | 15 |
| Total monthly income before COVID-19 | Below 450 USD | 31.2 |
| | 450 USD - 1,350 USD | 41.2 |
| | 1,350 USD - 2,270 USD | 19.4 |
| | 2,270 - 4,500 USD | 3.8 |
| | Above 4,500 USD | 4.4 |

CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the thesis with the general discussions of the key findings and their contributions to the theoretical and practical implications. The chapter firstly summarizes the overall conclusions of each scientific paper, which is followed by the general contribution and implications of the findings. The limitation will later be presented, which can serve as guidelines for future research directions. Overall speaking, the general objectives of this thesis are based in the premise that the key dimensions of Airbnb customers' perceived value which subsequently lead to their internal state or behaviours; or the way Airbnb customers respond to eWOM are assumed to be distinct according to their cultural background, personal characteristics and specific situational factors. Moreover, an understanding of the determinants of Airbnb hosts' continuance intention in the setting of the global pandemic of COVID-19 is also undoubtedly essential, which findings can support Airbnb management platform, service providers and policy makers in developing appropriate policies and strategies to retain the accommodation sharing business sustainable. To achieve these objectives, the study theoretically utilizes several existing theories including the Cognitive appraisal – Emotional response – Coping behaviour model (Bagozzi, 1992), the TPB (Ajzen, 1991), the MGB (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001), and the S-O-R model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Specifically, the main purpose of this study was (1) to test the previously confirmed perceived value dimensions of Airbnb customers in an understudied context - Vietnam, and to holistically examine the influential role of these value perceptions in enhancing customer satisfaction and perceived enjoyment and their willingness to give (e)WOM; (2) to investigate how eWOM affect Airbnb customers' purchase intention dissimilarly between powerful and powerless consumers, or consumers with different levels of psychological risk by taking into account the cultural and situational differences; and finally (3) to study the determinants of Airbnb hosts' continuance intentions in COVID-19, with Superhost badge as a moderator. Thus, the thesis's results provide a significant number of theoretical and practical implications that warrant a further discussion.

6.2 Discussion, contributions and implications

6.2.1 Discussion and theoretical contributions

This thesis provides a set of theoretical contributions to extant literature of accommodation sharing economy and hospitality and tourism crisis management through four scientific articles. As mentioned earlier, existing cross-cultural research with Airbnb customers and service providers revealed that their perceptions and behaviors may be culturally-driven (e.g. Tran et al., 2022; Ma et al., 2022). To comprehend Airbnb service consumers and providers' attitude, perception, and their loyalty intentions towards the platform with an emphasis in the context of Airbnb in Vietnam during a global pandemic, four conceptualized models were empirically tested. The study has offered findings which provide further explanations on the contrasting relationships between Airbnb customers' perceived value, their internal states, and subsequent behavioral intentions in the existing literature of sharing economy through testing them in a more specific context of an emerging Airbnb market (**Study 1** and **Study 2**), or the distinct impacts of eWOM on Airbnb consumers' purchase intention by considering the moderating effect of consumers' sense of power and psychological risk (**Study 3**), and Vietnamese Airbnb service providers' continuance intention throughout the COVID-19 pandemic (**Study 4**).

Study 1 adopted the framework of Cognitive appraisal – Emotional response – Coping behavior to examine the relationships between six dimensions of Vietnamese Airbnb customers' perceived value (monetary value, hedonic benefits/ enjoyment, social interaction, sustainability, novelty, functional benefits), satisfaction and their positive (e)WOM giving intentions. From the existing literature review, scholars found contrasting findings about customers' motivations in using Airbnb and how these motives influence their satisfaction and behavioral intentions, which can be explained by the distinct customers' preferences and behaviours in different markets and culture. Moreover, the vast majority of Airbnb related research has been conducted in developed countries, thus, this is a pioneer study that investigates Airbnb customers' intention to post positive eWOM in a fast growing market – Vietnam. The study's results emphasize the critical importance of monetary value, functional attributes and enjoyment of Airbnb accommodation to customer experience, which are aligning with several previous research (e.g. Lee & Kim, 2018; Li et al., 2021; Möhlmann, 2015; Nguyen et al., 2018). Interestingly, the relationships among sustainable values, novelty, social benefits, and customer satisfaction are not pronounced in this market. Furthermore, Vietnamese Airbnb users are more willing to recommend the platform services to their friends and family,

or leave positive feedback online when they perceive the functional attributes, financial benefit or the enjoyment of Airbnb accommodation, with their satisfaction as a mediator. These findings contradict what Li et al. (2021) found, in that customer satisfaction does not play a mediating role in the relationships among hedonic value, utilitarian value and loyalty, or perceived economic gains do not affect Airbnb customers' loyalty level (Lalicic & Weismayer, 2018). These contradictions once again confirm the significant influence of cultural values in customers' behavioral intentions and also the need of categorizing the overall loyalty intention into subsequent single behaviors such as repurchase or eWOM intentions. Last but not least, the most notable contribution of this study lies in the confirmation of the significant influence of traditional WOM intention on eWOM intention from the message communicators' perspective. This finding has not been discussed up to date in any research context.

