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Past Experience, Traveler Personality, and Tripographics on Intention to Use Airbnb

Abstract

Purpose: This study aims to identify the individual and trip characteristics that are associated with intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation, including past experience (users vs. non-users), accommodation preferences, traveler personality, and tripographic variables.

Design/methodology/approach: To compare Airbnb users and non-users, quantitative research was conducted to test for group differences. A questionnaire was designed and administered face-to-face in major tourist areas. Quota sampling was used to ensure comparable samples of Airbnb users and non-users.

Findings: While Airbnb users and non-users expressed few differences in their demographics and perceived importance of accommodation attributes, the two groups vary in their perception of Airbnb and evaluation of Airbnb compared to hotels, suggesting some positive and negative changes after experiencing Airbnb. Respondents who were more allocentric were more likely to use Airbnb. Hotels were preferred for traveling with family as well as shorter trips, while Airbnb was preferred for traveling with friends as well as longer trips.

Practical implications: This study identified several challenges for Airbnb and other sharing platforms, including consumers' security concerns, potential decrease in the likelihood of repeat usage, and low likelihood of using Airbnb when traveling with family.

Originality/value: While previous studies focused more on existing customers of peer-to-peer accommodation, this study compared users and non-users and identified key differences in their perceptions. The use of traveler personality and tripographic variables to examine intention to use Airbnb provides a unique perspective to consider Airbnb as an "allocentric destination," and the type of trips that are more compatible with the Airbnb experience.

Keywords: peer-to-peer accommodation, Airbnb, accommodation attributes, traveler personality, tripographics

1. Introduction

Peer-to-peer accommodation is not new. Back in the 1800s, in the American South, it was a custom or even considered a "duty" for people to receive travelers in their private homes (Shingleton, 1972, p. 249). However, it wasn't until the twenty-first century, with the advent of new technologies, that "sharing" and "exchanging" of resources became common, leading to the rise of the sharing economy (Belk, 2014; Botsman and Rogers, 2010). In the hospitality industry, many peer-to-peer accommodation platforms have developed over the years, such as CouchSurfing, HomeAway, 9flats, FlipKey, and Roomorama (Velikova, 2014). Founded in 2008, Airbnb rose quickly amongst its competitors and became the largest online platform for sharing accommodation, offering over two million homes in 191 countries (Airbnb, 2016a). Having served over 60 million guests since 2008, Airbnb is considered a major threat for hotels (Guttentag, 2015; Zervas *et al.*, 2015).

Peer-to-peer accommodation differs from the traditional accommodation sector in many ways. From the supply side, the accommodation service is provided by non-professional ordinary people, with flexible inventory, low cost of market entry, and the monetary exchange is usually a source of supplementary rather than primary income (Guttentag, 2015; Tussyadiah and Zach, 2015; Zervas *et al.*, 2015). On the demand side, consumers can find more affordable lodging, wider range of property types, stay in non-commercial neighborhoods, enjoy the hospitality of the hosts, and experience authentic local lifestyle (Liang, 2015; Oskam, 2016; Tussyadiah, 2015; Tussyadiah and Zach, 2016). More importantly, peer-to-peer platforms facilitate social interactions and create a network of people engaged in this practice of sharing and exchanging (Ikkala and Lampinen, 2015; Oskam, 2016). While previous studies have identified the unique attributes of peer-to-peer accommodation, peer-to-peer accommodation may not be suitable for everyone, and there are different factors that may influence travelers' accommodation choices.

For any business, it is crucial to understand consumers' decision-making process and the factors that impact their purchasing decisions. Within sharing accommodation literature, previous studies have discussed the benefits and key attributes sought by guests (Guttentag, 2015; Stors and Kagermeier, 2015; Tussyadiah and Zach, 2015; 2016), and some attention has been paid to the characteristics of the hosts (Han *et al.*, 2016; Meelen *et al.*, 2015). However, most studies focused on existing users of peer-to-peer accommodation (e.g., Guttentag, 2016; Liang, 2015; Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016a), which, despite the meteoric growth of the sharing economy, is a relatively small percentage of the general population (Morgan Stanley, 2015; Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016b). Thus, there is a need to examine the non-users—those who are unwilling or have yet to try peer-to-peer accommodation—as well as to compare existing users and non-users. The two groups may differ in market characteristics. According to Guttentag (2015), Airbnb tends to appeal to "young, technologically comfortable, adventurous, and budget-conscious tourists" (p. 1205).

Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016b) found that peer-to-peer accommodation users are better educated and travel more often than non-users. In addition, people who use peer-to-peer and those who don't may differ in their personality, perceptions, and accommodation preferences. There is a lack of research that compares existing users and non-users of Airbnb with regard to their perceptions and attitude towards using Airbnb and what they value in their accommodation choices

Moreover, people's choice of accommodation may be influenced by the characteristics of their trip—the so-called "tripographics" (Hu *et al.*, 2002; Li *et al.*, 2008). Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016a) examined the impact of peer-to-peer accommodation on travel patterns, and found positive impacts such as increased frequency and length of stay. While the availability of accommodation may increase one's length of stay, the opposite may also be true—that people choose Airbnb when they are planning a longer trip. Travelers may prefer peer-to-peer accommodation for some occasions, but not for all trips. The type of destination, length of stay, travel companion, group size, and other variables may influence whether tourists choose hotels or Airbnb. Furthermore, Airbnb users and non-users may vary in their intention to use hotel and/or Airbnb in the context of different trips. The inter-relationship between past experience (i.e., having stayed at Airbnb or not) and tripographic variables on accommodation choices warrants further investigation. This study addresses the aforementioned research gaps by comparing Airbnb users and non-users in their individual characteristics, perception of Airbnb, accommodation preferences, and intention to use Airbnb under different travel scenarios. Findings contribute to hospitality literature on accommodation choices and preferences, specifically on the factors that affect peer-to-peer accommodation use.

