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Factors Affecting the Intention to Use Airbnb in Egypt: A PLS-SEM Approach

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to assess the intention of Egyptian travellers to consider using Airbnb platform as one of the sharing economy and peer-to-peer accommodation. This study proposes and tests the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) constructs as the determinants of the Airbnb intention to use Airbnb by using PLS-SEM approach. The findings show that attitude is a significant determinant of using intention, whereas subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are not. This study adds to the body of knowledge by employing TPB to analyse customer intention to use Airbnb, providing a theoretical basis and a starting point for further investigation of Airbnb's structural linkages with the sharing economy. The ability to design successful strategies for Airbnb to promote favourable purchase behaviours will be aided by a thorough knowledge of Airbnb guests' purchase intentions.

Keywords: Airbnb, Theory of Planned Behaviour, Attitude, Subjective norms, Perceived behavioural control

Introduction

Peer-to-peer business platforms have emerged in which customers share their resources such as cars or rooms in what is called "collaborative consumption" (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Collaborative consumption is peer-to-peer based activity which based on sharing and using goods and services by online platforms (Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2016). One example of this consumption model is the Airbnb in which a customer can book a full house or just a room (Zervas, Proserpio, & Byers, 2017). Airbnb is considered one of the most significant and transformative industries. Although it has existed for nearly 10 years, it is considered one of the most important peer-to-peer industry and a shared economy that based on technology-driven distribution website. It impacted the lodging industry because it transformed a lot of individuals into micro-entrepreneurs (Guttentag, 2015; Guttentag, 2017).

Moreover, Airbnb processes the payment from the guest to the host and gets a service fee (commission percentage) from both parties. It permits both parties to review each other to promote trust. It has more than tools for promoting trust such as various identity verifications, free damage protection (for the host), liability insurance (for the host), and guest refund policy (that protects guests from inaccurate descriptions). It has important innovative marketing techniques, for instance, "instant booking" which are considered a policy that permits the reservation to happen

timely without the agreement of the host. In addition, "super-host" is a status badge that is given to the host which is active and well-reviewed. Moreover, a "For work trip" is one of the tools which has a filter that displays the lists of houses for business travelers only. Besides, "Airbnb Plus" is a status badge for hosts' houses which are inspected by Airbnb representatives. In addition, Airbnb makes agreements with travel companies to host corporate groups. Besides, the company makes collaboration with a real estate developer to build apartment complexes to be used for Airbnb. Additionally, it is extended to include restaurant reservations, trips, and excursions which are guided by local people (Jøsang, Ismail, & Boyd, 2007; Griswold, 2016; Guttentag, Smith, Potwarka, & Havitz, 2017).

In Egypt, the sharing economy such as Airbnb has more opportunities and risks. The opportunities provided by the sharing economy are increasing the income of the population, offering new tourism services for those who cannot previously afford it, and increase the building capacity and development. On the other hand, the negative effects are the bad image of Egypt offered by low quality services and the risk of misuse of guest data which are available on the platform (Harb, 2018). Ahmed, Ragheb, and Tantawi (2020) investigated the motives and barriers of using Airbnb for Egyptians and how they affect their attitude, intention, and actual use of it. The results showed that price, home benefits, privacy, and online reviews affect positively the attitude toward Airbnb while barriers such as distrust and perceived risk affect negatively the attitude toward Airbnb. Ammar, Kozmal, & Abdulaziz (2020) studying the sharing economy in Egypt such as peer-to-peer accommodation and concluded that sharing economy affects the destination choice, frequency of traveling, duration of stay, and activity participation. Moreover, they recommend that sharing economy need more development in Egypt.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that affect using Airbnb in Egypt. As a result, the study employed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), as major drivers of Airbnb intention. This study is important because limited researches in Egypt have investigated the factors that affect guests to use Airbnb in Egypt. Furthermore, it increases rapidly in Egypt. Moreover, Airbnb became an important source of income for local residents and play a significant role for the economy of the country (Bivens, 2019).

Literature Review

Overview of Airbnb

Airbnb is a type of accommodation where hosts can offer spaces for rent as tourist accommodation. It can be a full space (apartment, house, condominium) or part of space (a room in a house where the host is still exists). It can be an exotic place such as castles, igloos, and treehouses. It ranges from quite modest to extremely luxurious accommodation. For the customers, it can be like online travel agencies such as Expedia while it differs as it offers a communication with the host. For the host, it is considered an online platform where the host can offer his/her space easily and effortlessly by posting the description and photographs of the place and accept reservations and payments from guests all over the world. Airbnb offers travelers' needs by giving accommodation with low prices and the local experience of local people (Guttentag, 2019; Guttentag, 2015; Liang, Choi, & Joppe, 2017). Airbnb has more advantages for guests as they are cost saving, offer household amenities, offer authentic local experience (Agapitou, Liana, Folinas, & Konstantoglou, 2020).