Similarly, **Study 2** also investigates Airbnb customers' eWOM giving intention. However, this study was conducted from the lens of the S-O-R model and proposed the influential role of the atmospheric attributes at an Airbnb accommodation in customers' emotional states, which subsequently guide their behavioral intentions. Moreover, this study also firstly tested the strength of these hypothesized relationships among Airbnb customers with different genders and trip characteristics. While satisfaction was more commonly found as a key driver of customer attitudinal and behavioral loyalty in the existing literature, the findings of this study confirmed the influential role of perceived enjoyment in motivating Airbnb customers leaving positive eWOM. Hence, this finding extends our understanding of the antecedents of Airbnb customers' loyalty intentions. Second, this study also found the contradictory results regarding the associations between social interaction, authenticity and perceived enjoyment compared to the study from So et al. (2021), which was carried out in the U.S.A. These contrasting findings prove the existence of cultural differences that significantly affect the role of Airbnb experiential attributes on the customers' emotional states, which urges the need of further cross-cultural investigation. Third, the insignificant relationship between authenticity and perceived enjoyment is against the vast majority of prior Airbnb studies (e.g. So et al., 2018; So et al., 2021), however, this finding supports Sthapit et al. (2021) recent study which revealed that Airbnb guests still feel joyful from doing the similar activities as they do at home during their travel, as long as they have quality time with their close companions at an Airbnb rental property. Hence, this study suggests further research cautiously addressing the role of authenticity or novelty benefit in Airbnb experiential value according to particular target customers and different types of accommodation. Fourth, this study also affirmed that Airbnb

business travelers perceive the stronger effect of home benefits on their enjoyment, which offers the background for future studies in gaining a more holistic comprehension of this target demographic segment. According to the result from Janssens et al. (2021) study, it signifies an emerging trend of more business travelers using Airbnb as accommodation means. Last but not least, previous hospitality and tourism research mostly utilized the prevailing theories such as TPB or Theory of Reasoned Action to explain customers' behavioral intentions, this study thus provides stronger evidence of the usability and suitability of the S-O-R model in investigating Airbnb customers' behavioral intentions regardless of geographical contexts.

Study 3 is a pioneering effort to delve into the investigation of the perceptions and responses of Airbnb customers towards eWOM in a cross-cultural context between the three countries including Italy, Portugal and Vietnam, especially in a setting highly influenced by a global pandemic of COVID-19 and its subsequent long lasting objective and subjective psychological effects. Through extending the MGB, this study provides empirical evidence on explaining the contradictory findings regarding the effect of online reviews on consumers' perception and behavioral intentions in the extant literature. More particularly, the study's findings confirmed the differential moderating role of sense of power and psychological risk in the relationships between eWOM and Airbnb consumers' rational, cognitive and affective factors, or the relationships amongst these mentioned constructs with Airbnb customers' purchase intention by especially taking cultural and situational difference into consideration. Second, another interesting result of this study is the negative relationship between perceived behavioral control and Airbnb customers' purchase intention which is totally against the existing literature. This novel finding reflects that the well-established relationship between customers' cognitive factors and their behavioral intentions can be contrasting in different situations, which supports the need of studying customer behavior in various situational contexts. Third, although perceived risks have been predominantly investigated as the barriers of accommodation sharing platform's users, its moderating role was overlooked and remains unclear (Lho et al., 2022). Therefore, this study has deepened the existing knowledge on the moderating effect of risk perception in consumers' behaviour in the setting of the sharing economy. Lastly, in line with previous studies which were conducted in challenging situations (e.g. Fedeli et al., 2022; Gursoy et al., 2022), this study confirms the critical role of travel desire in customers' decision making process. Therefore, there is empirical evidence that the MGB is an appropriate theoretical background to investigate how eWOM affects Airbnb consumers' purchase intention in a health-related crisis.

