

Love is the Bridge Between You and Everything:
Relationships of Identity, Experience, and Benevolence to Travelers' Loyalty and
Willingness to Purchase

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Abstract

This study aims to understand (i)the main influencing constructs affecting travelers' love in a sharing-economy context, (ii)the key influence of sharing-economy identity on travelers' experience and benevolence which can impact on their likability and satisfaction, (iii)what and how travelers' experience and benevolence can influence travelers' love towards sharing-economy, (iv)what makes sharing-economy customers' platforms love a sharing-economy?, (v)the key consequences of travelers' love, and (vi)when and why such relations are likely to occur. This study employs an explanatory-study at the initial stage, as informed by the literature and research model. The developed model was tested via a positivist survey which was carried out with 417 travelers/tourists/users of peer-to-peer accommodation sharing-economy in the UK. Structural equation modelling was used to understand the research influences and relationships. We suggest implications for tourism and travelers' management.

Keywords: Experience; benevolence; likability; sharing-economy; love; co-creation

Introduction

There is only one real satisfaction in human life, to love and be loved. Sometimes humankind can go beyond this and start loving other than people, brands for example (Batra et al., 2012). Brand love is a newly emerged concept in tourism's academic literature. Researchers have shown that brand love is an antecedent of brand loyalty and co-creation behavior (Aro et al., 2018; Giovanis

and Athanasopoulou, 2018; Merz et al., 2018). In addition, researchers have stated that brand love is positively linked to willingness to purchase (Zhang and Patrick, 2018; Liu et al., 2018; Bairrada et al., 2018). Although there have been plenty of quite different studies regarding brand love and its consequences and antecedents in a sharing-economy context, there have not been many studies about brand love and its results in the peer-to-peer tourism context. The area surely is important for conducting research, owing to the increasing competition in the tourism industry and the emergence of different and distinctive sharing-economy tourism platforms such as Airbnb.

What are the main influencing constructs affecting travelers' love in a sharing-economy tourism context such as Airbnb? What are the key influences of sharing-economy's identity on travelers' experience and benevolence which can impact on their likability and satisfaction? What and how can travelers' experience and benevolence influence travelers' love towards sharing-economy? What makes sharing-economy customers' platforms love a website like Airbnb? What are the key consequences of travelers' sharing-economy love? When and why are such relations likely to occur? In answering such questions there have been different answers ranging from identity (Foroudi et al., 2018), satisfaction (Aro et al., 2018), and likability (Suetrong et al., 2018; Ramadan, 2018).

This study draws upon the theory of love (Langner et al., 2015; Sternberg, 1986) and aims to find a comprehensive understanding of brand love as part of peer-to-peer accommodation and its antecedents and consequences. In addition, this research tries to find an understanding of when customers are more likely to form and feel a sense of love with sharing-economy s such as Airbnb. The following research contributes to the burgeoning research on the peer-to-peer relationship by offering the nature of brand love as one of the most important psychological elements for the kind of sustainable and meaningful relationship that tourism managers and policymakers are seeking to make with travelers. Yet, there are a limited number of studies regarding sharing-economy websites such as Airbnb and trust and satisfaction together with co-creation behavior. Furthermore, there are a lack of studies on why tourists choose websites such as Airbnb to book their trips instead of using the traditional form of travel agencies and hotels.

The following sections provide an analysis of sharing-economy as a disruptive innovation; they

try to develop a deeper understanding of brand love antecedents and consequences and develop the travelers-level conceptual model. The method and methodology employed to examine the proposed conceptual framework is described. Afterwards, the paper concludes with a discussion of the theoretical and managerial significance, limitations and suggested avenues for future studies.

Identity and Experience

Identity is the core value of the company which remains unchanged at all times, while the products and services may not (Huang and Cai, 2015). Identity plays an important role in the communication process. Identity makes customers pay more attention to a sharing-economy, and in turn it enables the recognition and remembering of a sharing-economy during purchasing, using, and after-purchase behavior (Foroudi et al., 2016); it is also important for firms to connect to a customer's deepest values (Aro et al., 2018). Identity is conceptualized as what makes a company distinctive from its competitors in a market. Like human interactions, key parts of identity are combinations of the core values and demographics presented in the market by a sharing-economy (Perez-Vega et al., 2018). In a tourism context, communicating this distinctive identity through customer experience is quite important. Traveler experience can aid companies to develop relationships with their online tourism website which will ultimately be very beneficial for them (Foroudi et al., 2017). Furthermore, customers evaluate a product/service value based on their experience (Wu et al., 2018). Virtual brand experience can have an impact on a customer's behavior (Daigherty et al., 2008; Hussein, 2017). This experience can be gained through encounters with a firm's touchpoints (Daigherty et al., 2008; McLean et al., 2018) such as the Airbnb website. For instance, Airbnb hosts can create an image about themselves through their online profiles. Through that, they have the chance to form consumer insight about their identity, make positive impressions of themselves, and, as result, positively affect their customers' choice (Tussyadiah and Park, 2018).

Travelers these days pay increasing attention to the importance of modern values such as trust (Tussyadiah, 2016), transparency (Nunkoo et al., 2018), fairness (Park et al., 2018). Benevolence, as one of these modern values, is conceptualized as integrity, moral behavior and sincerity, helpfulness and generally perceived well-being of a particular brand (Choi et al., 2016). Benevolence (Doney and Cannon, 1997), along with other factors such as longevity (Mehta et al.,

2006). is about how much a brand is willing to aid its customers (Giovanis and Athanasopoulou, 2018), and the credit given to customers due to implementation of a customer-oriented strategy to the account of customers' benefit, even before brand benefit, in a short period of time (Gurviez and Korchia, 2003).