The purpose of this study is to identify the individual and trip characteristics that are associated with intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation as a guest. As Airbnb is currently the largest and best-known platform for peer-to-peer accommodation, Airbnb is selected for this analysis. Specifically, research objectives are:

1) To compare the current users vs. non-users of Airbnb in terms of demographics, perceived importance of accommodation attributes, and perception of Airbnb.
2) To explore if different traveler personality types vary in their likelihood of using Airbnb.
3) To examine how length of stay and travel party influence one's choice of hotels vs. Airbnb.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Peer-to-peer Accommodation

Peer-to-peer accommodation enables ordinary individuals to rent out all or parts of their own living spaces for a short period of time (Guttentag, 2015; Yannopoulou *et al.*, 2013; Zervas *et al.*, 2015). It is part of a global trend known as the "sharing economy" or "collaborative consumption." (Belk, 2014; Botsman and Rogers, 2010). Airbnb is one of the most popular sites for peer-to-peer

accommodation, but there are also other platforms, such as: Wimdu, HouseTrip, OneFineStay, and VacationHomeRentals. Web 2.0 technologies make it possible for the users of these platforms to interact before making the decision to sell/purchase (Zervas *et al.*, 2015). Rating systems allows both hosts and guests to rate and post public reviews about each other, and such user-generated ratings plus identity verification mechanisms can enhance the confidence of future consumers who may have reservations about hosting strangers and sleeping in the house of strangers

Technological innovations and flexible supply of underused assets lead to the exponential growth of peer-to-peer accommodation (Zervas *et al.*, 2015). According to Airbnb's report, "summer travel on Airbnb has grown 353 times over" from 2010 to 2015 (Airbnb, 2015, p. 3). Airbnb has also achieved more than 140 million total guest arrivals by the end of 2016 (Airbnb, 2016b). Despite the quantity of guests and number of stays on Airbnb, Airbnb users are still a minority within the traveling population. Tussyadiah and Pesonen's (2016b) study found that 20% of adult travelers in the US and 24% in Finland have used peer-to-peer accommodation. According to a report by Morgan Stanley (2015), 12% of travelers have used Airbnb, and 59% of travelers have "never heard of Airbnb" (p. 7). It should be noted that the Morgan Stanley study surveyed over 4000 consumers in the US, UK, France, and Germany, which are the top 4 destinations of outbound guests on Airbnb (Airbnb, 2016b). Consumer awareness and market penetration of Airbnb are likely to be lower in other countries. Therefore, it is also necessary to consider non-users and explore their perceptions and attitude towards using Airbnb.

2.2 Users versus Non-users

While there are not many comparative studies on Airbnb users and non-users, previous studies on travel booking have identified some differences between people who purchased travel products online and those who did not. Amaro and Duarte (2013) identified three types of antecedents of online travel shopping: consumer characteristics, perceived channel characteristics, and website and product characteristics (e.g., short-haul vs. long-haul trips, domestic vs. international flights). For example, Weber and Roehl (1999) found that online purchasers have more education, income, and Internet experience, while off-line purchasers were more likely to agree that "providing credit card information through the Web is plain foolish" (p. 296). Morrison *et al.*'s (2001) work on Internet travel "lookers" (i.e., those who searched online but did not book) versus "bookers" (i.e., those who purchased online) revealed that lookers and bookers differed in the perceived benefits and disadvantages of online booking. They also found that people with more international travel experience were more likely to be "bookers." Law *et al.* (2004) examined traveler's use of online versus traditional distribution channels, revealing that online travel purchases were more likely for long-haul travelers and travelers using full packaged tours, and that VFR travelers purchased less online than other business and leisure travelers.

Using peer-to-peer accommodation platforms is a unique type of online travel purchase. As it is difficult to examine all possible antecedents of Airbnb booking, this study will focus on key variables within Amaro and Duarte's (2013) classification (i.e., consumer, channel, and trip characteristics) and explore how they influence travelers' intention to use Airbnb. Behavioral intention has been well-established as a determinant of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). The construct has been widely applied in hospitality and tourism research, with a plethora of studies on intention to visit (e.g., Alvarez and Campo, 2014; Lam and Hsu, 2006) and intention to purchase (e.g., Agag and El-Masry, 2016; Wong and Law, 2005). This study will examine travelers' overall intention to use Airbnb as well as intention to use Airbnb and hotels under different travel scenarios.

2.3 Accommodation Attributes

Peer-to-peer accommodation differs from traditional hotels. Dolnicar and Otter (2003) conducted a comprehensive review of past research to identify the hotel attributes that are most important to guests. They extracted a total of 173 items, consisting of nine categories: Services, Hotel (the physical environment), Location, Room, Price/Value, F&B, Image, Security, and Marketing, and the top five most important attributes are: convenient location, service quality, reputation, friendliness of staff, and price. In addition to overall hotel attributes, other studies have compared the perceptions and preferences of different types of guests, such as: male/female, young/mature travelers, and business/pleasure travelers (e.g., Ananth *et al.*, 1992; Dube and Renaghan, 2000; McCleary and Weaver, 1994; Wilkins, 2010).

