Airbnb Host's Perceptions on Airbnb Customer Social Responsibility and Organizational Justice in Airbnb 2.0

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Abstract. In a peer-to-peer transaction of the sharing economy, an Airbnb host is a worker as well as a service provider. From this perspective, this study explores how Airbnb hosts' perception of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and organizational justice impact their customer orientation directly and indirectly via job satisfaction and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). The results highlight the importance of a host's perception of Airbnb's CSR and organizational justice. The results provide various implications for online accommodation businesses and guidance for future research.

Keywords: Airbnb hosts · CSR · Organizational justice · Customer orientation

1 Introduction

In the tourism industry, the most famous example of the sharing economy is Airbnb, which allows owners to offer visitors their unoccupied properties (houses or rooms). Airbnb has over 150 million users worldwide (including both hosts and guests), and its annual revenue in 2018 was USD3.6 billion [1]. In this situation, Airbnb hosts are becoming increasingly commercial. According to [1], it is expected that Airbnb hosts listing multiple houses for rent will become the fastest-growing section of Airbnb and will generate most of Airbnb's income. In fact, the number of hosts who lease two or more properties in the U.S totals nine million, and 44% of those homes are professionally managed. Some scholars refer to this professional Airbnb as Airbnb 2.0 [2]. As an individual service provider, a host attracts prospective customers by advertising the

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characteristics of himself/herself and his/her properties, and tries to achieve competitive advantages [3, 4]. At the same time, as a worker, he/she can be influenced by whether the Airbnb company has a sense of business ethics and concerns regarding environmental or social issues [5]. In this vein, we adopt some business-related issues (corporate social responsibility, organizational justice, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and customer orientation) and investigate their causal relationships.

Meanwhile, China is one of the biggest Airbnb markets. According to an Airbnb report [6], up to 94% of hosts in China practice environmental protection, and 63% of the hosts provide guests with public transport cards and travel information to encourage them to use public transport. Forty-five percent of the hosts use green cleaning products and methods. This study decided to investigate Chinese Airbnb hosts' perception.

2 Theoretical Background and Research Model

CSR is essential for a corporate's sustainability, and this attribute applies also to service providers of the sharing economy [7]. Mi & Coffman noted that the sharing economy has the potential to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) when a sharing service provider cooperates with the government by engaging in CSR [8]. Drawn from Social Identity Theory (SIT), previous studies have found that employees who perceive that their company's CSR activities are likely to engender a positive attitude toward the company and its work contribute to the goal of obtaining customer orientation [9]. According to SIT, people tend to divide themselves into different categories, and the perceived identity within each category in turn affects each member's self-concept [10]. For example, if an employee thinks he/she is a member of a superior company, his/her self-esteem and attitude toward the organization will be enhanced. In the context of CSR, companies' participation in CSR activities can lead employees to have a positive view of the company and a positive attitude towards work, which consequently results in good performance [9]. CSR boosts pleasant feelings amongst employees and prevents negative ones from flourishing. CSR also has the power to create an OCB [11]. In the context of the sharing economy, "a peer-to-peer based sharing of access to goods and services" ([8], p. 1), an owner (e.g., an Airbnb host) is a kind of a worker as well as a service provider [5, 8]. From this perspective, it can be assumed that Airbnb hosts' perception of CSR helps to increase a positive attitude toward jobs and organizations, which consequently enhances performance.

H1-4: Airbnb hosts' perception of CSR has positive impacts on job satisfaction, OCB, organizational justice, and customer orientation.

Organizational justice is considered a crucial factor influencing the attitude of members of an organization. The concept of organizational justice is related to "fairness," and has three key components: procedural justice (fairness in process), distributive justice (fairness in reward distribution), and interactional justice (fairness in relationships) [12]. According to previous studies, employees' organizational justice

has a positive impact on attitude toward jobs and organizations, and customer orientation [13]. In the context of this study, organizational justice refers to hosts' perception of fairness in Airbnbs' behavior. Although the sharing economy is believed to be a decentralized and equitable system, some researchers have shared concerns about the sharing economy under the shadow of moral hazards, unfair distribution of income and welfare, and a power struggle between the host and guest [14]. Therefore, the importance of considering and increasing the host's organizational justice will increase. Considering the role of organizational justice, it can be assumed that hosts' organizational justice enhances a positive attitude toward jobs and Airbnb, and customer orientation.