Identity can have a huge impact on trust (Louis and Lombart, 2010). As plenty of online travelers and customers may lack knowledge of online peer-to-peer accommodation websites (e.g., Airbnb, booking.com, tripadvisor.com) which work through the internet, identity can have an impact on trust, ultimately resulting in shaping online travelers' behavior. What is more, new customers who lack experience with these online sharing-economy s rely on the identity and the content made by previous travelers (Sparks et al.,2016) who booked their trips through them.

Experience can be influenced by identity (Kara et al., 2018; Phillips et al., 2014; Velasco, 2018). A wonderful case study of Harley-Davidson revealed that customers not only can shape experience but they can have an impact on a firm's identity as well (Schembri, 2009). In addition, many travelers and customers are becoming more interested in expressing their personal self-image through identity gained by their experience (Kim et al., 2015). Identity reflects the customer outlook toward an online sharing-economy gained by customer experience (Black and Veloutsou, 2017), thus as discussed above we propose the following hypotheses:

H1: Identity positively influences travelers' experience (H1a) and benevolence (H1b)

Experience, Benevolence, Satisfaction and Likability

Unique experience is the main key of shaping future travelers' behavior. Customer experience can aid companies to make long-lasting relationships, which are consequently very beneficial, (Foroudi et al., 2017). Travelers evaluate a product/service according to their experience (Wu et al., 2018). The experience for travelers is gained through online sharing-economy touchpoints (McLean et al.,2018). Likability/unlikability of brands is mostly dependent on the travelers' experience (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2013). Likability is defined as the evaluation of charm a traveler finds in a firm which is a psychological factor that has impact on customer reaction regarding other competitors in the market (Reysen, 2005).

Experience has influence on likability. More positive experience can result in generating more liking of a specific brand (Völkner and Sattler, 2006). Having the same experience level can result in different levels of likability (Sirianni et al., 2013). Likability for consumers is directly linked to the brand experience gained by their experiences (Lau and Lee, 1999). In addition, brand likability can reinforce customer-brand relationship and result in better financial performance of firms (Narteh, 2018).

Experience also plays an important role in influencing satisfaction (Ha and Perks, 2005). In today's highly competitive peer-to-peer accommodation websites, where plenty of firms are operating, sharing-economy s should pay extra attention to accommodating their customers' needs as customer satisfaction can be gained with difficulty and is easy to lose (Ngai, 2005). Satisfaction is expectations driven from a deduction of perception. What is more, satisfaction shapes future customer behavior toward a sharing-economy (Brown et al., 2016; Chen et al., 2016). Service experience can have a significant influence on travelers' satisfaction with a received service (Wu et al., 2018). In addition, different scholars stated that the quality of experience has significant impact on travelers (Kao et al., 2008; Wu and Li, 2015; 2017). A good customer experience might result in trust/benevolence in the brand (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). In a tourism context, a study done by Filieri et al. (2015) revealed that experience is the antecedent of benevolence in peer-to-peer accommodations sites such as Airbnb. Another study done by Han and Hyun (2015) suggested that satisfactory experience plays an important role in forming benevolence. The sharing-economy sites such as Airbnb, in which customers generate its content and reviews, usually have a high level of source credibility resulting in benevolence of new travelers (Boo and Busser, 2018). Also, successful customer experience can aid in developing benevolence in the sharing-economy s (Choo and Petrick, 2014). Finally, as discussed above we propose the following hypotheses:

H2: Experience positively has impact on travelers' benevolence (H2a), satisfaction (H2b), and likability (H2c)

Benevolence and Satisfaction

Benevolence plays a significant role in any business transactions. Having benevolence in sharing-economy s will result in choosing a sharing-economy and peer-to-peer accommodations like

Airbnb (Kim et al., 2011; Sparks and Browning, 2011). Authors (Silva and Topolinski, 2018; Sirdeshmukh et al., 2002) conceptualized benevolence as expectations of customers regarding how the service provider can be relied on and to what extent it can deliver its promises. Nusair and Hua (2010) also stated that benevolence/trust is the state of how much a firm is trustworthy and can be counted on by its customers. In tourism, benevolence refers to the enthusiasm of travelers to depend on the ability of sharing-economy to delivering their advertised promises. In the tourism industry, benevolence has been found to have an enormous impact on the success of sharing-economy s (Ponte et al., 2015) and businesses operating in the tourism industry (Kelliher et al., 2018). Benevolence has been found to have positive impact on satisfaction in the tourism industry (Chang, 2014). Oliver (1993) conceptualized satisfaction as the customers' responses and the assessment that a product/service feature provides for its customers. Furthermore, customers' judgment response is the main aspect of describing satisfaction (Han, Meng, and Kim, 2017). Besides, benevolence's perceived value has an impact on satisfaction (Eid and El-Gohary, 2015). Perceived value has been conceptualized as overall usefulness of a product/service measured by the difference between what is gained and what is lost (Busser and Shulga, 2018). The concept of value has received burgeoning consideration both in marketing and tourism research in the past thirty years (Prebensen and Xie, 2017). In the tourism industry, perceived value is conceptualized as an approach which tourists gain, form, and derive information according to their distinctive experiences (Prebensen et al., 2012).