Beside common accommodation attributes, peer-to-peer accommodation has more to offer. Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016b) identified two factors that drive the use of peer-to-peer accommodation: social appeal and economic appeal. Social appeal includes interacting with the hosts and local people, and getting insiders' tips on local attractions, which are consistent with the benefits of couch surfing (Chen, 2011). Moreover, with peer-to-peer accommodation, guests are able to rent an entire house, stay in residential neighborhoods, and enjoy the comfort of a home (Sommerville, 2015; Tussyadiah and Zach, 2016). Guttentag (2015) argued that staying in private homes and getting insiders' tips contribute to the authentic local experience of Airbnb guests. Liang (2015) also found perceived value and authenticity to be two important factors that influence the repurchase decision of Airbnb customers. Authenticity is typically examined in tourism research, such as the authenticity of tourism attractions, performances, and souvenirs (e.g., Chhabra *et al.*, 2003; Xie *et al.*, 2012; Yang and Wall, 2009). Before peer-to-peer accommodation, authenticity is not an attribute that people will consider for hotels. As authentic local experience is a unique appeal of peer-to-peer accommodation, it should be included in examining the perceptions and accommodation preferences of Airbnb users and non-users.

2.4 Traveler Personality and Travel Behavior

Hotels and peer-to-peer accommodation have different strengths and may cater to different market segments. It is necessary to identify the characteristics of the consumers who may be more interested in peer-to-peer accommodation. Plog's (1974; 2001) psychographic model is one of the most well-known measurements of travel personality, and has been used to examine traveler personality and related travel behaviors (e.g., Babu *et al.*, 2013; Chandler and Costello, 2002; Huang and Hsu, 2009; Litvin, 2006; McKercher, 2005; Park and Jang, 2014). It explains tourist behavior along a continuum, ranging from allocentrism to psychocentrism (Madrigal, 1995). Being venturesome and self-assured, allocentric individuals prefer to seek out unique destinations, while psychocentrics are self-inhibited and anxious about traveling, and tend to travel to destinations that are developed and even overly commercialized (Plog, 1994). Plog (1994) further categorized travelers into six types from the most psychocentric to the most allocentric (i.e., traditionals, sightseers, journeyers, voyagers, pioneers, and venturers), and found the classification to be normally distributed along a bell-shaped curve.

Plog's psychographics is typically used to predict travel behavior, such as destination choice and preferred activities, rather than studying accommodation preferences (e.g., Chow and Murphy, 2011; Galloway, 2002; Griffith and Albanese, 1996; Hoxter and Lester, 1988; Smith, 1990). However, peer-to-peer accommodation through online platforms is a relatively new travel product, and currently utilized by a small percentage of travelers only. The perceived risks involved and level of trust required to allow strangers to share the same space might be more appealing to venturesome and confident personalities (Guttentag, 2016; Liang, 2015). Plog (2002) pointed out that venturers are interested in new technology and usually the first users of new products and services. Previous studies have also identified innovativeness to be an important personal trait that influences online travel purchases (Amaro and Duarte, 2013). Lee *et al.* (2007) found innovativeness to moderate the relationship between attitude and intention to purchase travel products online. When travelers have high level of innovativeness, there is a greater likelihood that attitude would lead to intention to purchase. Hence, Plog's traveler personality types may be useful in examining travelers' intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation.

In addition to personality, travel decisions are shaped by many other factors. McKercher (2005) pointed out that the effects of geographic and cultural distance should be considered in examining the relationship between traveler personality and destination choice, which might explain why some studies using psychographic scales came up with inconclusive findings. Comparing traveler personality and destination choice, Litvin (2006) revealed that respondents' "most recent destination" did not match their traveler personality. However, their "ideal vacation destination" did. Park and Jang (2014) also found that satisfaction played a role in the revisit

intention of allocentric versus psychocentric travelers. Therefore, while personality types may be important predictors of travel behavior, it is also necessary to consider additional variables. In the case of peer-to-peer accommodation, while traveler personality may have an impact on one's overall interest in peer-to-peer accommodation, different travel scenarios may also influence the likelihood of using hotels or peer-to-peer accommodation.

3. Methods

This study aims to identify the individual and trip attributes that are associated with intention to use peer-to-peer accommodation, including demographics, perception of Airbnb, perceived importance of accommodation attributes, traveler personality, and tripographic variables. A questionnaire was developed based on research objectives. Airbnb, as the giant in peer-to-peer accommodation rentals and with a company value of $25 billion (Speiser, 2015), was selected for this analysis.

3.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section focused on the respondents' knowledge, past experience, and perception of Airbnb. Their knowledge of Airbnb includes their source of information about Airbnb. Past experience with Airbnb includes number of stays and the cities in which they used Airbnb. Although not all respondents may have experience staying with Airbnb, if they have some knowledge of Airbnb, it is still possible to measure their perceptions and purchasing intentions (Shukla, 2012). Items for the perception of Airbnb were developed based on Guttentag's (2015) overview of Airbnb. Key descriptions of Airbnb, such as Airbnb being innovative, provides local experiences, brings positive influence to the tourism industry, and the trust and privacy issues related to Airbnb, were incorporated into the questionnaire. Moreover, as Airbnb is believed to be more appealing to budget travelers and less of a threat for the business travel market (Marcin, 2014; Zervas *et al.*, 2015), respondents were asked about Airbnb's "suitability for leisure travel," rather than business travel.