Although Airbnb management denies the competition with hotels, traditional hotel managers have fears of the threat of Airbnb's competition. Media headlines always highlight the threat posed by them. Trade groups such as the American Hotel Association, British Hospitality Association, and Hotel Association of Canada have pushed regulations concerning Airbnb (Trenholm, 2015; DePillis, 2016; Handley, 2017; Trejos, 2018; Griswold, 2016). There are numerous regulatory battles about Airbnb as they converted local houses into businesses. Some of these regulatory issues are the hosts' tax regulations, the safety of Airbnb rentals, impacts on the housing market, and the quality of life (noise, people fabrics, etc.) (Guttentag, 2017; Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2016).

Theory of Planned Behavior

TPB is one of the most widely used research models for predicting behavioral intentions, and it is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). This theory indicates that behavioral intention, as an indicator for an action that is often cannot be measured and the best predictor of behavior, is based on three conceptual variables: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This theory is commonly used in tourism and hospitality studies (Ulker-Demirel & Ciftci, 2020; Ma, Hsiao, Gao, & Vada, 2020; Tajeddini, Rasoolimanesh, Gamage, & Martin, 2021; Shawky, El Enen, & Fouad, 2019)

A consumer's willing to use or purchase services or products is known as behavioral intention. A person's psychological mood and positive or negative appraisal of doing a certain activity are referred to as attitude. People's behavioral intentions will be favorable if they have a good attitude. A subjective norm relates to how much social pressure a person feels about a certain action. A subjective norm is a social element that consists of other people's or groups' perceived opinions that are near to or significant to the individual and impact the person's decision-making (Ajzen, 1991; Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; Ajzen & Driver, 1992).

Perceived behavioral control is a term that refers to a person's perception of how easy or difficulty to perform a given behavior. It is not included in the original TRA model. Perceived behavioral control has been included to capture non-volitional components of activity. A person's perceived behavioral control should be stronger when he or she has significant resources and opportunities, according to the TPB (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Customer Intention and Attitude

Attitude, which may be defined as "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable opinion or appraisal of the action in question," is an important component of the TPB that affects behavior intention (Ajzen, 1991, P.188). The two variables are positively linked, thus if a person has a favorable attitude, they will have a positive behavioral intention (Mao & Lyu, 2017). Amaro, Andreu, and Huang (2018) investigated intentions of Millenials to book on Airbnb and reached to the result that intentions to book on Airbnb would be positively influenced by one's attitude about Airbnb. Gates (2018) used online and offline surveys and confirmed that attitude influences repurchase intention from the site. Moreover, So, Oh, and Min (2018) confirmed that attitude predict the intention to use Airbnb. On the contrary, Tajeddini, Rasoolimanesh, Gamage, and Martin (2021) found that the attitude of the guests had no effect on their intention to return to Airbnb. According to Baldick and Jang (2020), attitude has a significant influence on intention to rent shared rooms through Airbnb. Furthermore, Chatterjee, Dandona, Mitra, and Giri (2019) revealed that trust in Airbnb and perceived authenticity had a significant beneficial influence on purchase intention, which was mediated by attitude. Lee (2020) confirmed that attitude affect positively the intention to use the sharing economy. Wang and Jeong (2018) explained that customers' attitude toward the Airbnb platform is influenced by perceived utility and trust. Their satisfaction with the Airbnb stay is influenced by amenities and the host-guest connection, resulting in loyalty and loyal customers reusing the platform.

Customer Intention and Subjective Norms

A subjective norm is the level of social pressure that is felt by an individual about a certain action (Ajzen, 1991). A subjective norm is made up of other people's or groups' opinions that are close/important to the person and affect the individual's decision-making (Ham, Jeger, & Ivković, 2015). In other words, the amount to which the consumer's community where he live, such as friends and family, feel that he or she should utilize a certain product or innovation is referred to as social influence. A subjective norm is a person's assessment of whether major referents approve or disapprove of an action (Ajzen, 1991). There were two types of subjective norms shown to impact Airbnb adoption: social influence and trend affinity (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

Tajeddini *et al*. (2021) reached to the result that subjective norms play a critical role in motivating people to return to Airbnb and hotel lodgings.The findings of two online surveys of millennials from Germany and China reveal that subjective norm influences millennials' intention to book on Airbnb (Amaro, *et al*., 2018). Ahmed, *et al*., (2020) confirmed that subjective norms can predict the intention of Egyptians to use Airbnb. Bigné, Jenkins , and Andreu (2020) reached to the

result that subjective norms affect the intention to book Airbnb after COVID-19. Martínez-González, Parra-López, and Barrientos-Báez (2021) examined the internal and external variables that affect the intention of young consumers to participate in the sharing economy in tourism. They reached the result that social norms have a significant effect on customer intention.