There have been many studies to analyze the impact of satisfaction on benevolence (Han and Hyun, 2015; Jin et al., 2008; Kim et al., 2006; Lee and Back, 2010; Nusair and Hua, 2010; Ranaweera and Prabhu, 2003). However, there have been limited studies relating to the effect of benevolence on satisfaction. Recent research also has shown that benevolence/trust has impact on satisfaction (Drennan et al., 2015). Furthermore, it was found that benevolence can be an antecedent of satisfaction in any business relations regardless of its kind (Altinay et al., 2014). Another study done by Brashear et al. (2005) suggested that benevolence has a positive impact on satisfaction as well as customer-company relations. Plenty of recent studies have shown the important role of tourists' perceived value regarding satisfaction (Ryu et al., 2012). Travelers' perceived value of a tourism sharing-economy such as Airbnb has impact on their satisfaction and their future behavior (Fang et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2015; Lin et al., 2017; Lin and Kou, 2016). To date and to researchers'

knowledge there has not been any study analyzing the moderator role of perceived value on satisfaction; as discussed above, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Benevolence has impact on travelers' satisfaction

Likability, Satisfaction and Love

Every firm needs its customers to like their different services and products (Kotler and Armstrong, 2010). Besides, brand likability in a customer relationship is the key driver of other customer relationships (Narteh, 2018), and a contributing factor for brand performance (Ewing and Napoli, 2005). During the last few years, scholars have tried to find a deeper and comprehensive understanding of customers' emotional impact on their decision behavior which ultimately leads their studies to a concept called brand likability (Nguyen et al., 2015). This is conceptualized, as Nguyen et al. (2015) suggested, as an antecedent of creating brand attachment and love. What is more, customers are driven toward a particular brand when they like it (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). Further, Barta et al. (2012) suggested that customers who experience a liking for a brand are great assets for firms owing to their advocacy and evangelism, and unwillingness to purchase competitor products and services. These three are all antecedents and consequences of brand love.

Different firms in a competitive market such as peer-to-peer accommodation platforms are trying to increase their customer satisfaction (Tussyadiah, 2016). This satisfactory feeling can lead to a phenomenon called brand love. Love as Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) conceptualized it is an emotional and passionate feeling of an individual for a brand. Based on their description, satisfaction is an antecedent of brand love (Schnebelen and Bruhn, 2018). They also confirmed that the concept of love is "experienced by some, but not all, satisfied consumers" (p. 81). According to authors (Albert et al., 2007; David, 2018), being satisfied with a particular brand for a period of time can make customers love particular brands. Besides, a study done by Whang et al. (2004) revealed that in order to have any sense of love toward a brand, customers should be first satisfied with their chosen brands. Furthermore, as Thomson et al. (2005) stated, satisfaction can lead a customer to form an emotional bond over a period of time on account of multiple interactions with the brand. Therefore, we propose the following hypotheses:

H4: Likability (H4a) and satisfaction (H4b) positively influence travelers' love

H4c: Likability positively influences travelers' satisfaction

Travelers' Love, Co-creation, Loyalty, and Willingness to Purchase

Love is conceptualized as a degree to which a satisfied customer forms a relationship with a specific brand (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). It has been analyzed through measuring different concepts ranging from customer satisfaction (Fournier and Mick, 1999; Severt et al., 2007) and brand loyalty (Aro et al., 2018; Hudson et al., 2015). Love is an emerging concept referring to a formed emotional attachment between a satisfied customer and a brand. This concept is drawn on the theory of Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of love. This theory mainly focuses on interpersonal love like the romantic love that humankind can experience. However, Batra et al. (2012) stated that brand love in marketing cannot be studied like love between men. He highlighted five differences as compared to love in humankind. As he stated, the first difference is that brand love is often less significant and important for customers, compared to their personal love. The second one is that although interpersonal love contains a strong concern about the loved one, this is not true and appropriate for brand love that customers may experience.

The third important difference is that love in humankind is usually a result of a mutual relationship while in brand love it is only one-sided. The fourth difference is that in Sternberg's triangular theory of love, there is nothing relating to the combination of the beloved into the self, while this integration seems important in the academic literature of brand love. Finally, a love is a person's conscious perspective to consider their relationship as love which is different from brand love. Besides, brand love is one of the six dimensions used for customer-brand relationships (Roy et al., 2013). The concept of love can respond to the question of whether travelers can ultimately feel a love toward a particular travelers' sharing-economy or not. Researchers have revealed that such feeling might really exist and some customers may form such relationships with brands (Rageh and Spinelli, 2012).

Love has a positive impact on co-creation behavior and can make customers actively engage in producing values sustainable for themselves and profitable for the firms (Merz et al., 2018). Previous studies have shown the importance of co-creation behavior in producing new products

and services (Hoyer et al., 2010; Kohler et al., 2011; Ranjan and Read, 2016; Skålén et al., 2015). Co-creation behavior mainly consists of two types (1) customer participation behavior and (2) citizenship behavior (Yi and Gong, 2013). The first type of behavior refers to customer co-creation of a particular service or product with a particular company (Yi and Gong, 2013) and the second type refers to additional effort which customers make for improving company performance (Yi and Gong, 2013). In addition, co-creation needs users to be actively engaged psychologically (Grisseemann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). The initial starting point of co-creation is the exiting bonds between the customers and brands. This relationship can be bounded based on the shared values (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2006; Liu, 2018) and also emotional bonds (Casidy et al., 2018; Ouyang et al., 2017) which illustrates that the center of concentration comes in co-creation behavior, and the brand love can be used. As discussed, love can have a direct effect on co-creation (Quach and Thaichon, 2017). Online tourism website use their online platforms (Airbnb website) to actively engage their customers.