In **Study 4**, the focus of this thesis was shifted to the lens of accommodation sharing service providers. It is worth noting that there exists studies examining the impacts of and responses to crises in hospitality and tourism companies such as chain hotels, large tourism operations, or airlines (e.g. Waller & Abbasian, 2022; Wang & Ritchie, 2012), however, the perspectives of micro-level stakeholders seem to receive much less attention. Thus, this study firstly approaches this gap to advance the theory in the field of micro-entrepreneurs' response towards the global pandemic through an investigation of the influential factors which significantly affect micro business owners' continuance intention with the accommodation sharing platform. By successfully extending the prevailing TPB model with a dedication-based factor – trust towards the Airbnb platform, the findings of this study confirmed the role of Airbnb hosts' attitude, perceived behavioral control and trust towards the platform in their business continuity intention. These results not only support the suitability of TPB in studying Airbnb service providers in the global pandemic but also provide strong evidence in the emphasis of the role of trust in the sharing economy platform. Second, this is also one of the pioneer studies which approaches the call from Kwok and Xie (2018) to study moderating factors in the relationships between the antecedents and Airbnb hosts' behavioral intentions. The findings revealed that the strength of the relationships between Airbnb host's attitude, subjective norms, trust towards the platform and their continuance intention are varied depending on the status of the hosts. Therefore, this study confirmed the moderating effect of Superhost badge in Airbnb hosts' behavioral intentions, which provides theoretical background for future sharing accommodation service provider related research.

6.2.2 Practical contributions and implications

This thesis's findings undoubtedly provide practical guidelines for Airbnb stakeholders including local authorities, platform managers, and Airbnb accommodation service providers, especially in an emerging Vietnamese Airbnb market. In **studies 1** and **2**, the functional benefit of Airbnb accommodations were confirmed to be associated with Vietnamese Airbnb customers' satisfaction and enjoyment, which in turns acts as the key antecedents of their positive (e)WOM intentions. In order to upgrade the functional values, offering clean accommodation with well-equipped home facilities in an accessible location should be the utmost priority for Airbnb hosts who are targeting the domestic market. Moreover, in the context of COVID-19, health and safety issues have been getting more important to tourists' accommodation choice than ever before (Li et al., 2021; Yang et al., 2020), hence, providing

functional benefits needs to take into account cleanliness and hygiene standards more cautiously. Nevertheless, ensuring meaningful interactions with the guests, which can boost their perceived enjoyment is also necessary to motivate them to write a positive WOM online. Thus, Airbnb hosts should be more active online and quickly respond to customer requests, or they can also organize more online social interaction activities such as live-streaming video or online cooking class to stimulate customers' pleasant emotion with the stay. Though monetary value does not increase customers' perceived enjoyment, it still plays a significant role in enhancing customer satisfaction. Hence, to attract Vietnamese Airbnb potential customers who are described as price sensitive consumers, Airbnb service providers should apply attractive promotions or price discounts. Though the data collection happened during COVID-19, its findings are argued to be applicable in the post pandemic period, as a once- in-a-lifetime experience happening during one's life will adjust their long-term core value affecting their lives, preferences, attitude and behaviors (Meredith & Schewe, 2002).

As mentioned in the theoretical contributions part, the value perception of Vietnamese customers towards Airbnb and its influence in their satisfaction and enjoyment with the platform are somehow contrasting to the findings of previous Airbnb studies which were conducted in developed countries, thus, Airbnb platform management are suggested to modify the appropriate standards to reward outstanding hosts according to customers' expectation and perceived value in a specific destination. These updated standards will be serving as specific and transparent guidelines to motivate Vietnamese Airbnb hosts offering the expected benefits to target customers. Lastly, Vietnamese customers who share their Airbnb experience with acquaintances are also more likely to recommend the platform to others electronically. Thus, this interesting finding infers a recommendation to Airbnb platforms and Airbnb hosts in motivating existing customers sharing their whole stay experience to their family and friends with monetary or non-monetary incentives.

In relation to **Study 3**, it reveals that Airbnb customers' attitude, subjective norms, anticipated emotions, PBC and trust in hosts are directly related to eWOM from experienced customers, which finally increase their desire to book the sharing accommodation. Thus, in addition to the key determinants of (e)WOM giving intention which were confirmed in **Studies 1 and 2**, Airbnb platform management should facilitate an accessible, easy-to-use mechanism to encourage Airbnb customers to write their feedback online after the stay. Moreover, the findings of this study also showed that Airbnb customers in Italy, Portugal and Vietnam

respond towards online reviews dissimilarly according to the level of sense of power and perceived psychological risks. More particularly, Vietnamese Airbnb customers' attitude, subjective norms and trust towards the platform are less influenced by reviews from other customers when they perceive a high level of psychological risk in staying at an Airbnb accommodation in the context of a health-related crisis. Therefore, Airbnb hosts in Vietnam should put extra effort in providing safe and clean accommodation such as following a strict cleaning protocol, or offering additional amenities to fulfill personal disinfection needs. This information should be presented clearly to customers while they are searching the listings to reduce their psychological risk perception. On the contrary, the impact of online reviews on customers' rational, emotional and cognitive factors are reduced among Italian Airbnb customers with high sense of power compared to those with low sense of power. According to Liu and Mattila (2017), the belongingness appeal of a sharing accommodation should be targeted to powerless customers, while uniqueness should be highlighted to their counterparts. Thus, the result of this cross-cultural study can assist Airbnb managers and service providers in these three countries or countries with similar cultural backgrounds in understanding the insight of their target customers. These insights can be used to formulate the types of marketing strategies which are more attractive to these markets.