Section two examined respondents' perceived importance of various accommodation attributes in their hotel choices, and their evaluation of hotels versus Airbnb on each attribute. A list of accommodation attributes was developed based on the work of Dolnicar and Otter (2003), and "authenticity" was added as it is a key feature of peer-to-peer accommodation (Guttentag, 2015; Liang, 2015). For Airbnb and hotel comparisons, respondents were asked to rate whether Airbnb or hotels performed better on the same item. On a seven-point scale, higher scores indicated that Airbnb was better, lower scores indicated that hotels were better, and a score of four would indicate that hotels and Airbnb were the same.

Section three asked respondents' intention to use Airbnb. According to Hsu and Crotts (2006), intention can be operationalized as the likelihood to act in a given setting. Respondents

were asked to indicate their overall likelihood of using Airbnb in the next three years, as well as their likelihood of using hotels and Airbnb under various trip scenarios. *Length of stay* was divided into two categories: "within 7 days" and "more than 7 days." *Travel party* was divided into four categories: traveling alone, travel with spouse/partner, travel with friends, and travel with family (e.g., Agrusa *et al.*, 2010; Kastenholz *et al.*, 2005). Together the two tripographic variables formed a 2 x 4 combination of travel scenarios. The next section examined respondents' traveler personality using Plog's (1974; 2001) psychographic scale. Respondents were asked to indicated their level of agreement with fifteen statements about their personality, travel, and leisure activities, which would be used to classify them into six traveler personality types. Finally, the last section collected respondents' demographic information, including age, gender, nationality, education, and occupation, as well as their frequency of travel within the past 12 months. To ensure face validity, the survey instrument was pilot tested with ten university students who had prior experience using Airbnb. No significant problems were found. The survey was deemed ready for administration after minor modifications.

3.2 Population and Sampling

Airbnb users are considered a small and difficult group to get in touch with for research purposes (Guttentag, 2016; Liang 2015). According to a recent study, Airbnb customers consist of approximately 12% of the adult traveling population (Morgan Stanley, 2015). To obtain comparable numbers of respondents from existing Airbnb customers and non/potential customers, quota sampling was used. Quota sampling is a non-probability equivalent of stratified sampling (Dattalo, 2008; Mangal and Mangal, 2013). While the quota selection criteria are typically demographic variables, quotas and sub-groups can also be determined by "identifying a particular variable of importance" (Babbie, 2008; Fogelman and Comber, 2007, p. 135). Quota sampling, like stratified sampling, can be proportional or non-proportional (Kemper *et al.*, 2003; Trochim *et al.*, 2016). With non-proportional quota sampling, researchers select an equal number of units in each group, irrespective of the proportions in the population. Based on research objectives, the variable of importance in this study was the use of Airbnb. Due to the wide gap in the proportion of Airbnb users and non-users (e.g., 12% vs. 88%), non-proportional quota sampling was used, with the minimum number of sampled units in each group set as 100. Besides Airbnb use, no demographic characteristics were used as quota selection criteria. Similar sampling strategies have been used in previous studies to compare, for example, skiers versus non-skiers, students of different majors, and different types of wellness tourists (e.g., Gilbert and Hudson, 2000; Karhunen and Ledyaeva, 2010; Voigt *et al.*, 2011).

3.3 Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collection took place in February, 2016 at three tourist areas in Hong Kong: Mongkok, Tsim Sha Tsui Ferry Pier, and Central Ferry Pier. These areas are not only tourist zones but also transportation hubs, where it is possible to approach both tourists and locals. While the questionnaire was designed to be self-administered, a face-to-face data collection method was selected, because it enabled interviewers to answer questions from respondents. Data was collected on both weekdays and weekends, and at various hours of the day. Respondents who were sitting or standing around in the waiting areas were approached and invited to participate in the study. Only one person per travel party was surveyed. The completed questionnaires were also collected by interviewers, which allowed them to check the questionnaire for incomplete responses. In the end, 119 completed questionnaires were collected from Airbnb users and 129 questionnaires from non-Airbnb users, resulting in a final sample size of 248.

The Statistical Package for Social Science 23 (SPSS) was used for data entry and analysis. Data analysis consisted of six steps. First, the demographic profiles of Airbnb users and non-users were created and tested for group differences. Second, independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the travel experience and accommodation preferences of users and non-users. Third, the two groups' perceptions of and intention to use Airbnb were also compared. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the measurements. Fourth, respondents' psychographic scores were calculated, and respondents were divided into six groups by traveler personality. Fifth, ANOVA and multiple comparisons were conducted to identify the differences in intention to use Airbnb by traveler personality types. Finally, paired-samples t-tests were utilized to compare the likelihood of choosing hotels and Airbnb under various travel scenarios.

4. Findings

This study compared the perceptions and characteristics of existing customers of Airbnb versus those who have never used Airbnb, and examined different factors that may influence one's intention to use Airbnb.