A study done by Kim and Fesenmaier (2017) on an Airbnb opponent (Tripadvisor.com) revealed that a traveler is no longer just an information seeker but is actively an information inventor, editor, and a channel of distribution as well, which consequently leads customers to co-creating their personal and individual experience. However, till today, based on the author's knowledge, there has been limited study regarding the influence of brand love on co-creation. Besides co-creation behavior, Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) stated that brand love can result in brand loyalty. Regardless of the sharing-economy nature of business, this result is the same for all of them (Bilgihan, 2016). Customers who experience brand love are interested in future purchases (Iordanova, 2017), and recommending the brand to their friends and relatives (Sánchez-Rebull et al., 2017). All of the mentioned behaviors are associated with brand loyalty (Leckie et al., 2016). Besides, Sternberg (1986) suggested that individuals who love their partners are more loyal and dedicated to their partners. Another resulting consequence of brand love which has been widely discussed in academic literature is enthusiasm to pay a higher price and future purchases (e.g., Batra et al., 2012; Giovanis and Athanasopoulou, 2018; Hosany and Gilbert, 2010; Huang and Cai, 2015; Pandey and Chawla, 2014; Swimberghe et al., 2014). According to Loureiro and Kastenzholz (2011), there is a relationship between the power of love and a customer's motivation to pay a higher price for a brand. What is more, Albert et al. (2013) stated that when customers love their

chosen products and services they are willing to pay more. Also, Roy et al. (2013) suggested that firms can sell their products and services at higher prices through love. In addition, Fetscherin and Heinrich (2015) found that future purchase behavior can be shaped through love. As discussed above, we propose the following hypotheses:

H5: Brand love positively influences co-creation behavior (H5a), loyalty (H5b), and willingness to purchase (H5c).

Co-creation, Loyalty, and Willingness to purchase

Companies try to involve their customers in identity group activities so that they can improve customers' feeling of being as a member of a community (Benur and Bramwell, 2015). A wide range of studies have suggested that co-creation behavior has a positive effect on improving this sense of community and ultimately improving the sense of loyalty to a particular brand (e.g., Auh et al., 2007; Fernandes and Cruz, 2016; Park and Ha, 2016; Sørensen and Jensen, 2015; Suntikul and Jachna, 2016). As a result, we suggest that travelers' engagement in service and product production will have an influence on their loyalty. Travelers' loyalty means having a deep commitment for using services or products of a particular brand in the future (Almeida-Santana and Moreno-Gil, 2018) which results in better performance of a brand (Geetha et al., 2017).

Maybe the most predictable results of brand loyalty are purchase intention (Yoon and Uysal, 2005), future purchase (Chi and Qu, 2008; Yuksel et al., 2010; Yi et al., 2018) and willingness to pay higher prices for services or products (Aro et al., 2018; Casidy et al., 2018). The concept of loyalty can result in customers using a brand again in the future (Haryanto et al., 2016). By the advances of technology, customers have a greater chance of expressing their willingness to purchase to other customers (Eelen et al., 2017). Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

H6: Co-creation positively has influence on travelers' loyalty

H7: Brand loyalty positively influences travelers' willingness to purchase

<<<Insert Figure 1 about here>>>

Materials and Methodology

This research was conducted to understand travelers' identity and experiences in the sharing-economy and how they can impact on love, loyalty and willingness to purchase from the travelers' perception. The concept of a peer-to-peer website and sharing-economy has developed against a background of rapid growth in global tourist arrivals around the globe and in the European Union. According to UNWTO (2018) international tourist arrivals, the United Kingdom has ranked eighth and attracted the world's attention as a tourist destination. The survey was conducted to obtain data for supplementary scale purification and hypotheses investigation. The following research consisted of questions referring to understanding how identity and travelers' experience and benevolence can impact on their likability and satisfaction, which then influence travelers' love towards sharing-economy, co-creation, loyalty, and willingness to purchase.

This study was done with UK tourists using a peer-to-peer accommodation website (Airbnb) in the UK by utilizing a convenience sampling technique (Bryman et al., 2007; McDaniel and Gates, 2006). We employed three skilled field research assistants. From 600 questionnaires distributed among the sharing-economy s users/travelers/customers face-to-face and online, 417 usable completed questionnaires were processed and examined. In addition, non-probability 'snowballing' was used as a distribution method by inviting original informants to recommend others who could offer further insights (Kirby and Kent, 2010).

Following the recommendations of previous studies (Foroudi et al., 2018), before to the main survey study, a qualitative study was employed from interviews with academics and experts and focus groups with travelers. During the qualitative stage, eight interviews were conducted with experts in tourism and four focus groups (total of 22 participants). Table 1 illustrates the results of the demographic profiles of the participants from the survey. 54.7% were female and 41.0% were under 25 years of age. The ethnic group of the majority of participants was white British (26.1%) followed by white-Irish (18.2%). The participants' occupations were students (16.8%), Craft workers (14.6%), and office/clerical staff (14.4%); 40.8% of the participants had a postgraduate degree.