Customer Intention and Perceived Behavioral Control
Perceived behavioral control is the perception of ease or difficulty to do a behavior. It consists of the resources and opportunities that a person should have to do or not to do a particular behavior (Ajzen, 1991). So, *et al.* (2018) investigated the barriers and motivations to use Airbnb by applying a mixed method by using a national survey and reached the result that perceived behavioral control affects the intention of customers to adopt it. On the other hand, Mao and Lyu (2017) used the theory of planned behavior model to investigate the travelers' intention to reuse Airbnb and found that perceived behavioral control did not affect the intention. In India, Chatterjee *et al.* (2019) investigated the Indians' perception of Airbnb compared to other hospitality accommodations and the factors that affect the intention to use it. They reached the result that perceived behavioral control is not a significant factor that can affect the intention to use it. Ma, Berezina, and Cobanoglu (2019) investigated the intention of Chinese travelers to use Airbnb and found that intention was affected by perceived behavioral control. While in Indonesia, Akbar and Andrawina (2018) investigated the provider intends to participate in sharing economy and found that if the provider has the appropriate resources, he/she will have the intention to participate in the sharing economy. Faizal and Nasution (2020) studied the motivations and constraints of consumers to repurchase Airbnb and applied the theory of planned behavior. They reached that perceived behavioral control has a positive influence on repurchase intention from Airbnb.

As a result, three hypotheses were proposed for this study that is derived from the theory:
> H1. Attitude has a positive influence on the customer intention to use Airbnb.
> H2. Subjective norms have a positive influence on the customer intention to use Airbnb
> H3. Perceived behavioral control has a positive influence on the customer intention to use Airbnb

Research Methodology
The purpose of the study is to assess the intention to use the Airbnb by Egyptians using the Theory of Planned behavior (TPB). Thus, in order to empirically investigate the proposed hypotheses in current study, a quantitative research approach was utilized. In addition, PLS-SEM analysis was used to measure the relationship and influence of the factors affecting the Egyptians to use Airbnb.

Data collection
In this study, a convenience sample was utilized and 450 respondents who have not used Airbnb before and are used to travel were contacted, and 410 online questionnaires were gathered at first. After screening out an additional 14 incomplete or incorrect replies, a total of 396 final acceptable responses were kept. Travellers were invited to participate in this survey as they are the most people who can use the Airbnb as an accommodation tool for short term rentals instead of traditional lodging tools as the practical benefits that can motivate them are low cost, household amenities, convenient location (EHL.Insights, 2020).

Measurements
The questionnaire was collected from the literature review then translated to Arabic language and revised by academics and experts to ensure the reliability and validity of questionnaire items. The survey contains four components, each with numerous items scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The study measurements were mostly derived from relevant literature and modified to meet research needs (Table 1)

Table 1. Measurement constructs items and sources

Construct	Item	Source
Intention	I1. I am willing to use Airbnb when traveling	(Han *et al.*, 2010)
	I2. I plan to use Airbnb when traveling	
	I3. I will make an effort to use Airbnb when traveling	
Attitude	AT1. For me, using Airbnb when traveling is good	(Mao & Lyu, 2017)
	AT2. For me, using Airbnb when traveling is favorable	
	AT3. For me, using Airbnb when traveling is wise	
	AT4. For me, using Airbnb when traveling is positive	
Subjective norms	SN1. Most people who are important to me think I should use Airbnb when traveling	(Mao & Lyu, 2017)
	SN2. Most people who are important to me would want me to use Airbnb when traveling	
	SN3. People whose opinions I value would prefer that I use Airbnb when traveling	
Perceived behavioral control	PB1. Whether or not I use Airbnb when traveling is completely up to me	(Mao & Lyu, 2017)
	PB2. I am confident that if I want, I can use Airbnb when traveling	
	PB3. I have resources, time and opportunities to use Airbnb when traveling	

Results and Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, V.25) and Smart PLS 3 were utilized to analyze the collected research data.