4.1 Airbnb Users vs. Non-Users: Demographic Profile

Table 1 presents the demographic profile respondents. The sample (N=248) consisted of 45.6% Male and 54.4% Female. There was no difference in the gender distribution among Airbnb users vs. non-users (p=.445). In terms of age, although there was no difference in the mean age of the two groups (p=.174), there were significant differences in the distribution of age groups (p=.016). There was a higher proportion of young people (age 18-24 & age 25-34) in the non-user group, and a higher proportion of young and middle aged population (age 35-44 & age 45-54) in the Airbnb user group. Significant differences were also found in the education attainment of the two groups (p=.017). There were higher proportions of respondents with bachelor's and

postgraduate degrees in the user group, and higher proportions of respondents with secondary school education and some college education in the non-user group.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Variables		Airbnb User (n=119)	Non-User (n=129)	Group difference
Gender	Male	51 (42.9%)	62 (48.1%)	χ^2=0.676 P=.445
	Female	68 (57.1%)	67 (51.9%)	
Age	18-24	43 (36.1%)	60 (46.5%)	χ^2=12.124 P=.016
	25-34	20 (16.8%)	26 (20.2%)	
	35-44	33 (27.7%)	16 (12.4%)	
	45-54	23 (19.3)	24 (18.6%)	
	Over 54	0 (0%)	3 (2.3%)	
Age	Mean	33.36	31.44	t-value=1.365 P=.174
Nationality	Hong Kong	66 (55.5%)	70 (54.3%)	χ^2=0.036 P=.899
	Non-Hong Kong	53 (44.5%)	59 (45.7%)	
Education	Secondary School or less	0 (0%)	5 (3.9%)	χ^2=10.154 P=.017
	Some College	10 (8.4%)	23 (17.8%)	
	Bachelor's Degree	82 (68.9%)	78 (60.5%)	
	Post Graduate Degree	27 (22.7%)	23 (17.8%)	
Employment Status	Student	42 (35.3%)	43 (33.3%)	χ^2=5.199 P=.392
	Self-employed	5 (4.2%)	2 (1.6%)	
	Employed Full-time	65 (54.6%)	70 (54.3%)	
	Employed Part-time	3 (2.5%)	6 (4.7)	
	Unemployed	4 (3.4%)	5 (3.9%)	
	Retired	0 (0%)	3 (2.3%)	

4.2 Airbnb Users vs. Non-Users: Travel Experience and Accommodation Preference

Next, we compared the travel experience and accommodation preference of users and non-users. As shown in Table 2, although Airbnb users on average took more trips than non-users, the difference was not statistically significant (p=.571). Moreover, the two groups did not express much difference in their perception of accommodation attributes. While both groups rated cleanliness as top priority, the difference was not significant (p=.645). Significant differences were found for three out of eleven items. Airbnb users placed more importance on price (p=.003) and security (p=.020), and non-users placed more importance on service (p<.001).

Table 2. Travel Experience and Accommodation Preference

	Airbnb User (n=119)	Non-User (n=129)	t-value	Sig.
Travel Experience				
Number of Overnight Trips/Year	3.78	3.58	0.567	0.571

Accommodation Attributes					Cronbach's
Cleanliness	6.15*	6.09	0.461	0.645	Alpha
Price	**6.24**	**5.84**	2.979	0.003	=.888
Location	6.03	5.84	1.408	0.161	
Security	**6.03**	**5.68**	2.346	0.020	
Overall performance	5.95	5.79	1.306	0.194	
Online Review Score	5.66	5.50	1.126	0.263	
Reputation	5.50	5.70	-1.335	0.183	
Facilities	5.28	5.36	-0.591	0.555	
Number of Reviews	4.95	5.02	-0.404	0.687	
Authenticity	4.77	4.60	0.916	0.360	
Service	**4.55**	**5.12**	-3.578	<0.001	

* Items measured on a 7-point scale, from 1=Extremely Not Important to 7=Extremely Important

4.3 Airbnb Users vs. Non-Users: Perceptions of Airbnb

Comparison of users and non-users revealed few differences in their perceived importance of accommodation attributes. However, more differences were found in their perception of Airbnb and perception of Airbnb compared to hotels. As shown in Table 3, results indicated that compared to those who have not tried Airbnb, Airbnb users had significantly better perceptions of Airbnb. They expressed a higher level of agreement in that Airbnb was innovative (p<.001), trustworthy (p<.001), worth trying (p<.001), and more preferable than hotels (p=.008). They also believed that Airbnb offered privacy (p<.001), was suitable for leisure travel (p<.001), allowed them to understand local culture (p<.001), and be involved in the daily life of locals (p<.001). Interestingly, when asked about their likelihood of using Airbnb within the next three years, Airbnb users had a slightly higher overall intention than non-users did, but the difference was not significant (p=.112).

Table 3. Respondents' Perceptions of and Intention to Use Airbnb

	Airbnb User (n=119)	**Non-User (n=129)**	**t-value**	**Sig.**	
Perception of Airbnb					Cronbach's
Worth trying	**5.97** [a]	**4.90**	6.645	<0.001	Alpha
Innovative idea	**5.71**	**4.91**	5.169	<0.001	=.894
Suitable for leisure travel	**5.63**	**4.84**	4.626	<0.001	
Understand Local Culture	**5.45**	**4.79**	3.655	<0.001	
Involve in daily life of locals	**5.38**	**4.70**	3.696	<0.001	
More Preferable than hotels	**4.58**	**4.09**	2.674	0.008	
Trustworthy	**4.53**	**3.94**	3.617	<0.001	
High privacy	**4.47**	**3.70**	4.323	<0.001	
Positive Influence	4.33	4.17	0.867	0.387	
Suitable for every city	3.58	3.71	-0.684	0.495	
Intention to Use Airbnb					
Likelihood of booking within the next three years	4.58[b]	4.27	1.597	0.112	