“Insert Table 1 about here”

Measurement

This study employed the item measurement for the research constructs of interest which were well-recognized from previous studies (Foroudi et al., 2018), established to be psychometrically sound (Churchill, 1979; Hair et al., 2006) (Table 2). Identity was measured with four constructs (personality, positioning, prestige, and promise) (Melewar et al., 2017; Hatch and Schultz, 2001; Hwang and Han, 2014) and experience with 2 constructs (affective experience and intellectual experience) (Dennis et al., 2014; Foroudi et al., 2016; Yuksel et al., 2010). Benevolence was measured via 3 item measurements (Tussyadiah and Park, 2018). Likability was measured through 3 item measurements (Nguyen et al., 2015; Reysen, 2005). Satisfaction was measured through 3 item measurements (Chu and Lu, 2007). The love contained 2 constructs (passion and intimacy) based on the context of the research (Albert and Valette-Florence 2010). Co-creation was measured through 3 item measurements (Grissemann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Loyalty was obtained through 4 item measurements (Kolar and Zabkar 2010). Ultimately, willingness to purchase was analyzed through 3 item measurements (Chu and Lu, 2007). Respondents were asked to show their feelings on seven-point Likert-type scales ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree.

The genuine measurement scales were subjected to a series of reliability and factor investigations. Table 2 illustrates the descriptive data for the current constructs of interest. The composite reliability (construct level reliability) reassures that items assigned to the same constructs reveal higher relationships with other items. Based on the recommendation by Hair et al. (2006) and Nunnally (1978), the compound reliabilities of the scales were all above the commonly accepted requirements for psychometric reliability examinations (.862 through .979>.70).

“Insert Table 2 about here”

Results and Analysis

To examine inter-relationships between the current study variables and to clarify the variables in terms of their common-underlying-factors, EFA (exploratory factor analysis) was employed (Hair et al. 2006). In addition, EFA was employed to scrutinize internal reliability, illuminate the factor

structure of measures, and determine underlying structures in the research constructs (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Initially, 44 measures of the nine proposed constructs were subjected for EFA. Table 2 reports item loadings, ranging from 0.726 through 0.955 from the rotated component matrix, the results show they satisfy the minimum criteria for factor loadings (Hair et al., 2006) and the fitness in the theoretical factor structures. Furthermore, the results specify that each factor was internally consistent (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1978). Table 3 illustrates the correlation matrix for the constructs.

“Insert Table 3 about here”

This research predominantly uses a positivist paradigm (a quantitative method) to inspect the causal association among the proposed research hypotheses (DeVellis, 2012). In order to examine the model and hypotheses, AMOS 21 (analysis of moment structure) was used. Based on the recommendation by Hair et al. (2006) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), the model fit was checked for total fit indices. RMSEA (the root mean squared approximation of error) ($0.055 < 0.08$) and CFI (the comparative fit index) (.936) provide sufficient special information to the model which presents an acceptable fit (Garver and Mentzer, 1999). TLI (Tucker-Lewis index) and IFI (the incremental fit index) were 0.931 and 0.936 respectively. All were greater than the recommended threshold of 0.90 and each criterion of fit, so indicated that the proposed measurement model fit was satisfactory (Hair et al., 2006).

Furthermore, GFI (the goodness-of-fit index) measures the fitness of a model in comparison with another model and the result (0.813) and AGFI (the adjusted goodness-of-fit index) changes model complexity (0.789). Both the GFI and AGFI are below the acceptable shortcuts levels. According to Hair et al. (2006), there is no specific value on any index that can separate distinct models into satisfactory and unsatisfactory fits. Based on the standardized parameter estimates for the hypothesized associations between the research constructs, the findings offer support for H1a (identity->experience $\gamma=0.555$, $t=5.644$) and H1b (identity->benevolence $\gamma=0.522$, $t=4.89$). Regarding H2a (experience->benevolence), the relationship between customers'/visitors'/tourists' experience and their benevolence to Airbnb was not statistically significant ($\gamma=.129$, $t=1.381$, $p=0.167$). On the other hand, there is a significant relationship between travelers' experience and

their satisfaction (H2b $\gamma=0.392$, $t=2.664$) and likability (H2c $\gamma=0.66$, $t=4.602$). With regard to hypothesis H3, there is a significant relationship between travelers' benevolence and their satisfaction ($\gamma=.195$, $t=3.09$). H4a (likability->travelers' sharing-economy love) and H4b (satisfaction->travelers' sharing-economy love) were accepted ($\gamma=0.34$, $t=5.771$; $\gamma=0.183$, $t=5.185$, respectively). The relationship between travelers' sharing-economy love and co-creation (H5a), loyalty (H5b), and willingness to purchase (H5c) ($\gamma=.645$, $t=4.298$; $\gamma=0.691$, $t=4.557$; $\gamma=1.06$, $t=5.429$, respectively) are confirmed. The relationship between co-creation and loyalty (H6: $\gamma=0.064$, $t=1.382$, p 0.167) was accepted. In addition, the results show that there is no relationship between travelers' loyalty and willingness to purchase (H7: $\gamma=0.063$, $t=1.107$, p 0.268). Therefore, hypotheses 6 and 7 were rejected. As for the findings, it can be a challenge for online sharing-economy to upsurge their effect on consumers'/travelers' loyalty. Table 4 illustrates the results of hypotheses' examinations; ten out of thirteen hypotheses were accepted.