H5-7: Organizational justice has positive impacts on job satisfaction, OCB, and customer orientation.

Customer orientation is defined as an employee's tendency or predisposition to meet a customer's needs or a customer's desire on the job, and it is essential for achieving customer satisfaction. Both job satisfaction and OCB are important factors affecting customer orientation, and they also have causal relationships with each other [15]. OCB is an employee's behavior while supporting organizational operations such as helping colleagues, and includes positively affecting all actions of the work-related parties for long-term business success [3].

H8-9: Job satisfaction has positive impacts on customer orientation and OCB

H10: OCB has a positive impact on customer orientation.

Based on the theoretical background, we proposed the following research model (see Fig. 1). Both CSR and organizational justice were measured as a second-order construct by the three constructs, respectively.

Fig. 1. Research model

3 Method and Results

All items were based on prior research and measured by a 5-point Likert scale. The survey instruments were initially produced in English and then translated into Chinese. A web-based online survey was conducted from 14 to 28 April, 2019. Data were collected from members of the largest Airbnb host communities in China: BAIDU TIEBA and the DOUBAN GROUP. As a result, a total number of 202 respondents completed the questionnaire.

First, we assessed the measurement model. The values of composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and average variance extracted are greater than their thresholds. In addition, this study separately conducted CFA for the two second-order variables (CSR and organizational justice) in order to reduce the likelihood of interpretational confounding resulting from conducting a complex model. The results showed an acceptable model fit. Therefore, all items are satisfactory in terms of reliability and validity.

Then, SEM was conducted (see Table 1). The results showed that host's perception of Airbnb CSR have an impact on customer orientation, indirectly via job satisfaction and organizational justice. That is, customer orientation can be enhanced only when the host's perception of Airbnb's CSR induces other positive perceptions or attitudes. A host's organizational justice directly influences OCB and customer orientation but does not contribute to job satisfaction. These results highlight the need for Airbnb to balance both CSR activities and fairness in process, distribution, and relationships. In the Airbnb 2.0 era, owners (hosts) are workers as well as service providers. Their perception of Airbnb's CSR activities and fairness is important to increase customer satisfaction, since the value of the customer should be created from the perspective of the hosts. Meanwhile, OCB does not influence customer orientation, and is not influenced by job satisfaction. One possible explanation is that since Airbnb is a peer-to-peer service, it is relatively rare to collaborate with colleagues for common goals.

Table 1. Standardized parameter estimates

Hypothesized path				Estimate	t-value	Results
H1	CSR	→	Job satisfaction	0.828	4.060	Support
H2	CSR	→	OCB	0.599	2.715	Support
H3	CSR	→	Organizational justice	0.925	13.643	Support
H4	CSR	→	Customer orientation	0.334	1.320	Reject
H5	Organizational justice	→	Job satisfaction	0.101	0.516	Reject
H6	Organizational justice	→	OCB	0.238	1.720	Support
H7	Organizational justice	→	Customer orientation	0.402	3.068	Support
H8	Job satisfaction	→	Customer orientation	0.427	2.930	Support
H9	Job satisfaction	→	OCB	0.140	0.971	Reject
H10	OCB	→	Customer orientation	-0.186	-1.033	Reject

$\chi^2 = 217.334$; d.f = 136; $\chi^2/\text{d.f} = 1.598$; CFI = 0.979; NFI = 0.947; GFI = 0.900; AGFI = 0.860; Standardized RMR = 0.03.

4 Conclusions

This study extends the literature on the sharing economy, which has focused intensively on Airbnb guests' perceptions by observing what hosts' perceptions of CSR and organizational justice are. The results suggest that, in order to improve the reputation of the company, especially from the perspective of employees and all stakeholders, the company should accelerate the implementation of CSR. Thus, Airbnb can be used as a valuable tool to provide competitive advantage. With the help of CSR implementation, Airbnb can improve hosts' OCB and job satisfaction, and hence improve customer orientation. In addition, the procedures and rules are used to compensate and distribute bonuses that are provided as a result of hosts' performance. And the more fair the supervisor's treatment is in the process of setting up the procedure, the more customer orientation is increased. It is important to operate a reward system as a way of maintaining organizational justice. Moreover, because the working state of the landlord is not collective, the Airbnb company needs to make every host feel fairness is being applied so as to promote the extra-role behavior and customer orientation of the hosts, at the same time improving the working environment and customer service.

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