Table 2: Respondents' Profile

Item	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	229	57.8
Female	167	42.2
Age		
Less than 25	130	32.8
25-34	193	48.7
35-44	50	12.6
45 and more	23	5.9
Education		
Undergraduate	94	23.7
Bachelor's degree	224	56.8
Post-graduate	78	19.7
Annual income		
Less than 50000 L.E	166	41.9
50000- 99999 L.E	151	38.1
100000- 149999 L.E	76	19.2
150000 and more	3	8
Marital Status		
Single	211	53.3
Married without children	115	29
Married with children	70	19.7

Males percentage is 57.8 % of the total sample. The median age ranged from 25 to 34 years old. A bachelor's degree was held by more than half of the respondents (56.8 %). Almost half of the respondents (41.9%) reported a household income of less than 50,000 L.E. per year. Moreover, 53.3% of respondents were single.

Model assessment
Two phases are involved in evaluating a research model utilizing PLS analysis. The first stage involves assessing the features of the constructs and measurement items that represent them, as well as the measurement (outer) model. The second stage entails evaluating the structural (inner) model as well as the connections between constructs as defined by the research model. Hair, Rngle, and Sarstedt (2011), Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, and Mena (2012), and Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics (2009) provided guidelines for the model evaluation.

Outer (Measurement) model
The findings demonstrate that the measuring model meets all of the standard criteria. First and foremost, loadings should be at least 0.60 and ideally more than 0.7 in order for indicators to be reliable (Chin, 1998; Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016). Table 3 shows that all factor loadings are more than 0.7. The average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct, which is all more than the required value of 0.5, also demonstrated the convergent validity (Bagozzi & Yi , 1988; Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Because all Cronbach's alpha values are more than 0.7 (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010), internal consistency reliability was also validated, indicating that each construct's indicators have the same meaning. Furthermore, composite reliabilities (Latan & Noonan, 2017), which many researchers believe more suited for PLS-SEM than Cronbach's alpha, vary from 0.86 to 0.90, above the suggested threshold value of 0.70. (Bagozzi & Yi , 1988). Divergent validity was also tested using cross-loadings.

Using the cross-loadings criteria, all indicators loaded on their respective construct more highly than on any other, revealing that the constructs are distinct.

Table 3. Results of Measurements Model- Convergent Validity

Construct	Item	Loading	AVE	CR
Intention	**I1**	0.889	0.749	0.899
	I2	0.910		
	I3	0.793		
Attitude	**AT1**	0.865	0.651	0.881
	AT2	0.785		
	AT3	0.837		
	AT4	0.734		
Subjective norms	**SN1**	0.850	0.668	0.858
	SN2	0.759		
	SN3	0.840		
Percevied behavioral control	**PB1**	0.826	0.681	0.865
	PB2	0.808		
	PB3	0.841		

Table 4: Latent Variables Correlations

	Attitude	Intention	Perceived Behavioral Control	Subjective Norms
Attitude	**0.834**			
Intention	0.807	**0.865**		
Perceived Behavioral Control	0.736	0.727	**0.842**	
Subjective Norms	0.725	0.677	0.817	**0.825**

Table 5: Discriminant Validity

	Attitude	Intention	Perceived Behavioral Control	Subjective Norms
AT1	0.865	0.778	0.581	0.601
AT2	0.785	0.593	0.428	0.416
AT3	0.837	0.748	0.677	0.652
AT4	0.734	0.525	0.706	0.678
I1	0.727	0.889	0.648	0.596
I2	0.736	0.910	0.706	0.657
I3	0.701	0.793	0.525	0.499
PB1	0.699	0.617	0.826	0.771
PB2	0.498	0.523	0.808	0.739
PB3	0.611	0.648	0.841	0.588
SN1	0.584	0.561	0.768	0.850
SN2	0.529	0.443	0.585	0.759
SN3	0.651	0.632	0.698	0.840

Inner (Structural model)

Calculating the path coefficients and significance levels is one of the most essential procedures in evaluating the inner model since it helps researchers to validate or deny the presented hypotheses. Figure 1 shows the path coefficients and significance levels for the suggested model in this research.

H1 predicted that attitude towards Airbnb would positively influence intentions to book on Airbnb. Consistent with intention-based models, attitude was found to be significantly associated with intentions to purchase travel online ($\beta = 0.654$, $p < 0.05$).

H2 which claimed that subjective norm impacts intention to use Airbnb was not accepted ($\beta = 0.254$, $p > 0.05$).

H3 in which perceived behavioral control predicts the intention to use Airbnb was rejected ($\beta = -0.011$, $p = .92$).