[a] Items measured on a 7-point scale, from 1=Strongly Disagree to 7=Strongly Agree

[b] Items measured on a 7-point scale, from 1=Extremely Unlikely to 7=Extremely Likely

In addition, respondents were asked to compare Airbnb to hotels, and rate whether Airbnb or hotels performed better on various attributes. Significant differences were found between two groups of respondents (Table 4). Compared to those who have not tried Airbnb, it was found that Airbnb users perceived Airbnb to be better than hotels in offering authentic experiences (p<.001) and competitive pricing (p=.011). However, Airbnb users also believed that Airbnb performed worse than hotels in: service (p<.001), security (p<.001), facilities (p=.012), reputation (p=.002), and number of online reviews (p=.029).

Table 4. Respondents' Perceptions of Airbnb Compared to Hotels

	Airbnb User (n=119)	**Non-User (n=129)**	**t-value**	**Sig.**	
More authentic experience	**5.53***	**4.89**	3.677	<0.001	Cronbach's
More competitive pricing	**5.41**	**4.98**	2.551	0.011	Alpha
Better online reviews	4.14	3.95	1.082	0.280	=.881
Better location	3.96	3.96	-0.021	0.983	
Better overall performance	3.78	3.82	-0.243	0.808	
More online reviews	**3.43**	**3.84**	-2.197	0.029	
Cleaner	3.27	3.59	-1.664	0.097	
More reputable	**2.94**	**3.57**	-3.097	0.002	
Better facilities	**2.83**	**3.34**	-2.535	0.012	
Better service	**2.74**	**3.48**	-3.910	<0.001	
Better security	**2.42**	**3.33**	-4.672	<0.001	

* Items measured on a 7-point scale, from 1=Better Description of Hotels to 7=Better Description of Airbnb

As Airbnb users appeared to have lower evaluations of Airbnb than non-users did on several accommodation attributes, correlation analysis was conducted to test the relationship between "number of previous stays with Airbnb" and "likelihood of booking" within the next three years. Results indicated that there was a marginally significant relationship between "number of stays" and "likelihood of booking" (p=0.077). However, the correlation was negative (r=-0.163), which suggests that the more one stays with Airbnb, the less likely one will book through Airbnb again.

4.4 Traveler Personality and Likelihood of Using Airbnb

Plog's (1974; 2001) psychographic scale was used to measure the allocentric-psychocentric tendencies of respondents. Subsequently, respondents were categorized into six traveler personality groups based on their psychographic score (Table 5). According to Plog (1994), the distribution of six traveler personality types within the general population should follow normal distribution. Thus, the distribution of respondents was tested, and found to be not different from normal distribution (p=.450).

Table 5. Traveler Personality and Likelihood of Using Airbnb

	"Traditionals"	**"Sightseers"**	**"Journeyers"**	**"Voyagers"**	**"Pioneers"**	**"Venturers"**
	Psychocentric	Near psychocentric	Mid-centric but leaning to psychocentric	Mid-centric; leaning to allocentric	Near allocentric	Allocentric
Group size	n=8	n=25	n=91	n=90	n=30	n=4
Normal Distribution	2.5%	13.5%	34%	34%	13.5%	2.5%
	χ^2=4.725 P=0.450					
Likelihood of Using Airbnb	3.25*	4.60	4.23	4.40	4.97	6.25
	F=3.424 P=0.005					

* Item measured on a 7-point scale, from 1=Extremely Unlikely to 7= Extremely Likely

ANOVA was conducted to examine the relationship between traveler personality and intention to use Airbnb within the next three years. Results revealed that there were significant differences between the groups in their likelihood to use Airbnb (p=.005) (Table 5). Post hoc LSD multiple comparisons revealed that Traditionals and Venturers differed from most other groups (p<.05). Journeyers differed from Pioneers in their intention to use Airbnb (p=.019). The difference between Voyagers and Pioneers was marginally significant (p=.070). In addition, Plog's psychographic scale measures a continuum from psychocentrism to allocentrism, with higher scores indicating a higher level of allocentrism. Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between one's psychographic score and intention to use Airbnb (r=.184, p=.004). In other words, respondents who were more allocentric were more likely to use Airbnb.

4.5 Length of Stay and Travel Party on Accommodation Choice

To examine the influence of trip duration and travel party size/companion on one's accommodation choice, respondents were given different scenarios to indicate how likely they would choose hotels and Airbnb for accommodation respectively. Paired-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the likelihood of choosing hotels and Airbnb under the same scenario. As shown in Table 6, it was found that when traveling alone and traveling with spouse/partner, respondents were more likely to stay at hotels if the trip was shorter, but would prefer Airbnb more if the trip was longer. On the other hand, when traveling with friends, respondents were more likely to use Airbnb, regardless of trip duration. Interestingly, when traveling with family, the situation was reversed, in which case hotels were preferred, regardless of trip duration. It should also be noted that in all four types of travel party, respondents' likelihood of using Airbnb for trips "more than 7 days" was consistently higher than using Airbnb for "within 7 days." On the contrary, in all four types of travel party, respondents' likelihood of using hotels for "within 7 days" was

consistently higher than using hotels "more than 7 days." Overall, hotels were preferred for traveling with family as well as "within 7 days," while Airbnb was preferred for traveling with friends as well as "more than 7 days."