Study 4 infers significant practical and managerial implications for local authorities and Airbnb management platforms in Vietnam in deepening their knowledge of the determinants of sharing accommodations service providers' loyalty intention in a global pandemic. The findings of this study confirmed the significant role of trust towards the platform in stimulating Airbnb hosts' business continuity intention. Airbnb should particularly have a more balanced strategy in terms of ensuring Airbnb guests and hosts' benefits in a crisis. For instance, Airbnb needs to promote and provide the appropriate safeguards, technological advances, prompt support and a safe business environment to increase hosts' trust towards the platform. Moreover, local authorities and Airbnb management should work closely regarding the real impact of COVID-19 in the area to clarify the opportunities of remaining listings, which might improve Airbnb hosts' favorable evaluation towards the business continuance. Lastly, this study shows that the way Airbnb ordinary hosts and Superhosts perceive the influential role of attitude, subjective norms, PBC and trust towards the platform on their continuance intention is distinct, which provides useful information to Airbnb management in improving their support policy to these service providers more effectively and efficiently.

6.3 Limitations and directions for future studies

As with any type of research, this thesis is not free of limitations. The first limitation which should be mentioned relates to the methodological choice of a solely quantitative research approach throughout the four studies in this thesis. Though quantitative analysis with survey methods can be viewed as the most appropriate method to investigate the four research objectives of this thesis and it is also most commonly used to study customers' perception and behavioral intentions in hospitality and tourism research, however, this method still has some limitations. These limitations include lack of richness in the data, being unable to create a real life scenario, indirect reasons for the respondents' answer, and a lack of consideration for the researcher being a creator of knowledge. Thus, future research is encouraged to overcome this limitation and complement the present study's findings with qualitative ones or mixed methods.

Second, the target populations of this thesis (**Studies 1, 2 and 4**) mostly focus on Vietnamese Airbnb consumers and service providers observed through a non-probabilistic sampling method with a rather small size and in the context of the global pandemic, thus, rendering findings hard to generalize to the Vietnamese population of consumers and service providers, as well as to other populations with different cultural background and in the new normalcy of the post COVID-19. Since Airbnb customers and service providers' perception and behavioral intentions are driven by their culture (e.g. Ma et al., 2022; Tran et al., 2022), future research is certainly required to test the proposed conceptual frameworks in this study with a larger scale of data collected in other cultural contexts, as well as other situational conditions. In relation to these cultural and situational differences, another limitation of this thesis might be the use of existing scales already published in the literature, which were conducted in different research contexts. Thus, developing and validating a scale to measure Vietnamese Airbnb guests and hosts' perception and their consequent behaviours is also urged in future studies.

Third, another limitation of this study is related to the lack of inclusion of other influential factors and moderating variables shown to affect Airbnb customers and service providers' perception and their behavioral intention. Related to **Studies 1 and 2**, only perceived values of Airbnb, positive environmental attributes, customers satisfaction and perceived enjoyment were used as the key antecedents of Airbnb customers' positive (e)WOM giving intentions, there are several other variables that could also motivate Airbnb customers

spreading positive (e)WOM such as self-directed or social benefits. Moreover, reviews on Airbnb are criticized as being skewed towards positive ratings for multiple reasons, including established trust between hosts and guests, the non-anonymity of reviewers, review and rating reciprocity, and sociocultural norms of politeness (Bridges & Vasquez, 2018). Therefore, it may be worthwhile for future studies to expand the proposed models with these motivational factors and the sharing economy model related characteristics, which might improve the predictive power of Airbnb customers' positive (e)WOM intentions.

Regarding **Study 3**, it investigated the moderating role of sense of power and perceived psychological risk in the relationships between eWOM and Airbnb consumers' rational, emotional and cognitive factors, and the influence of these constructs on customer desire and purchase intention. Nevertheless, customers' responses towards online reviews are also influenced by other personal characteristics such as extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness (Tapanainen et al., 2021), the level of skepticism (Sher & Lee, 2009), restrained vs indulgent culture, or the familiarity of service provider (Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020). Future studies are recommended to use the Big-Five personality model and other external variables to retest the proposed hypotheses in this study. In addition, service providers' proactive response to online reviews was also confirmed to hold a positive effect on prospective customers' attitude, perception and behavioural intentions towards eWOM adoption (Liu et al., 2017; Roy et al., 2021; Sijoria et al., 2019), thus, the inclusion of Airbnb hosts' online review response as a moderating factor in investigating Airbnb customers' eWOM adoption process could also be an avenue for further research.