“Insert Table 4 about here”

Discussion

Nowadays, owing to revolutions in the micro- (customers, competitors in the market, etc.) and macro- environment (political, demographic), the tourism industry has to overcome many challenges. As a result, within such profound changes, the question of what are the most effective factors that have impact on tourists' decisions to visit a destination is gaining more significance in the tourism industry than before (Kastenholz et al., 2012). Making tourists/customers feel love is one of the most vital concerns for any sustainable tourist firms. Thoughts like this raise the questions of the main issues affecting love and the consequences of brand love in sharing-economy firms such as Airbnb, and when and why such relationships are likely to happen. Academic scholars, tourism policy makers and managers need to find an answer in order to find the most effective and tactful strategy within such sweeping and lightning-fast pace. In the light of the preceding discussion, the first purpose of the study was to search and find an integrated model considering the effects and antecedents of brand love.

The research provides such invaluable insight regarding the demand side of sharing-economy firms such as Airbnb. The results revealed that identity is favorable to travelers and impacts on

their attitude toward the experience and benevolence. Such findings proffer suggestion for tourism managers and policy makers about how to create and manage peer-to-peer accommodation websites. With the growth and widely increasing usage and necessity of World Wide Web tools (Segota, 2015), it might be necessary for managers to consider the tools used in creating and enhancing benevolence and their customer experience.

In a peer-to-peer- accommodation website like Airbnb, customer experience is the key contributing factor for likability and satisfaction. This result is consistent with prior research in tourism and marketing literature, which shows that experience can shape satisfaction and likeability (Brakus et al., 2009). However, in peer-to-peer accommodation websites like Airbnb, experience was not found to have an effect on benevolence. Such findings contradict previous academic literature (Jevons and Gabbott, 2000). The experience provided in peer-to-peer websites should be likable and meet customers' needs so that they are satisfied with their choice. On the other hand, firms and policy makers can increase their customers' benevolence through enhancement of their identity.

Benevolence influences likability and satisfaction. This is expected as customers find a website or a sharing-economy more likable when they can easily find benevolence on it and they also become more satisfied as they try to meet their needs through it. As there has been limited study regarding the influence of benevolence on satisfaction, this study can add knowledge to academic literature. However, this study is in line with studies carried out on this topic (Chang, 2014; Drennan et al., 2015). Therefore, the trustworthiness of a peer-to-peer accommodation website (like Airbnb) can assist tourism managers in shaping tourists' perspective. However, the website, like Airbnb, should be carefully monitored and built so that customers can trust on it.

Likability was found effective in forming customer love and customer satisfaction in peer-to-peer accommodation websites like Airbnb. This result was consistent with prior results (Fornell et al., 2010; Park et al., 2010). As likability has influence on brand love (Nguyen and Melewar, Chen, 2013), policy makers and tourism managers should try to adopt an approach for increasing customers' love through customer likability.

On the other side, satisfaction was found to be an influence on love as well. As stated by Carroll and Ahuvia (2006), satisfied customers can show emotional attachment to a particular brand. As a result, like the previous studies, satisfaction was found effective on brand love (Batra et al., 2012; Roy et al., 2013). By making customers satisfied with their choice, policymakers and tourism managers can make their customers love their peer-to-peer sharing accommodation. As a matter of fact, the more customers are satisfied, the more s/he is likely to love a firm.

The results of the study revealed that love can have an impact on co-creation, loyalty, and ultimately willingness to purchase. These results are found to be in line with preceding researchers in the marketing literature and tourism context (Aro et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2018). These results support the prior finding that brand love can result in loyalty (Giovanis and Athanasopoulou, 2018), co-creation (Kaufman et al., 2016), and willingness to purchase (Liu et al., 2018). Due to the importance of love and the significant consequences of it on tourists, tourism managers and marketing managers can increase their customers' loyalty thorough love and can make their customers keen to buy their services and products. What is more, due to the necessity of co-creation in peer-to-peer accommodation websites like Airbnb, where customers mainly make and produce most of the website content, it is vital to engage travelers in co-creation and actively involve them in making content in a website.

On the other hand, co-creation was found not to have an effect on customer loyalty. The result was found to be in contrast to the result of other researchers (Rihova et al., 2018; Bru and Scaringella, 2018). Perhaps the result could be because of the peer-to-peer context behavior that customers demonstrate. Another unexpected result derived from the survey illustrates that the traveler's loyalty has no impact on peer-to-peer customer's willingness to purchase. This result is also in contrast to the prior research (Li et al., 2018; Srinivasan et al., 2002). These two unexpected results may be because of the context of the study.

Conclusion and Limitation

Peer-to-peer accommodation websites are becoming the next phenomenon in the tourism industry. More and more tourists and travelers are using them these days. However, there is a limited

understanding of why tourists are becoming more interested in using peer-to-peer accommodation websites like Airbnb instead of traditional bookings. The main contribution of this research was to investigate the antecedents and consequences of brand love. The first contribution of this research is to increase the understanding of the traveler's perception towards new emerging peer-to-peer accommodation websites like Airbnb and of how brand love can impact on the loyalty of travelers and tourists. The current study aims to support the idea that love is one of the most important factors for actively involving tourists in producing content for peer-to-peer sharing accommodation.