Table 6: Path Coefficient of the research Hypotheses

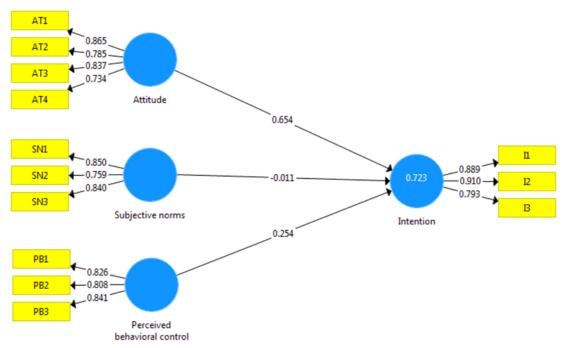| Hypo	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T-value	P-value	Decision
H1	Attitude→Intention	0.654	0.103	6.323	0.000	Supported **
H2	Subjective Norms→Intention	0.254	0.143	1.779	0.076	Not supported
H3	Perceived Behavioral Control→Intention	-0.011	0.115	0.092	0.927	Not supported

Figure 1: Structural Model

Discussions and Implications

The current study focused on the factors that affect the intention of Egyptians travellers to use Airbnb who have not used it before. The results of this study are quite different from other studies and hypotheses. This study examined the adoption decision process of Airbnb using TPB model. As expected by the theory, attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control affect the behavioural intention.

The results show that attitude affect the intention to use Airbnb. This study is in line with previous studies which found that attitude was the strongest predictor of intentions to use Airbnb. This finding is in agreement with the study of Amaro, et al. (2018), Gates (2018), So, et al. (2018), Baldick and Jang (2020), Chatterjee, et al. (2019), Lee (2020) and Wang and Jeong (2018). On the

other hand, this study differ from the study of Tajeddini, et al. (2021) which revealed that attitude toward Airbnb did not affect the intention to use Airbnb.

Moreover, the findings demonstrated that subjective norms did not affect the intention to use Airbnb in Egypt. This relationship, however, was surprising since a significant number of studies focusing on the intentions to use Airbnb have found that subjective norms were the strongest predictor of intentions to use it (Mao & Lyu, 2017; Kurillová & Marciánová, 2020; Rigene, Jenkins, & Andreu, 2020).

In additions, the results explained that perceived behavioural control did not affect the intention to use Airbnb for Egyptians. This result is agreeing with the results of Jun (2020) and Fong, Leung, Ly, and Zhang (2021). On the contrary, this results differ from the results of So, et al. (2018), Mao and Lyu (2017), Chatterjee, et al. (2019), Akbar and Andrawina (2018) and Faizal and Nasution (2020).

This study adds to the current body of knowledge by explaining the primary reasons why people choose Airbnb over traditional lodging options like hotels. Moreover, the results show that subjective norms and perceived behavioural control do not affect the intention to use Airbnb and this results do not agree with the TPB model. It's possible that the lack of a significant effect of perceived behavioural control on behavioural intention in this study is due to travelers' complete control over their choice of Airbnb or hotels. In our everyday life, smart phone technology and the internet have become popular. When deciding between hotels and Airbnb, respondents have the same resources and options. To put it another way, for Airbnb guests, the options for purchasing Airbnb or hotel rooms are basically equal.

The findings have implications for both Airbnb and its hosts. Airbnb and its hosts, as players in the sharing economy, should adapt their services to fit the demands of travellers and focus on the elements that have a direct or indirect impact on visitors' purchase intentions. The most significant factor appears to be attitude, implying that Airbnb and its hosts should work to increase customers' positive attitudes by increasing the impact of positive antecedents (i.e. perceived value and unique experience expectation) while reducing the influence of negative antecedents (i.e. perceived risk).

Research Limitation and Future Direction

This study has some limitations. First, the study sample is controlled to Airbnb non users in Egypt. Therefore, the future researches should investigate the intention of the users of Airbnb to reuse it. Second, this study only based on the main constructs of the TPB model. The TPB model should be extracted to include other factors that affect the intention to use Airbnb especially after the COVID-19 duration. In the future, a longitudinal research or an experimental design can be used to determine causality.

Conclusions

Airbnb was designed to give an alternative to a hotel-based overnight lodging. However, there is a gap in literature about the intention to use Airbnb in Egypt. The current research evaluates TPB model to investigate the psychological variables that influence customers' decision to use Airbnb. As a result, it adds theoretical and empirical refinement to previous research of Airbnb purchase intention. The study examines the relationship between psychological dimensions and the intention to use Airbnb in Egypt. The results show that attitude toward Airbnb has a significant and a positive effect on the intention to use Airbnb. However, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control did not affect the intention to use Airbnb in Egypt.

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