In relation to **Study 4**, this study only extended the TPB model with trust towards Airbnb and confirmed their predicting role in Airbnb hosts' intention. While trust in Airbnb refers to a dedication-based mechanism, previous research argued that the loyalty intention of customers is more strongly related to constraint-based factors which usually create a "lock-in" effect and mitigate customers' interest in other alternatives (Kim & Son, 2009; Lin et al., 2015). Hence, further research should expand the conceptual model with more constraint-based factors (such as relative attractiveness, switching costs, calculative commitment), which may improve the explained variance of Airbnb hosts' continuity intention. Lastly, the accommodation and the operation models of shared and non-shared listings are significantly different, which results in the possibly distinct survival determinants across these listings' categories (Crommelin et al., 2018; Fan et al., 2023). As Fan et al. (2023) study concluded,

response time, tourism specialization, market volume, COVID-19 and professionalization are the antecedents which leads to the different survival status of shared and non-shared listings on Airbnb platform. Therefore, a consideration of these variables as influential factors in studying Airbnb hosts' business continuity intentions also warrants further investigation.

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Appendix D: Questionnaire in Study One and Two

QUESTIONNAIRES

I am doing research about “Vietnamese consumer’s perceived value and word of mouth intention towards Airbnb accommodation”. It takes approximately 5 minutes to complete this questionnaire. The collected data will be served for research purpose only and your personal data will be kept confidentially. Thank you for your support to get the research done.

1. Have you ever booked your travel stay on Airbnb in Vietnam from 2019 onward?
 1. Yes
 - b. No

If no, please indicate the reason for not choosing Airbnb

- a. Lack of safety
- b. Unfamiliarity
- c. Lack of value

If yes, please proceed to the following questions

2. How many times have you booked your travel stay on Airbnb?
3. When was your most recent stay with Airbnb since 2019 (please indicate the month/year)?
4. Who was/ were you traveling with in this trip?
 - a. Alone
 - b. Family
 - c. Friends
 - d. Partners
 - e. Others
5. What type of Airbnb accommodation did you choose in this trip?
 - a. Sharing room
 - b. Private room
 - c. Entire housed.
 - Others
6. What was the main reason of this recent trip?
 - a. Business
 - b. Holiday
 - c. Study/ Training
 - d. Visiting friends/ family
 - e. Health
 - f. Others:
7. How many nights did you stay at Airbnb accommodation in your last trip?
8. How much did you spend in your Airbnb accommodation in your last trip?

I. PERCEIVED VALUE IN AIRBNB EXPERIENCE

From 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), kindly indicate your level of agreement about your perceived values in booking Airbnb accommodation

| Item No | Variable | 1 (Strongly disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Strongly agree) |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| I. MONETARY VALUES | | | | | | |
| 1 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation was a good value for money | | | | | |
| 2 | I found good deals in Airbnb for my travel accommodation | | | | | |
| 3 | Using Airbnb offers a good product for a price | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 4 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation was an economical alternative to hotels | | | | | |
| 5 | Airbnb accommodation are reasonably priced | | | | | |
| II. HEDONIC BENEFITS/ PERCEIVED ENJOYMENT | | | | | | |
| 6 | Airbnb offered an entertaining accommodation experience | | | | | |
| 7 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation made me feel happy | | | | | |
| 8 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation made me elated | | | | | |
| III. SOCIAL VALUES/ SOCIAL INTERACTION | | | | | | |
| 9 | Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me opportunities to interact more directly with local people | | | | | |
| 10 | Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me opportunities to interact more with other guests. | | | | | |
| 11 | Staying at Airbnb accommodation offered me good social opportunities with the host. | | | | | |
| 12 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation helped me feel accepted by others | | | | | |
| 13 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation will leave a good | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | impression on other people | | | | | |
| 14 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation improved the way I am perceived by others | | | | | |
| 15 | There is no shame in using Airbnb for travel accommodation | | | | | |
| IV. NOVELTY BENEFITS/ AUTHENTICITY | | | | | | |
| 16 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation made me feel adventurous | | | | | |
| 17 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation satisfied my curiosity | | | | | |
| | Using Airbnb provides an authentic experience | | | | | |
| 18 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation was a good opportunity for me to learn about new people and cultures | | | | | |
| 19 | Airbnb offers an accommodation that integrates local culture | | | | | |
| 20 | Airbnb provided an opportunity to stay in a less standardized accommodation environment. | | | | | |
| 21 | Airbnb offered unique experiences | | | | | |
| V. FUNCTIONAL ATTRIBUTES/ HOME BENEFIT | | | | | | |
| 22 | Airbnb listed accommodation types that are | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | suitable for my travel needs | | | | | |
| 23 | Airbnb offers spacious accommodation like homes | | | | | |
| 24 | Airbnb listed accommodations that met my location needs for travel | | | | | |
| 25 | Airbnb listed accommodations with up-to-date facilities to satisfy my travel needs | | | | | |
| 26 | Airbnb provided a homely feel during the stay | | | | | |
| VI. SUSTAINABLE VALUES | | | | | | |
| 27 | Airbnb is an environmentally friendly option for my travel accommodation | | | | | |
| 28 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation enabled more efficient resource use | | | | | |
| 29 | Using Airbnb for my travel accommodation was a sustainable way of lodging | | | | | |
| 30 | Airbnb helps promoting local culture | | | | | |