Table 6. Respondent Preferences under Different Scenarios

	Hotels	Airbnb	t-value	Sig.
Pair 1 Travel Alone ≤ 7days	**3.77***	3.13	5.044	<0.001
Pair 2 Travel Alone > 7days	3.19	**3.64**	-3.582	<0.001
Pair 3 With Spouse/Partner ≤ 7days	**3.96**	3.42	5.452	<0.001
Pair 4 With Spouse/Partner > 7days	3.49	**3.65**	-4.804	<0.001
Pair 5 With Friends ≤ 7days	3.44	**3.77**	-3.026	0.003
Pair 6 With Friends > 7days	3.00	**4.02**	-9.190	<0.001
Pair 7 With Family ≤ 7days	**4.17**	2.75	7.046	<0.001
Pair 8 With Family > 7days	**3.84**	2.96	7.087	<0.001

* Items measured on a 5-point scale, from 1=Very Unlikely to 5=Very Likely

To further examine current Airbnb users' and non-users' accommodation choices under different travel scenarios, independent samples t-tests were conducted (Table 7). Across all eight scenarios, there were few differences in users' and non-users' likelihood of staying in hotels. On the contrary, Airbnb users were more likely to choose Airbnb than non-users in all eight scenarios, regardless of trip duration and travel companion.

Table 7. Accommodation Choice under Different Scenarios: Users vs. Non-Users

	Airbnb User (n=119)	Non-User (n=129)	t-value	Sig.
Choose Hotels for the stay				
Travel Alone, ≤ 7days	3.80*	3.74	.374	.709
Travel Alone, > 7days	3.09	3.29	-1.395	.164
With Spouse/Partner, ≤ 7days	**4.13**	**3.80**	2.767	.006
With Spouse/Partner, > 7days	3.51	3.47	.338	.735
With Friends, ≤ 7days	3.30	3.57	-1.906	.058
With Friends, > 7days	2.88	3.12	-1.724	.086
With Family, ≤ 7days	**4.30**	**4.05**	2.351	.020
With Family, > 7days	3.87	3.82	.375	.708
Choose Airbnb for the stay				
Travel Alone, ≤ 7days	3.29	2.99	1.809	.072
Travel Alone, > 7days	**3.89**	**3.40**	3.270	.001

With Spouse/Partner, ≤ 7days	**3.81**	**3.06**	5.551	<.001
With Spouse/Partner, > 7days	**4.03**	**3.29**	5.579	<.001
With Friends, ≤ 7days	**4.07**	**3.50**	3.978	<.001
With Friends, > 7days	**4.42**	**3.64**	6.601	<.001
With Family, ≤ 7days	2.89	2.63	1.739	.083
With Family, > 7days	**3.24**	**2.71**	3.137	.002

* Items measured on a 5-point scale, from 1=Very Unlikely to 5=Very Likely

5. Discussion and Conclusions

5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study examined the individual and trip characteristics that may influence one's intention to use Airbnb. First, Airbnb users were found to be slightly older than non-users, but overall both sample groups were fairly young—with a mean age of 32 and 80% below the age of 45. In a cross-cultural study between the US and Finland, Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016b) found peer-to-peer accommodation users to be younger than non-users in the Finnish sample, but not in the US sample. While there is no consensus in the age characteristics of Airbnb users, findings suggest that Airbnb may go beyond student travelers and backpackers, and appeal to travelers in their 30s and 40s as well (eMarketer, 2014; Guttentag, 2016). The user group was also found to be better educated than the non-user group, which is consistent with previous research (Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016b).

In terms of accommodation preference, Airbnb users placed more importance on "price," while non-users placed more importance on "service," which is consistent with previous studies on Airbnb and hotel comparisons (Tussyadiah and Zach, 2015). However, Airbnb users were also more concerned with "security." Compared to traditional accommodation, Airbnb involves more risks and is often suggested for adventurous travelers (Liang, 2015; Oskam, 2016). Thus, Airbnb users' perceived importance of security was puzzling. Respondents were also asked about their perception of Airbnb compared to hotels, and those who had stayed with Airbnb gave significantly higher scores for hotel security than their counterparts did. In other words, is it possible that after staying with Airbnb, guest become more aware of the risks and security issues inherent in the sharing economy, which in turn sways them to give higher evaluation of hotels? On the other hand, those who have never used Airbnb may be less aware of the potential risks.

This study also compared Airbnb users' and non-users' intention to use Airbnb in the future. While users had a slightly higher overall likelihood of using Airbnb, the difference was not statistically significant. Both groups' intention to use Airbnb can be considered positive, with mean scores above 4 on a 7-point scale. Findings differ from that of Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016b), in which non-users were found to be "unlikely" to use peer-to-peer accommodation. Further analysis of different trip characteristics revealed that Airbnb users were significantly more likely

to choose Airbnb than the non-users were, for nearly all travel occasions. On the contrary, the two groups expressed few differences in their likelihood of choosing hotels in the context of various trip durations and travel parties.