Just like all other research, the current study has a number of limitations. The main limitation of this study is regarding the context of the study. The study context was London; however, the result might be different in other regions of the world, for example in Asia owing to their different culture. To remedy this situation, future research should take into account the moderating role of culture as well. What is more, future research can include other cities with more diverse population and tourists. Secondly, this research only considered Airbnb customers and other peer-to-peer accommodation websites (e.g., Booking.com). Future researchers are recommended to focus on other peer-to-peer websites such as booking.com and compare those results with our results. Finally, as individual evaluation can vary, it might be that a different cultural background may be related to different perceptions of love. Therefore, further studies should be expanded to develop the conceptual model by adding cultural variables as well. This study encourages researchers and practitioners to follow up a number of potentially useful areas of future research.

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Love is the Bridge Between You and Everything:

Relationships of Identity, Experience, and Benevolence to Travelers' Loyalty and Willingness to Purchase

Figure 1: The conceptual research model

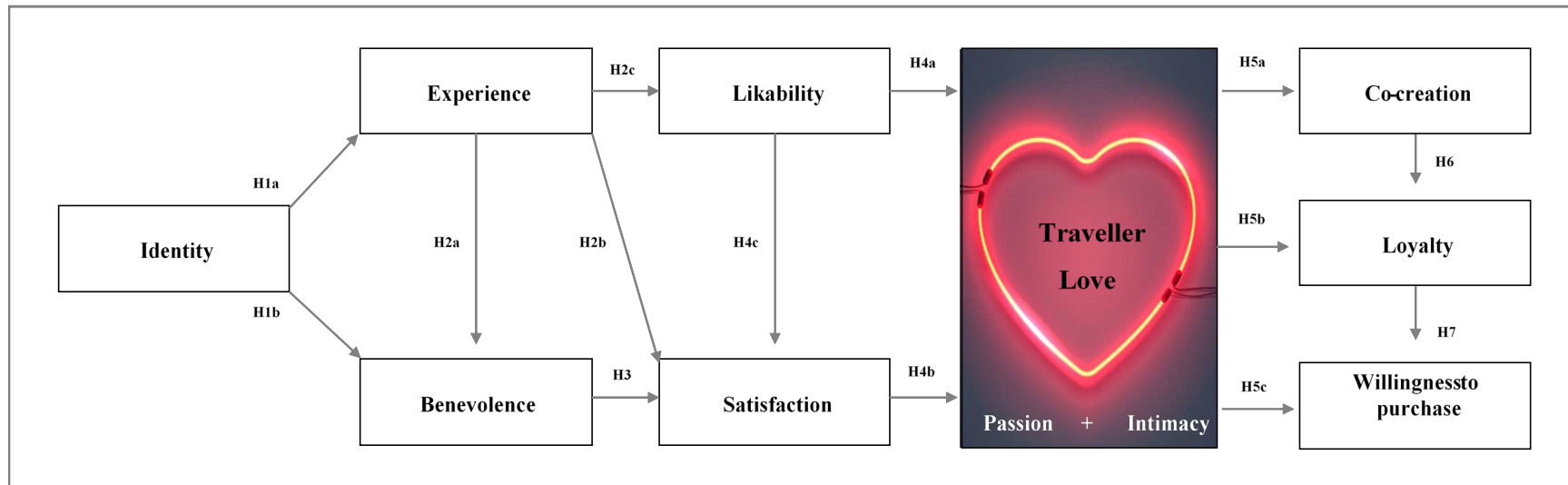


Table 1: Demographic profile (N=417)

Table 2: The domain and items of construct in extant literature, Cronbach Alpha, scale items, mean, and standard deviation

		CFA Loading	Mean	Standard Dev.	AVE	Cons. Reliability	Cronbach's alpha
Identity							
	Personality				0.863	0.775	0.934
	X has sincere personality	0.826	5.2470	1.43410	Aaker, 1997; Melewar, Foroudi, Gupta, S., Kitchen, and Foroudi, 2017		
	X has rugged personality	0.880	5.0384	1.63744			
	X has competent personality	0.883	5.0312	1.60423			
	X has sophisticated personality	0.861	5.1079	1.63800			
	Positioning				0.893	0.728	0.907
	X has a strong competitive positioning strategy in the marketplace	0.911	5.4556	1.55927	Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Melewar, Foroudi, Gupta, S., Kitchen, and Foroudi, 2017		
	X differs across product categories	0.937	5.4916	1.54128			
	X is distinctive	0.832	5.6571	1.58718			
	Prestige				0.936	0.718	0.976
	X has a high status	0.737	5.7050	1.32534	Hwan and Han, 2014		
	X has an upscale image	0.891	5.9161	1.17880			
	X has a respected image	0.914	5.8657	1.24081	Hwang and Han, 2014		
	Promise				0.886	0.737	0.957
	X promises courtesy	0.955	5.3621	1.63372	Zyman, 2002		
	X promises efficiency	0.891	5.4628	1.61251			
	X promises entertainment	0.963	5.4221	1.52520			
Experience							
	Affective Experience				0.853	0.721	0.890
	My decision to use X made me happy	0.795	5.5851	1.33484	Dennis, Brakus, Gupta, Alamanos, 2014, Foroudi, Jin Gupta, Melewar, Foroudi 2016; Yuksel et al., 2010		
	My decision to use X was a right decision	0.911	5.6978	1.33547			
	My decision to use X made me satisfied	0.877	5.5468	1.42382			
	Intellectual Experience				0.893	0.727	0.938