II. GUEST SATISFACTIONS AND INTENTIONS

| | GUEST SATISFACTION | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | I am satisfied with Airbnb for my travel accommodation | | | | | |
| 2 | I believe I did the right thing by choosing Airbnb for travel accommodation. | | | | | |
| 3 | The value of Airbnb experience is high | | | | | |

Appendix E: Questionnaire in Study Three

QUESTIONNAIRE

Good morning/afternoon.

We are conducting research about the role of online reviews on Airbnb customers' accommodation booking intention. This research is part of an international research project led by the University of Algarve, Portugal and carried out in collaboration with the University of Sassari, Italy. Specifically, it aims to investigate how online reviews affect Airbnb customers' purchase intention. In this study, Airbnb customers' purchase intention is defined as the likelihood of booking an Airbnb accommodation in the next 6 months. It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire. The collected data will be served for research purposes only, and your personal data will be kept confidential. Thank you for your support to get the research done.

1. Have you ever heard about Airbnb accommodation before?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Have you ever stayed at any Airbnb accommodation before?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If you choose Yes in the 1st question, please proceed to the following sections. Otherwise, please proceed to Section IV.B

IV. PERCEPTION ABOUT AIRBNB, ONLINE REVIEWS & CUSTOMERS' SENSE OF POWER

| Item No | Variable | 1 (Strongly disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 3 (Neither agree or disagree) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Strongly agree) |
|---|--|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| If respondents are <u>Airbnb existing users</u>, they will be directly driven to this set of measurement items of eWOM | | | | | | |
| VII. Online WOM | | | | | | |
| 1 | I read other Airbnb customers' online reviews to know what Airbnb accommodation makes good impressions on others | | | | | |
| 2 | To ensure I choose the right Airbnb accommodation, I read other Airbnb customers' online reviews | | | | | |
| 3 | I consult other Airbnb customers' online WOM | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | to help me choose a good Airbnb place | | | | | |
| 4 | I gather information from other travelers' online reviews before I choose a certain Airbnb accommodation | | | | | |
| 5 | If I don't read other travelers' online reviews when I stay at an Airbnb accommodation, I will worry about my decision | | | | | |
| 6 | When I choose an Airbnb accommodation, other travelers' online reviews make me confident in staying at that accommodation | | | | | |
| If respondents are <i>Airbnb potential users</i>, they will be directly driven to this set of measurement items of eWOM | | | | | | |
| 1 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, I would read other Airbnb customers' online reviews to know what an Airbnb accommodation makes good impressions on others | | | | | |
| 2 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, to ensure I choose the right Airbnb accommodation, I would read other customers' online reviews | | | | | |
| 3 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, I would consult other Airbnb customers' online WOM to help me choose a good place | | | | | |
| 4 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, I would gather information from other Airbnb travelers' online reviews before I choose a certain accommodation | | | | | |
| 5 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, I would worry about my | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | decision when I don't read other Airbnb travelers' online reviews | | | | | |
| 6 | If I would decide to use Airbnb in the future, other Airbnb travelers' online reviews make me confident in staying at that accommodation | | | | | |
| <i>Both existing and potential customers will continue the same set of following measurement items</i> | | | | | | |
| VIII. ATTITUDE | | | | | | |
| 7 | I think that using Airbnb is a desirable behavior | | | | | |
| 8 | I think that using Airbnb is useful | | | | | |
| 9 | I think that using Airbnb is a wise behavior | | | | | |
| 10 | I think that using Airbnb is valuable | | | | | |
| IX. SUBJECTIVE NORMS | | | | | | |
| 11 | Most people who are important to me highly recommend using Airbnb | | | | | |
| 12 | Most people who are important to me actively consider using Airbnb | | | | | |
| 13 | Most people who are important to me will use Airbnb | | | | | |
| 14 | Most people who are important to me will agree with that I stay at Airbnb accommodation | | | | | |
| X. PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL | | | | | | |
| 15 | I am confident that it's up to my will to use Airbnb | | | | | |
| 16 | The decision to use Airbnb is relied entirely on me | | | | | |
| 17 | There is no impediment to my use of Airbnb | | | | | |
| XI. TRUST IN AIRBNB HOSTS | | | | | | |
| 18 | I think Airbnb hosts care about their customers | | | | | |
| 19 | I think Airbnb hosts are honest | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 20 | I think Airbnb hosts are consistent in quality and service | | | | | |
| 21 | I believe Airbnb hosts are trustworthy | | | | | |
| 22 | I think Airbnb hosts are dependable | | | | | |
| XII. PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK | | | | | | |
| 23 | In the COVID-19 pandemic, the thought of using Airbnb makes me nervous | | | | | |
| 24 | In the COVID-19 pandemic, the thought of using Airbnb makes me feel psychologically uncomfortable | | | | | |
| 25 | In the COVID-19 pandemic, the thought of using Airbnb causes me to experience unnecessary tension | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| XIII. CUSTOMERS' SENSE OF POWER | | | | | | |
| 26 | I can get other people to listen to what I say | | | | | |
| 27 | I can get other people to do what I want | | | | | |
| 28 | I think I have a great deal of power | | | | | |
| 29 | If I want to, I get to make the decision | | | | | |
| 30 | My wishes do not carry much power | | | | | |
| 31 | Even if I voice them, my views have little sway | | | | | |
| 32 | My ideas and opinions are often ignored | | | | | |
| 33 | Even when I try, I am not able to get my way | | | | | |