Moreover, a negative relationship was found between their "number of previous stays with Airbnb" and "likelihood of booking" within the next three years, suggesting that the more one uses Airbnb, the likelihood of one additional stay drops. Findings contradict a report conducted by RJ Metrics, which claimed that 22% of first-time Airbnb users will book a second stay, and for five-time users of Airbnb, over 50% will book a sixth stay (Carr, 2012; Moore, 2012). Guttentag (2016) argued that within Airbnb customers, some use Airbnb not for the sense of home or unique social interactions it provides, but for the sense of novelty. As such, for novelty-seeking customers, the novelty will eventually wear off, and they may use Airbnb less. Guttentag's (2016) discussion on the relationship between novelty and repeat usage of Airbnb provides one explanation for the negative relationship between number of stays and likelihood of future booking.

Plog's (1974; 2001) traveler personality and psychographic positioning of destinations may offer an alternative explanation. First, findings revealed that allocentric personalities were more likely to use Airbnb, which fits the profile of Airbnb guests as being adventurous and risk-taking (Liang, 2015; Yannopoulou et al., 2013). The novelty, authenticity, and social interactions that emerge from collaborative consumptions are common motives for tourism (Crompton, 1979). According to Brian Chesky, CEO and co-founder of Airbnb, some of the most popular listings on Airbnb are treehouses, and "people plan their vacation now around treehouse availability!" (quoted in Friedman, 2013). Airbnb has elevated the role of accommodation within one's travel experience. However, seeing Airbnb as a destination or a type of experience that appeals to allocentric personalities, it should be noted that the exotic destination that attracts venturers may gradually become commercialized, and the personality of its visitors will shift to mid-centrics and psychocentrics (Plog, 1974; 2001). Oskam (2016) discussed the commercialization of Airbnb, with more and more multi-listers and commercial providers. With the success of Airbnb, such progress is inevitable. If the initial users of Airbnb feel that Airbnb has lost its edge, their likelihood of future bookings may also decrease.

Lastly, this study examined the effects of length of stay and travel party size on accommodation choice. Respondents were more likely to book hotels for trips "within 7 days" and Airbnb for trips "more than 7 days." Findings are consistent with Morgan Stanley (2015), which found that Airbnb guests stayed longer than hotel guests. In terms of travel party, respondents were more flexible when traveling alone and with spouse/partner, and their choice of accommodation was shaped by length of stay rather than by travel party. When traveling with bigger groups, respondents demonstrated a stronger tendency to choose hotels when traveling with family and Airbnb when with friends. Guttentag (2016) also showed that the percentage of Airbnb guests who

stayed with "friend(s)" was higher than the percentages of those with "child(ren)" and "other family" combined. However, another study by Forno and Garibaldi (2015) found that household families tended to opt for peer-to-peer accommodation rental. Such discrepancy may be caused by unclear definitions of "family" in various studies and respondents' different family structures. Traveling with aging parents or young children may create different accommodation needs. Additional tripographic variables should be considered to get a better understanding of how Airbnb can cater to different market segments.

5.2 Practical Implications

The emergence of the sharing economy changed the way people travel. Consumers now have the opportunity to choose between two distinctive forms of accommodation. The peer-to-peer accommodation industry needs a better understanding of the difference between existing customers versus non-customers in order to increase their market share. By comparing the opinions of Airbnb users and non-users, this study found the two groups to be quite similar in their international travel experience, accommodation preferences, and likelihood of booking hotels under various travel scenarios. However, with regard to their perception of Airbnb compared to hotels and likelihood of using Airbnb under various travel scenarios, the two groups had very diverse opinions. Findings suggest that users and non-users may not necessarily be different in their preferences, but the users' perception of Airbnb changed after their experience, both positively and negatively. The negative changes indicate room for improvement. Peer-to-peer accommodation providers need to be aware of their performance, and be cautious that experience with Airbnb could result in lower evaluations of Airbnb on certain accommodation attributes.

In addition, Airbnb is found to be more appealing to people who are allocentric, and when travelling alone, with spouse/partner, and with friends, particularly for longer trips. While staying in real homes is a unique selling point of Airbnb, Airbnb was found to be less preferred when traveling with family. Therefore, peer-to-peer accommodation platforms may need to reconsider the positioning of their products. The use of traveler personality also shed light on the future development of peer-to-peer accommodation. Will Airbnb become too commercialized or too familiar for novelty and adventure-seeking guests? McKercher (2005) argued that "perceived life cycle stage is market specific, rather than destination specific" (p. 51). For example, geographic proximity and cultural differences influence how "staying in a houseboat in Amsterdam" is perceived by domestic and international visitors. Peer-to-peer accommodation providers may gain some insights from destination management in attracting guest from a variety of source markets and personality types.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

Lastly, there were several limitations in this research. First, this study focused on leisure travel. Hence, the suitability of Airbnb for business travel, tripographics of business travel, and intention to use Airbnb for business travel were not examined. As Airbnb is trying to attract more business travelers (eMarketer, 2014; Levere, 2016), future research can investigate the business travel segment. Second, only two tripographic variables were examined: length of stay and travel party/companion. Additional variables can be considered, such as trip purpose and type of destination. While it may be complicated to specify the exact number of guests and ages of guests (e.g., oldest/youngest person in your travel party), future studies can incorporate more details on travel party to clarify the relationship between family trips and intention to use Airbnb. Third, the use of non-probability sampling is another limitation. Although significant differences were found in users' and non-users' perception of and intention to use Airbnb, as the two samples were also slightly different in age and education, sampling bias and self-selection bias may influence the findings. Future research can target first-time customers of Airbnb and conduct pre-test and post-test comparisons to get examine the effects of a particular stay on future intention to use Airbnb.

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