	I can find what I am looking for in X	0.860	4.9329	1.53024	Dennis, Brakus, Gupta, and Alamanos, 2014 Foroudi et al., 2016
	I find X helpful	0.903	5.1799	1.52030	
	I can decide better with X	0.894	4.9688	1.63539	
Benevolence					0.853 0.719 0.979
	X is sincere	0.851	4.9472	1.73125	Tussyadiah and Park, 2008
	X is helpful	0.870	4.8657	1.75581	
	X is welfare	0.837	5.2302	1.60520	
Likability					0.873 0.705 0.862
	Airbnb is friendly X	0.815	5.2038	1.57021	Nguyen, Melewar, Chen, , 2015; Reysen, 2005
	I find X attractive	0.847	5.2902	1.60220	
	I find X employees approachable	0.726	5.4173	1.57611	
Satisfaction					0.873 0.724 0.896
	My decision to use X was wise	0.901	4.7842	1.62061	Chu and Lu, 2007
	My decision to purchase from X was a right decision	0.864	4.9568	1.71197	
	My decision to use X met my needs	0.853	4.8106	1.66989	
Traveler e-retailer Love					
	Passion				0.859 0.720 0.938
	I think about X during the day	0.809	4.7986	1.70624	Albert and Valette-Florence 2010
	I feel lonely when I am no longer with X	0.879	4.7626	1.70794	
	I have some obsessive thoughts about X	0.888	4.9161	1.70834	
	Intimacy				0.928 0.788 0.963
	I know X better than its competitors	0.908	4.8417	1.75244	Kim et al., 2005
	I describe X to my friends	0.903	5.2542	1.56821	
	I am familiar with X	0.952	5.0192	1.69264	
	I feel comfort with X	0.948	5.0911	1.66449	
CO-CREATION					0.857 0.720 0.888
	X I use for my past experiences to arrange my current purchase	0.890	5.5588	1.48130	Grissmann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012
	X there are useful suggestions about how to arrange my purchase	0.885	5.4101	1.47322	
	Considerable amount of time arranging my purchase	0.796	5.3957	1.66966	

Loyalty					0.889	0.727	0.914
	I will use X again	0.856	5.3765	1.53006	Kolar and Zabkar, 2010		
	I will recommend X to my friends and relatives						
	I will visit X again in the future	0.884	5.5612	1.38040			
	I will recommend X services to friends in the future	0.926	5.4700	1.42764			
Willingness to purchase					0.883	0.726	0.934
	I am happy for the cost of accommodation	0.890	5.0504	1.43274	Chu and Lu, 2007		
	I am willing to pay more from X	0.844	5.0048	1.46595			
	I am considering using X again in the future	0.915	5.0168	1.44854			

Table 3: Correlation matrix for the constructs

	Personality	Positioning	Prestige	Promise	Affective Experience	Intellectual Experience	Benevolence	Likability	Satisfaction	Passion	Intimacy	Co-creation	Loyalty	Willingness to purchase
Personality	1													
Positioning	.253**	1												
Prestige	.177**	.169**	1											
Promise	.275**	.202**	0.064	1										
Affective Experience	.279**	.131**	.202**	.105*	1									
Intellectual Experience	.352**	.185**	.246**	.174**	.343**	1								
Benevolence	.300**	.174**	.082*	.206**	.212**	.155**	1							
Likability	.401**	.237**	.205**	.200**	.296**	.237**	.306**	1						
Satisfaction	0.025	.135**	0.037	0.065	.155**	.125**	.187**	.270**	1					
Passion	.289**	.161**	.241**	.221**	.273**	.384**	.202**	.429**	.279**	1				
Intimacy	.176**	0.029	.086*	-0.008	.208**	.139**	.082*	.336**	.125**	.300**	1			
Co-creation	.292**	.161**	.440**	.165**	.203**	.267**	.246**	.254**	0.069	.250**	.133**	1		
Loyalty	.204**	0.073	0.066	.112*	.230**	.223**	.308**	.266**	.183**	.268**	.173**	.162**	1	
Willingness to purchase	0.070	.200**	.238**	.095*	.173**	.203**	.151**	.278**	.439**	.330**	.170**	.157**	.271**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

Table 4: Results of hypothesis testing

HYPOTHESES RELATIONSHIPS				Estimate	S.E	C.R	<i>p</i>	
H1a	Identity	--->	Experience	0.555	0.098	5.644	***	Significant
H1b	Identity	--->	Benevolence	0.522	0.107	4.89	***	Significant
H2a	Experience	--->	Benevolence	.129	.093	1.381	.167	Not-Significant
H2b	Experience	--->	Satisfaction	.392	.147	2.664	.008	Significant
H2c	Experience	--->	Likability	0.66	0.143	4.602	***	Significant
H3	Benevolence	--->	Satisfaction	0.205	0.079	2.6	0.009	Significant
H4a	Likability	--->	Traveler e-retailer love	0.34	0.059	5.771	***	Significant
H4b	Satisfaction	--->	Traveler e-retailer love	0.183	0.035	5.185	***	Significant
H5a	Traveler e-retailer love	--->	Co-creation	.645	.150	4.298	***	Significant
H5b	Traveler e-retailer love	--->	Loyalty	0.691	0.152	4.557	***	Significant
H5c	Traveler e-retailer love	--->	Willingness to purchase	1.06	0.195	5.429	***	Significant
H6	Co-creation	--->	Loyalty	0.064	0.046	1.382	0.167	Not-Significant
H7	Loyalty	--->	Willingness to purchase	0.063	0.057	1.107	0.268	Not-Significant