V. CUSTOMER DESIRES & PURCHASE INTENTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| I. CUSTOMERS' DESIRE | | | | | | |
| 34 | If I travel, I want to choose Airbnb to book the accommodation | | | | | |
| 35 | I would like to use Airbnb to book the | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| | accommodation in the near future | | | | | |
| 36 | My desire for using Airbnb to book the accommodation in the near future is very strong | | | | | |
| 37 | If I can use Airbnb to book the accommodation in the near future, I won't miss that opportunity | | | | | |
| II. PURCHASE INTENTION IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS | | | | | | |
| 38 | I think I will be using Airbnb to book the accommodation in the next six months | | | | | |
| 39 | I plan to use Airbnb to book the accommodation in the next six months | | | | | |
| 40 | I am thinking of using Airbnb to book the accommodation in the next six months | | | | | |
| 41 | I intend to try and use Airbnb to book the accommodation within six months | | | | | |

III. ANTICIPATED EMOTIONS

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| I. POSITIVE ANTICIPATED EMOTIONS | | | | | | |
| 42 | If I use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be satisfied | | | | | |
| 43 | If I use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be happy | | | | | |
| 44 | If I use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, it will be memorable for a long time | | | | | |
| 45 | It will be fun to use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip | | | | | |
| II. NEGATIVE ANTICIPATED EMOTIONS | | | | | | |
| 46 | If I can't use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be worried | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 47 | If I can't use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be disappointed | | | | | |
| 48 | If I can't use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be sorry | | | | | |
| 49 | If I can't use Airbnb to book the accommodation for my next trip, I will be sad | | | | | |

| III. PERCEPTION ABOUT COVID-19 (please share your perception about the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic) | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 50 | COVID-19 is now a frightening disease | | | | | |
| 51 | Compared to SARS and MERS, COVID-19 is still more dangerous | | | | | |
| 52 | I am still afraid of COVID-19 | | | | | |

IV. TRAVEL EXPERIENCE & PERSONAL INFORMATION:

A. TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

1. How often are you travelling annually?
 - a. Less than once a year
 - b. 1 – 3 times a year
 - c. More than 3 times a year

2. With whom are you mostly travelling with? (can choose more than one option)
 - a. Alone b. Family c. Friends d. Partners e. Others

3. In which type of accommodation do you most frequently stay in your previous trips? (can choose more than one option)
 - a. Hotel b. Motel c. Homestay d. Resort e. Airbnb accommodation
 - f. Others

4. If you are choosing to stay at an Airbnb accommodation in the next trip, how much are you willing to spend (VND/ per night/ per person)?

5. In this case, which type of Airbnb accommodation you would like to book?
 - a. Entire flat b. Private room c. Shared room

B. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Your gender is:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female

2. Your age is:
3. Your marital status is:
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Others:
4. Your education level:
 - a. Highschool
 - b. College
 - c. Bachelor's degree
 - d. Postgraduate
 - e. Others:
5. Your income is:
 - a. Below nation's average (less than US\$3040 annually)
 - b. Nation's average (about US\$3040 annually)
 - c. Above nation's average (above US\$3040 annually)
6. Where did you hear about Airbnb?
 - a. Social media
 - b. Airbnb website
 - c. Friends/ family
 - d. Others

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT

Appendix F: Questionnaire in Study Four

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am conducting research about “Vietnamse hosts’ continuance intention with Airbnb platform in the context of COVID-19 outbreak”. In this study, Airbnb hosts’ continuance intention refers to the likelihood of their continuous intention to list accommodation on Airbnb. It takes approximately 5 minutes to complete this questionnaire. The collected data will be served for research purpose only and your personal data will be kept confidentially. Thank you for your support to get the research done.

1. Have you been an Airbnb host for at least one year (before September 2019)?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

If yes, please proceed to the following questions

SECTION I: AIRBNB HOSTS’ LISTING INFORMATION

2. When did you join Airbnb as a host?(please indicate the month/year)
3. What is the major type of Airbnb accommodation which you list on Airbnb?
 - a. Sharing room
 - b. Private room
 - c. Entire house
 - d. Others:.....(please indicate)
4. How many listings did you have on Airbnb before March 2020?.....(please indicate)
5. And how many listings do you have currently?..... (please indicate)
6. Are these listings your own assets?
 - a. Yes, they are all my assets
 - b. Some are mine and some I rent from others
 - c. I rent all from others and re-rent to Airbnb users
7. Where are the locations of the majority of your Airbnb accommodation listings?
 - a. Ho Chi Minh City
 - b. Da Nang, Hoi An
 - c. Ha Noi
 - d. Others:.....(please indicate)
8. What did motivate you to be an Airbnb host? (can choose more than one (1) option)
 - a. Financial benefits
 - b. Social Interaction
 - c. Sustainable values
 - d. Others:.....
9. Are you rewarded as a Superhost (Superhosts are experienced, highly rated hosts who are committed to providing great stays for guests)?.....(Yes/No)
10. Is being an Airbnb host your full-time or part-time job?
 - a. Full-time
 - b. Part-time
11. How about your **monthly average revenue** generated from **one listing** on Airbnb **since March 2020**?.....VND/ month (please indicate)
12. **Compared the current monthly average revenue** to this revenue **before March 2020**, what is the percentage of revenue decrease?.....(please indicate)

SECTION 2: ATTITUDE, SUBJECTIVE NORM, PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL, TRUST TOWARD AIRBNB & CONTINUANCE INTENTION

I. ATTITUDE, SUBJECTIVE NORM, PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL, TRUST TOWARD AIRBNB

From 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), kindly indicate your level of agreement about attitude toward continuance intention, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and trust toward Airbnb

| | Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| i. ATTITUDE | | | | | | |
| 1 | All things considered, I find continuing sharing my accommodation with others to be a wise move in the context of COVID – 19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 2 | All things considered, I think continuing sharing my assets with others is a positive thing in the context of COVID – 19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 3 | All things considered, I think continuing sharing my accommodation with others is a profitable thing in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 4 | Continuing sharing my accommodation with others is a better mode of exchange than selling and buying in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 5 | Continuing sharing my accommodation makes sense | | | | | |
| ii. SUBJECTIVE NORMS | | | | | | |
| 6 | People who are important to me think that I should continue sharing my accommodation with others in the sharing economy community, in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 7 | People who may influence my behavior think that I should continue sharing my accommodation with others in the sharing economy community, in the context of COVID - 19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 8 | People whose opinions I value think that I should continue sharing my accommodation with others in the sharing economy community, in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| iii. PERCEIVED BEHAVIORAL CONTROL | | | | | | |
| 9 | I am able to continue sharing my accommodation with others in the sharing economy in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 10 | Continuing sharing my accommodation with other members is within my control in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 11 | I have the resources to support continuing sharing accommodation with other members in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 12 | I have the opportunities to continue sharing my accommodation with other members in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| iv. TRUST TOWARDS AIRBNB | | | | | | |
| 13 | I believe Airbnb has enough safeguards to make me feel comfortable continuing using it in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 14 | I feel assured that legal and technological structures adequately protect me from problems on Airbnb in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 15 | I feel confident that encryption and other technological advances on Airbnb make it safe for me to use in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 16 | In general, Airbnb provides a robust and safe environment to share private information in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |

II. CONTINUANCE INTENTIONS

| | HOSTS' CONTINUANCE INTENTION | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 | I intend to continue sharing my accommodation on Airbnb platform in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 2 | I will always try to share my accommodation on Airbnb in my daily life in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |
| 3 | I will keep sharing my accommodation on Airbnb as regularly as I do now even in the context of COVID-19 outbreak | | | | | |

SECTION III: PERSONAL INFORMATION

13. Your gender is:
 - a. Male
 - b. Female
14. Your age is:.....(please indicate)
15. Your marital status is:
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Others:.....(please indicate)
16. Your education level:
 - a. Highschool
 - b. College
 - c. Bachelor's degree
 - d. Postgraduate
 - e. Others:.....(please indicate)
17. What is your major occupation?
 - b. Professional/ Manager
 - c. Small business entrepreneur
 - d. Public servant

- e. Officer/ Administrator
 - f. Unemployed/ Retired
 - g. Others:.....(please indicate)
18. How about your total monthly salary?
- a. Below national's average income
 - b. National's average income
 - c. Above national's average income

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT