



Essays on Investigating Barriers and Bridges for Older Adults in the Sharing Economy

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Declaration

I, Jingshan Yang, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university. ChatGPT was used for proofreading only.

Abstract

This thesis comprises two studies. In the first study, we use qualitative methods, including interviews, videos, and archival articles, to explore older adults' perception of the sharing economy, particularly their motivations and challenges of adopting sharing platforms. We find that, apart from common motivations (e.g., financial gains, social benefits, etc.), some older adults have an entrepreneurial passion that motivates them to take on a role as a micro-entrepreneur within the sharing economy. In terms of the challenges of participating in the sharing economy, we discover that some older adults have concerns related to their age, which prevents them from providing in the sharing economy.

In the second study, we conduct two experiments in different contexts within the sharing economy: home sharing and skill sharing. We test the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) (future-oriented message vs. present-oriented message) in both contexts; however, we do not find positive results to support that SST is useful in the sharing economy. Additionally, we test ad focus (ad from platform vs. ad from service provider) and do not find a significant result in the home sharing context. This contrasts with Costello and Reczek (2020)'s study. Despite the non-significant outcomes to support our hypotheses, the study enriches the dialogue in the sharing economy and marketing communication literature.

The connection between these two studies is as follows: we discover that age is a major concern for many older adults in our first study. Older adults sometimes see themselves as too old to engage in activities, such as providing services in the sharing economy. This leads us to focus on the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory in the second paper, which posits that as people age, their time orientation can shift from future-focused to present-focused. We were interested to explore this aspect of older adults' motivations and effectiveness of marketing communications.

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Foreword: my motivations for the research and my research journey

Motivation:

From a young age, I have always been captivated by the complexities of psychology and human behaviour. Humanity, as an intellectually advanced species, has transformed the world into a dynamic place of innovation and discovery. As I transition through different phases of life, I have become more interested in the topic of ageing, which I see as a natural progression influenced by personal growth.

As a student in the field of marketing, a recurring observation has inspired my studies – the absence of older adults in the advertising and marketing narratives. Imagining myself growing older, I realise that I do not wish to be left out of the commercial world. This observation propels the question: does the ageing population share this sentiment of exclusion?

In the last decade, the sharing economy has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping how people travel, work, and live. I am eager to investigate how the sharing economy can serve as a powerful tool for the inclusion and empowerment of older adults. In a time when technology is rapidly advancing, the ways we work and connect with others are always changing. The sharing economy stands out not only as an economic model or business innovation but also a fresh way for people, especially the ageing generation, to work flexibly and connect with others.

Research journey:

Before going deeper into the research of the sharing economy and older adults, I had an innate inclination to explore the sharing economy's role in alleviating loneliness and social exclusion among older adults. However, due to the exploratory nature of our study and other unpredictability, our research took an unexpected direction.

Our initial propositions were not significantly substantiated by our findings. Instead, I found myself exploring other aspects of the topics. The journey of research is indeed full of

surprises. I enjoy the learning and growing along this journey very much even though I had encountered various challenges.

Reflecting on this journey, I have become a more curious and humbler person. The proverb, “the more you learn, the more you realise how little you know” resonates profoundly with me. I plan to extend my research to further investigate the ageing population and broaden my understanding of the sharing economy. This pursuit if not just academic but also societal.

Introduction to the Thesis

The sharing economy has been an important topic due to its implications for community building, economic opportunities, and associated challenges. This thesis aims to contribute to the field of the sharing economy by exploring how older adults perceive the sharing economy. The thesis is structured in a publication format and consists of two interconnected papers. Paper 1 uses qualitative methods to explore older adults' motivations and challenges in participating in the sharing economy, while Paper 2 employs experiment to test a key finding from Paper 1.

Research Questions/Objectives:

The primary research questions guiding this thesis are:

1. What are the motivations and challenges for older adults to participate in the sharing economy?
2. How can different marketing communications affect older adults' intention to provide in the sharing economy?

Philosophical Justification for Methodologies:

Ontologically, this thesis adopts a pragmatist perspective. Ontology refers to the nature of reality (Saunders et al., 2023). This research recognises that the reality is best understood through practical outcomes. Using both qualitative and quantitative methods allows for flexibility in methodological approaches.

Epistemologically, in paper 1, a qualitative approach is used to explore older adults' perceptions of the sharing economy through their experiences and secondary sources. This aligns with an interpretivist paradigm (Saunders et al., 2023). The nature of the paper is exploratory. The interpretivist paradigm emphasises the subjective construction of reality,

making it suitable for exploring subjective experiences. In paper 2, a quantitative approach (experimental design) is adopted to test a key finding from Paper 1. This reflects a positivist paradigm that aims to identify causal relationship objectively (Saunders et al., 2023).

Implications of Philosophical Stance:

The philosophical stance employed in this thesis has important implications for the research design, data collection, data analysis and interpretation of findings.

In Paper 1, the interpretivist approach facilitates the exploration of older adults' perceptions of the sharing economy, as well as their motivations and challenges in participating. The interpretivist approach guided the research by using open-ended interviews for collecting detailed and nuanced data, capturing participants' complex lived experiences; enabling the researcher to gain insights that could be overlooked by rigid quantitative approaches.

In Paper 2, the positivist approach enables rigorous testing of hypotheses. By using an experimental design, the research provides a controlled environment to enhance the reliability and validity of the findings; using statistical analyses to ensure that the results are objective and replicable.

The adoption of a pragmatic ontology with an integration of interpretivist and positivist paradigms has significant implications for the research design and findings of this thesis.

These philosophical stances help provide a robust understanding of complex issues.

Structure of the Thesis:

The thesis is structured as follows:

- Introduction to the Thesis (current chapter)
- Paper 1 (Qualitative study)
- Paper 2 (Experimental study)

Potentials and Challenges of the Sharing Economy for Older Adults: An Exploratory Study

Abstract

Research on the sharing economy has grown significantly as an increasingly large number of businesses and organisations adopt sharing business models. However, little is known about how older adults perceive the sharing economy and their willingness to participate both as users and service providers. Additionally, the potential contribution of the sharing economy to the wellbeing of older adults has remained largely unexplored. This research aims to explore older adults' perceptions of and participation in the sharing economy from both perspectives. To accomplish this goal, we conducted 20 semi-structured interviews, analysed 15 videos from Airbnb and reviewed 23 media articles. The findings indicate that despite concerns related to age, safety and technical proficiency, and a general lack of awareness about opportunities within the sharing economy, older adults have unique motivations to get involved. This study provides valuable insights into the incentives and barriers for older adults in the sharing economy.

Keywords: Sharing economy, older adults, perception, adoption, wellbeing, users, service providers

1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology and the proliferation of internet have revolutionised many industries. However, for certain demographics, particularly the older age groups, there remains significant barriers. Mainstream society often sees older people as less familiar with technology (Hanson, 2010; Knowles and Hanson, 2018) and therefore, less likely to participate in the digital economy and the sharing economy (SE) (Apte and Davis, 2019). Although this is true to some extent, these generalisations do not fully capture the diversity of experiences and perspectives among older adults.

The topic of the sharing economy has gathered significant attention over the past ten years, evolving into a dynamic area of study within both academic and professional fields. The sharing economy, characterised by its reliance on digital platforms to facilitate the transfer or exchange of goods, services and resources, is known by several terms. These terms include collaborative consumption (emphasising the joint use of resources and reducing waste), peer-to-peer economy (focuses on direct transactions between individuals), platform economy (using digital platforms to connect users and providers), shared economy (the overarching concept of shared access to goods and services) and gig economy (addresses short-term, flexible jobs) (Hamari et al., 2016; Rojanakit, de Oliveira and Dulleck, 2022). Mair and Reischauer (2017, p.12) gives a straightforward definition for SE: “a web of markets in which individuals use various forms of compensation to transact the redistribution of and access to resources, mediated by a digital platform operated by an organisation”.

Although the SE has been widely researched in recent years, there remains a gap in the literature regarding older adults’ participation, both their roles as users and service providers. There is a lack of deeper understanding of their motivations and barriers to participating in the SE. This research aims to address this gap by identifying the factors that influence older adults’ decisions to use and provide in the sharing economy.

To better understand older adults and their perspectives, we ask: what factors influence older adults' decision to participate in the sharing economy as service users? And what factors influence their decision to join the sharing economy as service providers?

Our study makes several key contributions to the existing knowledge on the sharing economy. **First**, the research advances existing knowledge of older adults' motivations to use and provide in the sharing economy. **Second**, we explore and generate new insights of the deeper meaning of the surface motivations (e.g., financial benefits, social networking). **Third**, we provide practical implications to SE enablers with ways to attract the untapped older age group. These contributions are significant because the SE has a great potential to address some societal problems we are facing, such as an ageing population, pension challenges, retirement, and life transition.

In the following sections, we will discuss the literature, our methods, finding in detail, and provide a thorough discussion of the implications of our findings for literature and practice in the field.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Sharing Economy: An Overview

Kumar et al. (2018) suggested that the term 'sharing economy' does not have a clear definition in academic literature. They attempted to define the sharing economy as 'the monetisation of underutilised assets that are owned by service providers (firms or individuals) through short-term rental'. This definition appropriately describes the functions of major firms like Airbnb and Uber, which operate under the sharing economy business model closely. The sharing economy is also referred to as 'collaborative economy' or collaborative consumption' (Botsman and Rogers, 2011). Hamari et al. (2015) define the term 'collaborative consumption'

broadly as “the peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services.”

In recent years, as research on the sharing economy has expanded, the definition of the sharing economy (SE) has become much broader and remains unclear (Dewi and Sundiman, 2023). For instance, researchers have started to relate the SE more closely to the gig economy and platform economy. Dewi and Sundiman (2023) believe that this has caused complications and inconsistencies in the contributions to the SE research. Table 1 presents representative definitions of the sharing economy.

Table 1 Definitions of the Sharing Economy

Study/Source	Definition
Belk (2007)	“The act and process of distributing what is ours to others for their use and the act and process of receiving or taking something from others for our use.”
Botsman (2013)	“An economic model based on sharing underutilised assets from spaces to skills to stuff for monetary or non-monetary benefits.”
Belk (2014)	“People coordinating the acquisition and distribution of a resource for a fee or other compensation.” (p. 1597)
Stephany (2015)	“The value in taking underutilised assets and making them accessible online to a community, leading to a reduced need for ownership.” (p. 205)
Hamari et al. (2016)	“The peer-to-peer-based activity of obtaining, giving, or sharing the access to goods and services, coordinated through community-based online services.” (p. 2047)
Sundararajan (2016)	“The sharing economy is an economic system with the following five characteristics: largely market based, high impact capital, crowd-based networks, blurring lines between the personal and professional, and blurring lines between fully employed and casual labour.” (p. 21)
Kennedy (2016)	“The sharing economy is a socio-technical system for the exchange of goods and services. The sharing economy refers to a collection of services that enable private and commercial owners of particular resources to make them available to others. (p. 466)
Breidbach and Brodie (2017)	“Access rather than ownership, the use of ICT-enabled engagement platforms, monetary rewards for the sharing of resources, among multiple interdependent economic actors who engage in sociotechnical exchange processes within service ecosystems.” (p. 764)

Frenken and Schor (2017)	“Consumers granting each other temporary access to under-utilised physical assets (idle capacity), possibly for money.” (p. 4-5)
Andreotti et al. (2017)	“A reciprocal exchange process, whereby individuals share their personal goods with others for use through a digital platform.” (p .2)
Kumar et al. (2018)	“We define the sharing economy as: the monetisation of underutilised assets that are owned by service providers (firms or individuals) through short-term rental. (p. 148)
Narasimhan et al. (2018)	“The sharing economy describes the recent phenomenon in which ordinary consumers have begun to act as sellers providing services that were once the exclusive province of professional sellers.” (p .93)
Eckhardt et al. (2019)	“A scalable socioeconomic system that employs technology-enabled platforms to provide users with temporary access to tangible and intangible resources that may be crowdsourced.” (p .3)
Wirtz et al. (2019)	“Two- or more-sided peer-to-peer online platforms through which people collaboratively provide and use capacity-constrained assets and resources.” (p. 458)
Minami et al. (2021)	“Sharing economy consists of the practice of using and sharing products or services between two or more individuals with the support of the Web 2.0, and that does not involve any form of material compensation.” (p. 127)

The key attributes of the sharing economy (SE) include access over ownership, peer-to-peer transactions, and the allocation of idle resources. It has been argued that the sharing economy is market-mediated and more like an access economy (Eckhardt and Bardhi, 2015), where customers access services providers’ assets for a certain period instead of owning them. The business model of the sharing economy typically consists of a service enabler (a company) that provides the platform for service providers (individuals who own assets and can share) and consumers (individuals who demand and access the shared goods or services).

The practice of the sharing economy has increased uses of idle resources. Kumar et al. (2018) suggest that it is unrealistic to expect sharing goods to be utilised fully, even though the sharing business model maximises the utilisation of those resources. While the practice of sharing increases the productivity of an idle asset through high occupancy and provides flexibility for resource owners, it also shortens the asset’s lifetime. Eckhardt et al. (2019)’s

definition of the SE: “A scalable socioeconomic system that employs technology-enabled platforms to provide users with temporary access to tangible and intangible resources that may be crowdsourced.” (p .3) better reflects the current functioning of the SE, which this study adopts.

Based on the rapid growth of SE giants Airbnb and Uber, the sharing economy is estimated to grow to \$335 billion by 2025 (Yaraghi and Ravi, 2017). However, it is unclear how COVID-19 has impacted the growth of the SE. In addition to the most popular organisations (e.g., Airbnb, Uber, TaskRabbit, Lyft, Fiverr, etc.), several new businesses or services using the sharing economy business model have emerged over the past five years: UP&GO (founded in 2017) offers peer-to-peer cleaning services (UP&GO, 2017); BlaBlaCar BUS (launched in 2019) provides bus sharing services across Europe (BlaBlaCar, 2019).

Khalek and Chakraborty (2023) argue that a typology of the sharing economy is needed to help clarify and set the boundaries of the SE phenomenon. Table 2 presents two main types of sharing economy (collaborative consumption and access-based consumption) with eight sub-classified types (altruistic sharing, true sharing, complementary sharing, swapping, commercial sharing, resale, access-based services and hybrid access). Their typology provides a clear understanding of current practices within the sharing economy and sheds light on participants’ underlying motivations. It also offers our study a clear structure to explore and evaluate the state and impact of the sharing economy.

Table 2 Typology of Sharing Economy (adapted from Khalek and Chakraborty, 2023)

Type of Sharing economy	Sub-Category	Description	Examples
Collaborative Consumption	Altruistic Sharing	Sharing without expecting anything in return.	Freecycle and Olio
	True Sharing	Similar to altruistic sharing, however, goods are returned to the owner after use.	KIVA and Couchsurfing

	Complementary Sharing	Participants share resources without transferring ownership. Participants can act as both a user and a provider	Timebanks and home-swapping platforms
	Swapping	Participants exchange items directly on online platforms. No monetary transaction is involved. Assets swapped include houses, cars, fashion items, makeup and books.	Goswap.org, Rehash, and PaperbackSwap
	Commercial Sharing	Financial aspect is predominant. People share their privately owned items for profits. Most popular sharing platforms fall under this category.	Airbnb, Uber, LendingClub, Neighbor, Prosper, Eatwith, etc.
	Resale	Opposite of altruistic sharing. People sell their privately owned items for monetary compensation.	Poshmark, Thredup and Swap.com
Access Based Consumption	Access Based Services	Participants pay a fee to use platform-owned resources without owning them.	The fashion accessories rental Rent the Runway.
	Hybrid Access	A unique category in the sharing economy. Option to access platform-owned resources temporarily.	Revv and Nissan Intelligent Ownership

Understanding various definitions of the SE is crucial for framing our research. The above review addresses the broad range of activities within the sharing economy. The broad range of SE definitions suggests a need to examine technical capabilities and regulatory frameworks, particularly how they affect older adults' participation in SE.

2.2. Key Research Areas in the Sharing Economy

Research on the sharing economy has boomed in the last ten years. The most prevalent topics include regulatory and ethical challenges within the sharing economy (Etter et al., 2019; Berkowitz and Souchaud, 2019), consumer behaviour and trust dynamics (Huurne et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2019; Kong et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Venkateswaran et al., 2021), platform economics and business models (Richter et al., 2017; Kumar et al., 2018; Curtis

and Mont, 2020), labour and employment issues (Newlands et al., 2018), social and cultural impact (Davidson et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2021).

In this literature review, we have a deeper investigation on these four relevant research areas: new business model development in the sharing economy, customer experience in sharing economy, the adoption of sharing economy, and motivation and participation in the sharing economy.

2.2.1. Business Model Development in the Sharing Economy

Studies by Kumar et al. (2018), Apte and Davis (2019), Ritter and Schanz (2019), and Curtis and Mont (2020) present frameworks for developing SE business models (see Table 3 for a summary of studies focusing on business model development and review studies). Ritter and Schanz (2019) and Curtis and Mont (2020) emphasise the importance of having innovative business models that support sustainability and address socio-economic transitions. These studies guide our research by providing insights into successful SE models that can be adapted to cater to older adults, considering their unique needs and challenges.

Table 3 Business Model Development and Overview of SE Studies

Studies	Research focus	Method	Data/Sample	Key findings/contributions
Kumar et al. (2018)	Business model development & adoption of the sharing economy	Literature review & unstructured interviews	90 customers, 43 service providers, 8 service enablers in US cities	- Provides a strategic framework for a profitable service enabler performance - Generational traits can shape the adoption of the sharing economy; baby boomers have the potential to contribute to the sharing economy - Offers strategies for customer development
Apte and Davis (2019)	Business model development	Case vignettes	53 case studies	- SEs play a crucial role in the sharing economy's growth - The substantial growth of SEs is largely due to reduced transaction

				costs in connecting/matching customers and service providers
Ritter and Schanz (2019)	Business model development	Literature review	131 academic articles were reviewed	- Provides a comprehensive business model framework for the sharing economy from aspects of value propositions, value creations, deliveries and value captures - The study offers a better understanding of the potentials of the sharing economy in terms of sustainability transitions and business model innovations
Curtis and Mont (2020)	Business model development	Literature review; morphological analysis	104 academic articles were reviewed	Sustainability is not inherently supported by the sharing economy; therefore, it is crucial to plan and strategise carefully
Cheng (2016)	Overview of the sharing economy	Literature review	66 academic articles	Provides a strengthened and comprehensive framework to better understand the sharing economy
Sutherland and Jarrahi (2018)	Overview of the sharing economy	Literature review	435 publications	While there is extensive research on the business model and its application of the sharing economy, a cohesive analysis intertwining the economic and social aspects with technological aspect is absent
Hossain (2020)	Overview of the sharing economy	Literature review	219 academic articles	Provides a comprehensive review on the sharing economy covered

				topics including definition, business models, motivations, impacts and regulations. • Highlights the need for a global agreement on sharing economy initiatives
Rojanakit et al. (2022)	Overview of the sharing economy	Literature review	136 articles	• Offers insights in terms of sociocultural, technology, legal and political, and platform strategy within the sharing economy • Underlines the necessity of context-specific studies within the sharing economy

These frameworks highlight the needs to adapt business models to be inclusive and sustainable. This suggests that future SE platforms must consider the specific requirements of different demographic groups, including older adults. This adaptation can potentially lead to more equitable participation in the sharing economy, bringing both social and economic benefits.

2.2.2 Consumer experience in the Sharing Economy

Research has explored consumer experiences in the sharing economy extensively. Pappas (2019) found that the correlation between price and quality, risk and social interaction can impact consumer's experience significantly. The social interaction element in the sharing economy is important; and users evaluate it based on their interaction levels with the service providers (Lee, 2022). Other crucial elements affecting consumer experience in SE include uniqueness of accommodation interiors and atmosphere, local culture (in the context of accommodation sharing) (Paulauskaite, 2017), and cocreation (Scaraboto and Figueiredo, 2022). These insights into consumer experiences are useful for our research as they provide

ideas for understanding how people perceive and engage in the sharing economy as consumers or users.

Table 4 A summary of representative studies on Consumer Experience in the Sharing Economy

Studies	Research focus	Method	Data/Sample	Key findings/contributions
Pappas (2019)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Structured questionnaires	712 P2P holidaymakers	The correlation between price and quality, risk, and social interaction can significantly impact consumer's experience
Lee (2022)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Online reviews analysis	503,071 textual reviews	- Introduces a framework that combines text analytics and fsQCA to explore consumer experience is the SE - Guests evaluate service aspects differently depending on their interaction levels with the hosts
Paulauskaite et al. (2017)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Qualitative interview	15 respondents	Airbnb users place significant importance on the uniqueness of accommodation interiors and atmosphere, interactions with hosts and local culture
Dellaert (2019)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Literature review	Unknown	Introduces a two-layered conceptual framework to help companies with establishing new marketing strategies
Xu (2020)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Online reviews analysis	802 accommodation listings	The study reveals the important role of willingness to share in shaping customer perceptions of their stays and future booking decisions
Scaraboto and Figueiredo (2022)	Consumer experience in the sharing economy	Qualitative: netnography, ethnographic observations, interviews	40 participants	- Presents the challenges for consumers who are cocreating experiences - The study pinpoints orchestration as an important type of work undertaken by service

				users and providers to deal with complexities
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Understanding these factors can help sharing platforms enhance user experience, leading to higher customer satisfaction and repeat usage. Platforms can tailor their services to meet specific needs of consumers, thereby increasing engagement and loyalty.

2.2.3. Adoption of the Sharing Economy

It is believed that materialistic consumers tend to prefer owning products. However, Davidson et al. (2018) suggested that materialism can lead to a willingness to use sharing services. For American customers, materialism drives the use of sharing services that bring hedonic and transformative benefits, improving their well-being and self-image. For Indian customers, materialism motivates participation in the sharing economy primarily for utilitarian reasons (Davidson et al., 2018). Different regions and cultures may exhibit varying motivations to participate in the sharing economy. The most studied motivations include financial benefits (Hamari et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2019, Chung et al., 2021), social connection (Hamari et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2019, Chung et al., 2021; Köbis et al., 2021), perceived usefulness and enjoyment (Li and Wen, 2019), and entrepreneurial aspirations (Zhang et al., 2019). While most studies found similar factors that motivate people to join the sharing economy, there is a lesser focus on the service provider's perspective. Barriers to adoption include perceived risks and platform stress (Park et al., 2023). Huynh and Gurtner (2023) found that the barriers differ between consumers and providers: usage barrier are common to both, but value barriers mainly affect consumers, whereas functional risks primarily concern providers (Huynh and Gurtner, 2023).

Kumar et al. (2018) highlighted that generational characteristics can shape the adoption of the sharing economy, and understanding the generational nuances can be important for tailoring SE platforms to effectively meet each age cohort's distinct needs. However, older

adults in the sharing economy are understudied. A noticeable gap exists in current research, with limited knowledge about the ageing generation. Older adults have unique needs, preferences and challenges that have not been explored in the context of the sharing economy. Understanding this understudied group can foster a more inclusive and sustainable growth in the sharing economy. Additionally, it can help generate some insights into solving societal issues that comes with ageing such as financial problems in retirement, loneliness and much more.

Table 5 A summary of representative studies on Intention and Adoption of the Sharing Economy

Studies	Research focus	Method	Data/Sample	Key findings/contributions
Zhu et al. (2017)	Adoption of the sharing economy & consumer motivations	Survey questionnaire	314 respondents in Beijing, China	• Self-efficacy influences consumer's perception of value directly and behavioural intention indirectly • Important antecedents for ridesharing platforms: functional value, emotional value and social value • Learning effort and risk perception do not have a great impact on consumers' perceived risk/cost when adopting ridesharing platforms
Liu and Yang (2018)	Adoption of the sharing economy	Questionnaire	426 responses in China	• The following factors play a significant role on users' behavioural intention towards the sharing economy in China: Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, trust, subjective norm and imitation • Trust mediates the relationship between subjective norm and perceived ease of use • The study expands the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by

				identifying factors in the context of the sharing economy in China
Kumar et al. (2018)	Business model development & adoption of the sharing economy	Literature review & unstructured interviews	90 customers, 43 service providers, 8 service enablers in US cities	• Provides a strategic framework for a profitable service enabler performance • Generational traits can shape the adoption of the sharing economy; baby boomers have the potential to contribute to the sharing economy • Offers strategies for customer development
Lee et al. (2018)	Motivations and participation in the sharing economy	Online survey	295 valid responses	• Users' intention to join Uber is significantly influenced by perceived risks, perceived benefits, trust in the sharing platform and perceived platform qualities
Böcker and Meelen (2017)	Motivations and participation in the sharing economy	Survey	1330 respondents	• Incentives to participate in the sharing economy vary among different socio-economic groups, between users and service providers, and notably among diverse categories of shared goods (e.g., cars, accommodation, tools etc.) • The economic driver is particularly important in the accommodation sharing sector due to high cost of housing • Environmental motivations are important in the context of car and ride-sharing • Meal sharing is highly driven by social incentives • Young and low income groups have a stronger economic drive to use and offer shared assets

Hamari et al. (2016)	Motivations and participation in the sharing economy	Survey	168 respondents	• Participation in collaborative consumption is driven by a variety of factors: sustainability, enjoyment, economic benefits. • Sustainability becomes an important motivator only when participants have positive attitudes towards collaborative consumption • A potential attitude-behaviour gap exists in collaborative consumption
Current study	Motivations and participation in the sharing economy	Qualitative: semi-structured interviews, video analysis, archival articles analysis	Primary data: 20 semi-structured interviews Secondary data: 15 YouTube videos and 22 archival articles	• Provides insights into older adults' perceptions towards the sharing economy by identifying specific factors related to ageing • Explores the potentials and challenges for older adults becoming service providers in the sharing economy

These findings suggest that SE platforms should consider cultural differences when developing marketing strategies. Meeting the specific motivations of different consumer groups by tailoring services can increase adoption and enhance user satisfaction.

2.3. Older Adults in the Modern Economy

Populations are ageing rapidly around the world. Many nations have increased pension age due to various reasons related to an ageing population and financial issues. According to Gerstorf et al. (2023), today's older adults are cognitively fitter than those from 20 years ago. Moreover, older adults today are feeling younger (subjective age) (Wettstein et al., 2023). Although marketers and researchers have long recognised the potential of the silver economy and 50+ marketing segment, not much has been done in the marketplace (Tréguer, 2002).

On the other hand, society has started to pay more attention to social problems related to an ageing population. Loneliness and social isolation can influence the wellbeing of older people (Golden et al., 2009). Emotional isolation, or loneliness, is defined as an unpleasant feeling of lacking companionship, whereas social isolation is seen as the subjective absence of interactions or contacts between older people and social network (Cattan et al., 2005; Townsend, 1957; Weiss, 1982). Cattan et al., (2005) suggested that social activity group interventions can alleviate loneliness and isolation among older adults.

As the population ages, there has been increased discussion about the ageing workforce. While the concept of FIRE (Financial Independence, Retire Early) has been popular among the younger generation, some older adults wish to remain in the workforce longer, and some wish to stay active with flexible work options (Johnson, 2010). With older adults becoming more tech-savvy compared to years ago, there are opportunities for them to work flexibly in the gig economy or platform economy without taking on too much responsibility. Kumar et al. (2018) also address that the baby boomers can play an important role in the sharing economy. However, many older adults may lack digital literacy and have health problems.

In this study, we are interested in exploring older adults' lifestyles and technology use in the era of smartphones and social media. While studies discuss smartphone or social media addiction among the older generation (Lee and Lim, 2019; Tian and Wang, 2023), we suspect that these older adults may limit their use to the most common applications. Understanding their lifestyle and technology use will help us comprehend their perceptions about adopting the sharing economy.

Although research on the sharing economy has increased significantly in the past decade, further investigation is needed, especially on the supplier sides, particularly focusing on older adults who have the potential to make a positive impact in the sharing economy. By focusing

on older adults, our research addresses a noticeable gap, aiming to find out what motivates and discourages the older adults from joining the sharing economy as users and service providers. Additionally, we seek to determine how businesses in the sharing economy can develop strategies to attract the older generation.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

To answer our research questions, we combined three qualitative methods (see Table 6): semi-structured interviews, archival analysis of videos, and archival analysis of news articles. We followed best practices to improve data collection, ensure methodological quality, and handle the data ethically (Aguinis and Solarino 2019; Wallendorf and Belk 1989).

Table 6 Research data sources

Technique	Type of data	Data set size	Purpose
Semi-structured interviews	20 interviews with older adults, ranging from 21 to 62 minutes	80 pages of transcripts and notes	To understand the motivations, experiences, lifestyles, consumption practices of older adults
Archival videos analysis	15 Videos from YouTube	15 pages of transcripts and notes	To understand the motivations, experiences, lifestyles of older Airbnb hosts
Archival articles analysis	Articles from Forbes, Guardian, Medium, and others	23 media articles	To contextualise the lifestyle and consumption behaviours in market and media discourses

3.2. Data Collection

Pilot Testing: Before the main data collection, we conducted a pilot test to refine our research tools and ensure effectiveness. We conducted three preliminary interviews to test the

semi-structured interview guide. The pilot interviews helped us identify any questions that are ambiguous or terms that needed to be simplified. We then adjusted the wording and order of questions for better flow (see Appendix for some questions asked in interviews).

Main Data Collection: We carried out 20 semi-structured interviews through video calls or phone calls. The main purpose was to understand older people's lifestyles, motivations, and consumption practices, with or without experiences of participating in the sharing economy. Therefore, not many criteria were needed to be applied to the informants. Informants needed to (1) be older than 50 years; (2) speak English or Chinese.

To ensure we reached a wide range of older individuals, we recruited participants through convenience sampling and snowballing. Interviews were conducted online in 2020. The main reasons to conduct interviews online are: (1) to go beyond the boundaries of location and reach more older adults in a global context (2) to protect vulnerable older individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic. We sent out a poster about our research recruitment on social media platforms including WeChat, Interpals and Facebook. People who were interested in the research or were willing to help with the research contacted the researcher through the social media sites. We were then able to recruit the initial informants. At the end of each interview, we asked participants if they had any friends that may be willing to participate in the research, and we were able to recruit more participants through this snowball sampling method.

Example interview questions included, "What are your general thoughts about the sharing economy?" "What challenges do you anticipate encountering in dealing with the sharing economy?" and "Do you have any concerns about the sharing economy and/or the companies that use the model?". We then asked more relevant questions based on the interviewee's answers.

We acknowledged that some older adults might not be tech-savvy or that our poster may not reach many from this age group. Hence, we stated in our poster that it would be appreciated

if young adults could let the older people in their households know about the research. During interviews, we asked their family members to set up the devices to help interviews run smoothly if it was needed.

Table 7 presents the details of the research: region selection and description, sampling method and selection, interviewing process and data saturation.

Table 7 Region selection and description, sampling method and selection, interviewing process and data saturation

Region selection and description	Our study adopts a demographic sample from diverse regions to capture a broad perspective on the sharing economy. The selection criteria are based on the following considerations: 1. Substantial growth in the sharing economy: this includes places where the sharing economy has expanded, with organisations adopting the sharing business model. 2. Diverse economic development stages: this diversity helps understand how the sharing economy works in different economic contexts. 3. Cultural representation: a wide range of cultural perspectives is captured; this approach ensures that the findings enhance the generalisability of the study.
Sampling method and selection	We employed a convenience sampling and snowballing method to conduct our study. Given the exploratory nature of the study, using a convenience sampling method allows the initial collection of diverse insights. Additionally, the interviews were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when direct contact with older adults was advised against. In this condition, utilising a convenience sampling and snowballing method was more practical and efficient. Our sample consists of participants who are over the age of 50. We decided on the age of 50 for the following reasons: 1. Significance of Baby Boomers: Kumar et al. (2018) suggested that baby boomers, individuals born between 1946 and 1964, have significant potential to contribute to the sharing economy. As of 2020, people in this demographic group ranged in age from 56 to 74. Given the proximity to our age threshold of 50, it is practical to include slightly younger individuals to capture a broader spectrum of this influential group. 2. Early Retirements: In some cultures, early retirement is common, especially among women who often retire in their 50s (World Economic Forum, 2023), and among wealthier individuals (Cribb, 2023). This suggests that people in this age group have distinct lifestyle changes and motivations relevant to this study. The FIRE (Financial Independence,

	Retire Early) movement has also encouraged people to retire early (Martel, 2024). 3. Technological Timeline: Technologies such as the internet and computers did not become widespread until the 1980s. This technological timeline presents an interesting contrast in the experiences of those over the age of 50 compared to the younger people, who are often the primary focus of research in the sharing economy. This historical context is crucial for understanding their interaction with the sharing economy. 4. Marketing Benchmarks: Marketers often use the age of 50 as a benchmark to target older individuals (e.g., Centre for Ageing Better), referring to this demographic segment as the ‘silver economy’ (Tréguer, 2002). This demographic is recognised for its economic potential and different consumption behaviours, which makes it an appropriate focus for our research.
Interviewing process	We firstly obtained the informed consent from the participants. All interviews were conducted via phone/Messenger video call/WeChat video call by the lead researcher. English, Chinese Mandarin and Chinese Cantonese were the languages used to carry out the interviews. We did not experience a significant non-response rate.
Data Saturation	Data saturation refers to when newly collected data no longer offers additional insights into what has already been gathered (Saunders et al., 2018). We aimed to achieve saturation by examining recurring themes from each interview. The interview process was considered complete when we did not identify new information.

In total, we interviewed 11 female and 9 male individuals, aged 51 to 72 years. Table 8 outlines the characteristics of participants.

Table 8 Characteristics of participants

Metric	Number
Gender	
Male	9
Female	11
Age	
50-55	6
56-60	4
61-65	6
66-70	2

71-75	1
Employment status	
Employed-full time	2
Employed-part time	3
Self-employed	5
Retired	1
Not employed	2
Marital status	
Married	16
Divorced	3
Widowed	1
Number of children	
No children	1
1 child	2
2 children	10
3 children	5
4 children	2

Second, we collected 15 relevant YouTube videos to gain additional insights. The contents of the YouTube videos focus on older adults' motivations to join Airbnb and their experiences. See Appendix for sources of the videos.

Third, we collected 22 articles and blog posts from mainstream and specialised Chinese and British news media, such as BBC News and the New York Times, on topics surrounding the phenomenon of interest. Some of the keywords used to search include “collaborative consumption”, “platform economy”, “Airbnb”, “sharing economy”, “ageing”, “older adults” and “elderly”.

3.3. Data analysis

First, the primary author coded the interview data following Saldaña's (2016) coding methods and created a data structure of codes and emergent themes. All authors came together to discuss and challenge the themes, thus achieving analyst triangulation.

Second, we coded the data from the collected archival videos and integrated it with the primary interview codes and themes. We carefully scrutinised the data, iteratively moving between the data and emergent themes while reviewing relevant literature on the sharing economy.

Third, we contrasted and grounded the data with the archival articles and blog posts to identify the pathways that shapes participants' motivations and concerns.

Finally, we integrated Locus of Control (Rotter, 1954) as an enabling theory to conceptualise the potentials and challenges of the sharing economy for older adults. Table 9 shows the trustworthiness of this study.

Table 9 Trustworthiness of the study

Trustworthiness criteria	Method for addressing trustworthiness in this study
Credibility: the degree to which the results are considered to be accurate reflection of the data	• Use three different data sources: interviews, archival videos, archival news articles. • Invite interviewees to review the data and findings. • Invite colleagues to review the findings
Transferability: the extent to which findings of one study can be applied/transferred to other contexts or settings	• Include a diverse range of participants to understand various experiences and perspectives. • Offer detailed information about the research context to allow participants and readers to validate the differences and similarities with other contexts.
Dependability: the extent to which findings are stable, consistent, and reliable	• Discuss with experts or peers to assess the research process and findings. • Use three different data sources: interviews, archival videos, archival news articles to validate the consistency. • Recode after initial coding to ensure consistency.

Confirmability: the extent to which interpretations genuinely reflect the experiences of the participants and the phenomenon, rather than being influenced by the researcher's biases	• The researcher reflects on own biases and assumptions. • Clearly describe and record the data analysis procedures. • Discuss with experts or peers to ensure the interpretations are grounded
Integrity: the extent to which interpretations are free from participants' misinformation or evasions	• Use follow-up questions to probe and confirm the consistency of participants' answers. • Cross-verify the information provided by participants.

4. Findings

4.1. Prospects of older adults joining the SE

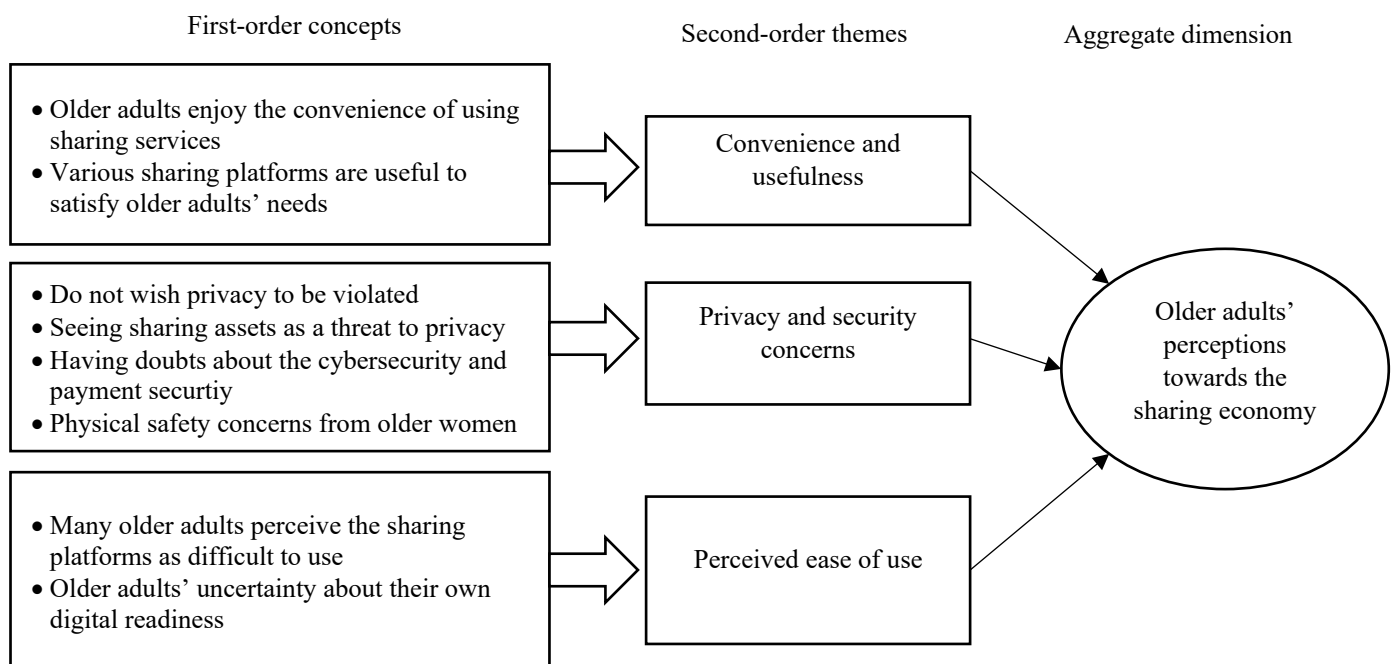
As business adopting a peer-to-peer sharing model continue to grow, there is increasing recognition of the potential for older adults to participate in the sharing economy. In cent years, businesses specifically targeting and designing for older adults have seen notable growth worldwide. Examples of such businesses include Chef for Seniors, Golden Girls Network, Roommates4Boomers, Silvernest, TrustedHousesitters, SilverRide, Seniors Helping Seniors, GoGoGrandparent, Good Life Sorted (CNBC, 2016; Sharing Economy UK, 2022). These businesses differentiate themselves from others by offering services that cater to the unique needs of the older generation. They have created digital platforms that specifically address issues related to ageing. These platforms prioritise areas such as digital readiness, social inclusion, loneliness, mobility, and other health-related challenges.

While these businesses have achieved a certain level of success, it is important to note that their influence and impact are relatively limited compared to large international organisations like Uber and Airbnb. Renowned platforms such as Uber, Airbnb, TaskRabbit, Lyft, Upwork and Fiverr have not only witnessed older adults joining as consumers but also as service providers. Furthermore, predictions suggest that an increasing number of older adults will be willing to offer their services on these sharing platforms. This trend can be attributed to the rising cost of living and the growing awareness and trust in these platforms among older adults.

Both broader society and researchers focused on ageing recognise the potential of older adults joining the sharing economy to address age-related challenges. For instance, it is predicted that through participating in the sharing economy, older adults may experience reduced loneliness, based on real-life cases and the perception that the older generation tends to be more susceptible to loneliness. Moreover, the sharing economy has the potential to transform the relationship between older adults and work. By offering new opportunities for income generation, older adults can enjoy increased flexibility and security during their retirement years.

4.2. Older adults' perceptions towards the SE

Figure 1 Data structure of older adults' perceptions towards the sharing economy



4.2.1. Convenience and usefulness

The most commonly cited factor that attracted older participants to use a sharing service consistently is its functionality. This encompasses both convenience and usefulness, which aligns with existing literature on the topic (Li and Wen, 2019). To provide a more nuanced

understanding, we have included the following representative quotes offering a firsthand perspective on the preferences and inclinations of older adults:

I think they provide very convenient services for traveling, very good. We had some bad experiences in the past, but I still use ride sharing and home sharing services because it's really useful and convenient.

(Participant H, 55, manager, China)

I used Didi (Chinese equivalent of Uber) quite a lot. It's quite good. Very convenient.

(Participant A, 50, business owner, China)

It's very good and convenient. It's the same as viewing flats online, I don't need to trouble myself to go there. I just look online and book whichever I want. This way I won't waste my time and energy.

(Participant G, 63, doctor, China)

Most participants have directly or indirectly used a sharing service, either through personal experience or through the experiences of friends and family. These interactions have been intuitive and do not require a deep understanding of the specific terms associated with this economic model. However, when asked if they are familiar with the term 'sharing economy' or 'sharing platform', the majority of participants expressed their unfamiliarity with these terms. This pattern was not exclusive to occasional users; even those who frequently used a sharing service were not familiar with the terminology. This disconnect highlights an interesting phenomenon.

4.2.2. Privacy and security concerns

While the convenience and utility of using a sharing platform are apparent, older participants have significant concerns about their privacy and security, casting a shadow on the overall user experience. Compared to the younger generation, older adults often find themselves investing more time in deciding the trustworthiness of online companies or products (Bergström, 2017). The balance between technology use and privacy is a key issue.

There is a need for specific approaches to address these worries and make sharing platforms more user-friendly and trustworthy for older adults.

We find that both male and female participants expressed concerns about privacy when using a sharing service. This finding reveals that privacy concerns associated with using sharing services are not exclusive to one gender. For example, while some older adults enjoy a home feeling from staying at an Airbnb and interacting with the hosts, many others prefer staying in a hotel where they get a sense of privacy. The latter group values the professional boundaries and desires for personal space and privacy:

I prefer staying at a hotel. I like being looked after where you would get your bed changed every day, towels changed every day. I don't want to feel like home when I'm going on holiday. It's not as much of a holiday experience if I stay at someone's home. I'd like more privacy.

(Participant K, 62, retiree, England)

I probably wouldn't [use a sharing service]. I'm quite a personal person....Well if it was a vehicle, I'll totally consider using that. Not so much if it was someone's apartment or whatever, I'd rather use a hotel. Someone's apartment is very personal. They've got their own ornament, their own taste whereas hotels are slightly mutual. And I care about privacy.

(Participant S, 55, carpenter, England)

Compared to older male participants, older female participants were more cautious about physical safety and potential risks associated with online interactions and transactions:

If I was traveling with someone and the host was another female. Yes, I'd do that. And if it was somewhere that I was going that I hadn't been before and I was traveling alone, then I would double check everything and I would be happier haring with another female. Yeah, I'd like to have correspondence with them before I went.

(Participant R, 64, retiree, England)

I suppose you learn about them through different friends and family members. I suppose that knowing they're safe and reliable. And obviously, I want to be sure of...the money going through from your account to them etc. that sort of thing is secure. For the likes of Airbnb, transferring money etc...that is safe.

(Participant M, 63, doctor, England)

This outcome is not surprising and can be anticipated, as older adult females are often perceived as particularly vulnerable, a perception that is accentuated by societal norms and expectations regarding age and gender.

4.2.3. Perceived ease of use

As mentioned in section 4.2.1, sharing platforms can be very useful and convenient for older users. However, some older participants did not find them particularly useful, mainly due to uncertainty about their digital readiness. This uncertainty leads to a hesitance in adopting these sharing services.

From our interviews, we noticed that every older participant owned a smartphone. However, their usage can be limited to messaging, making voice and video calls, reading, and scrolling on Douyin (Chinese TikTok). They use smartphones mostly for basic features, suggesting they might face challenges or lack interest in using their phone's full capabilities. This indicates a gap between having access to technology and fully utilising it.

Participant C (70) was given a smartphone by her child, and she mainly use WeChat on the smartphone. She is able to message, make calls, watch videos on WeChat thanks to her children and grandchildren's help. When she was asked if she knew about the sharing economy or sharing platforms, she said:

I don't know anything about that. It's not necessary to me. I don't want to make such big effort to try those things. It must be complicated. It took me some time to learn how to send a voice message on WeChat and other things from my children. I'm old.

(Participant C, 70, retiree, China)

Older adults are increasingly marking their presence on social media platforms. Well-designed and easy-to-navigate apps such as Douyin offer a perfect entertainment platform for older adults. The algorithms used on these apps enable older adults to consume contents to their likings and keep the effort to navigate to a minimum level – it is as simple as an automated scroll for the next piece of content. However, platforms requiring extensive reading or multiple

clicks can be perceived as less user-friendly and cumbersome by older adults. The ease of navigation is important for their digital engagement:

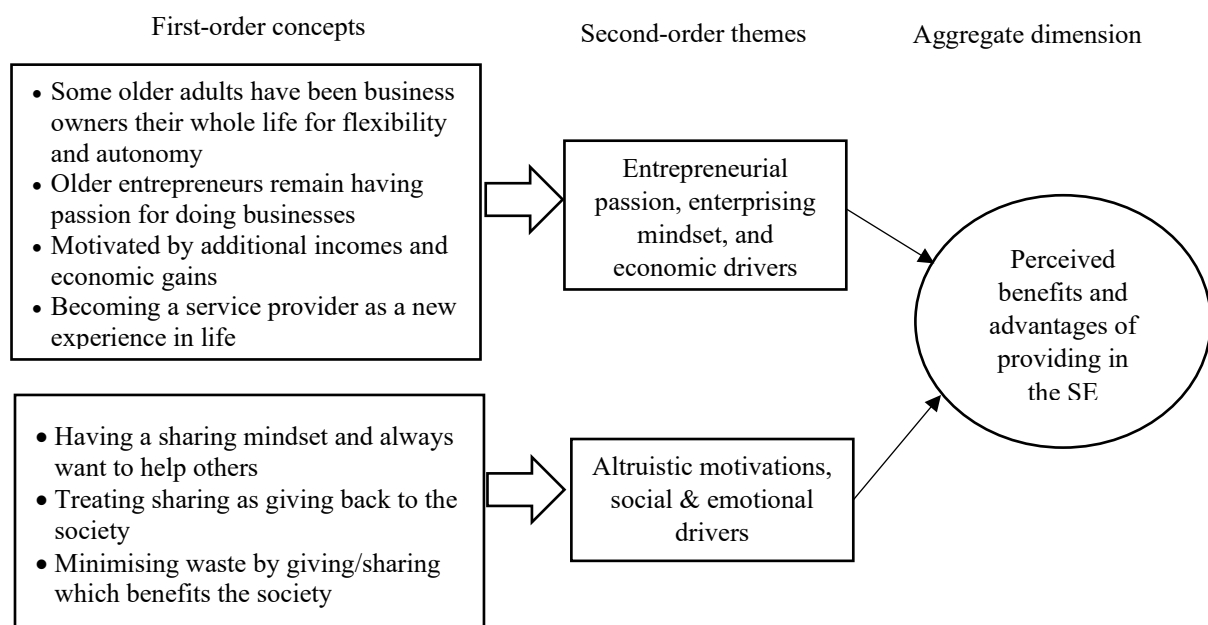
I don't think I'm capable of doing that. I mean, I'm familiar with Douyin (Chinese Tiktok) and WeChat. I use Douyin when I'm bored. It makes me laugh. But other apps or websites that we don't use often, they may be too much for me.

(Participant J, 51, business owner, China)

Overall, the majority of our older participants found the sharing platforms user-friendly and easy to navigate. However, we also encountered a subset of participants who expressed reluctance to try and engage with these platforms. Their hesitation is rooted in perceived complexities and potential challenges in navigating the digital interfaces. These contrasting viewpoints highlight an opportunity to review, refine and adapt platform designs to be more accessible and enhancing user confidence.

4.3. Perceived benefits and advantages of providing in the SE

Figure 2 Data structure of older adults' perceived benefits and advantages of providing in the sharing economy



4.3.1. Entrepreneurial passion, enterprising mindset, and economic drivers

In our participant pool, we noted a small group who are established business owners. They prefer working for themselves and being their own boss. These individuals not only possess the desire for self-direction but also have tangible resources to share. Take Participant A for example, he has been a business owner for over 30 years. He is open to the prospect of joining the sharing economy as a service provider. He considers it to be potentially rewarding. This may be rooted in his extensive journey of entrepreneurship. Being a leader has perhaps transformed himself into someone who accustomed to leading a team to execute tasks:

I think the manufacturing I'm doing... we have a relatively good team. Basically, the whole operation is quite independent. So, I don't participate a lot at the moment. I think I have trust on the team..... I'd love to share the idle machines from my factory via the internet. But that's too complicated for me. I'm too old to do things like that now. I'd need a young team to do that for me. I'm not sure if that will happen.

(Participant A, 51, business owner, China)

Another pronounced benefit associated with being one's own boss or providing on the sharing economy is flexibility. The freedom to choose your own work hours and location is a major benefit. Research has shown that this is one of the most prevalent factors driving people to provide in the sharing economy. The ability to choose work hours and location to fit personal needs and lifestyle makes the type of work especially attractive for those looking to balance their job with their personal life.

I don't like the idea of being employed. I like being my own boss and have my flexibility..... I get to meet new people and learn about them when they book our place.

(Participant N, 50, Airbnb host, England)

While many may want to treat providing on the sharing economy as a job or career, some enterprising and adventurous individuals are drawn to it for the enriching and diverse experiences it offers. Participant P has been a housewife most of her life. Her external experiences have been somewhat circumscribed. However, she thinks that hosting in her own house for a short period of time gives her a chance to break the monotony of routine.

It's interesting. I would like to be a service provider, but not for a long time, just short term. I want to have some new experience.

(Participant P, 62, housewife, Spain)

Financial gain from hosting is the single most important driver that attracts people to provide in the sharing economy. Especially for older adults, some of whom might encounter financial struggles due to rising living costs and decreased income in retirement. Having an additional income source not only enables them to maintain their lifestyle but also ensures they can reside in their homes comfortably and supports their personal passions.

I've got a real passion for art and design. I used Airbnb money to buy ceramics and other pieces in my house because I really like it. It's a beautiful area. A lot of creatives live here. And I still enjoy it very much. Being a host has changed my quality of life quite significantly. I really enjoy receiving guests from all over the world through Airbnb. It's widened my horizon.

(Airbnb host, England)

4.3.2. Altruistic motivations, social & emotional drivers

As people progress through different life stages, acquiring more resources and insights along the way, a shift towards generosity or altruism often manifests. With the wealth of experience and resources gathered over the years, they think about contributing to broader society. Their sharing mindset sometimes leads them to give out for free. For many older adults, there is an intrinsic reward in giving – a sense of satisfaction.

Doing philanthropy makes me happy. I don't think about retiring completely so early yet because I like to help people.

(Participant H, 55, Manager, China)

Whatever (food) I have, I share (eat) with others. I never look down on people.

(Participant C, 70, retiree, China)

From a more logical point of view, giving out or sharing one's underused assets minimises waste. By extending the utility of assets through sharing, not only is individual waste reduced,

but community-based resource optimisation is achieved. This practice fosters a culture of shared responsibility and efficiency:

These things, if you use them, they'll wear out; if you leave them aside, they'll also wear out. Why not use them more often then? At least [letting others use them] helps with their financial burden. I'm happy to share or lend my things to others.

(Participant D, 74, retiree, China)

From both social and emotional perspectives, the act of sharing one's unique spaces and personal narratives creates memorable experiences. Each exchange brings together different personal stories and emotions, creating a rich and varied experience. The experience not only satisfies both the providers and the consumers but also contributes to and reinforces the idea of community building. The genuine interactions in the sharing economy help build a solid base for these communities:

We believe that our home should be a haven for both the friend and the stranger. You can be white, you can be black, you can be green, come in my house and front door, let's have something to eat first. Then let's talk.

(Airbnb Superhosts, US)

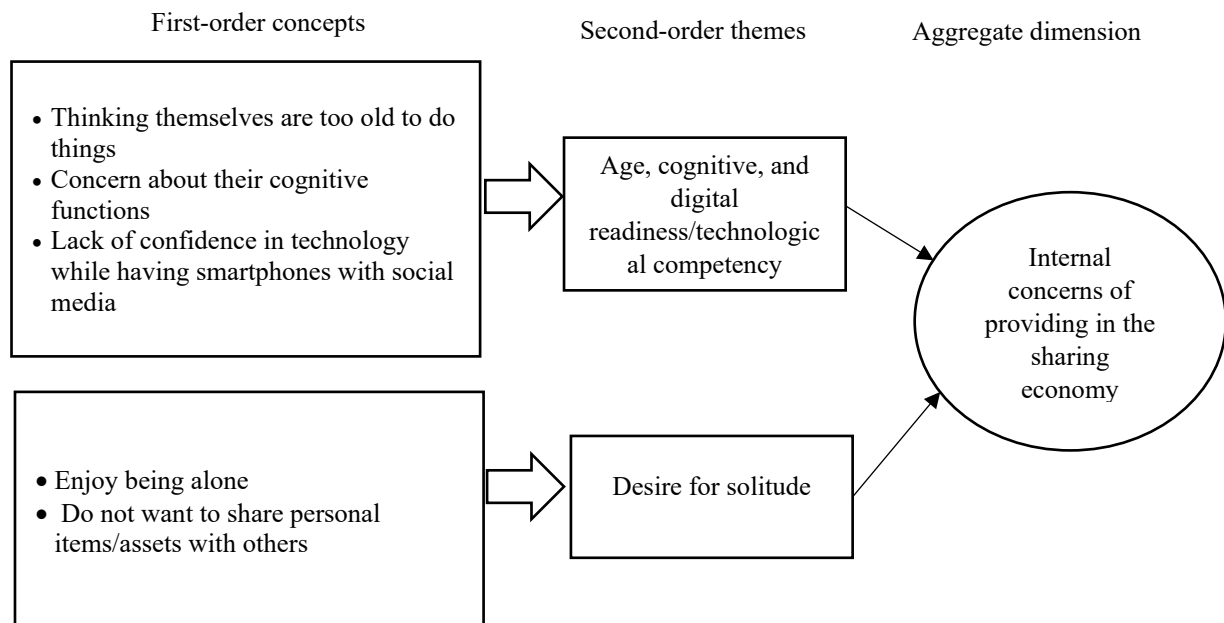
People lost their relatives, their family, their friends and also their homes. That was like, 'I have the space, let them come over.' I want to give something back and I think I got much more back myself.

(Airbnb Superhost, Italy)

4.4. Perceived barriers and demotivating factors of providing in the SE

4.4.1. Internal concerns

Figure 3 Data structure of internal concerns of providing in the sharing economy



4.4.1.1. Age, cognitive and digital readiness/technological competency concerns

When evaluating older adults' adaptation to new technologies or digital platforms, it is imperative to consider their self-perceptions, particularly in terms of how they perceive their age. Our study draws special attention to this point. Confidence levels varied significantly among participants. While some participants expressed assurance in their abilities to transition into micro-entrepreneurial roles within the digital space, a significant portion of our older participants expressed age-related concerns. The intersection of technological adaptation and age is complex, and often related to both perceptual and practical challenges.

I haven't thought about starting a business in the sharing economy..... For people of my age, or a little bit older than me, they're quite slow to learn new things....When people reach my age, it's enough to just know and use the basics (of technology).

(Participant I, 63, teacher, China)

I'd love to share the idle machines from my factory via the internet. But that's too complicated for me. I'm too old to do things like that now. I'd need a young team to do that for me. I'm not sure if that will happen.

(Participant A, 51, business owner, China)

The concern related to age could be linked to their perception of the time remaining in their lives. Carstensen (1995) offers a valuable perspective on this, positing that as people age, they consider their time remaining in the world as finite, this awareness influences their goal orientation. Their focus shifts from future-oriented goals towards present-oriented goals. Additionally, cognitive function tends to decrease with age. This natural progression can exacerbate age-related concerns, particularly when confronted with adaptation to new technologies or digital platforms. For our participants, the adaptation is not just a process of learning; it is connected to their introspections about age and desire for meaningful engagements.

A lot of the oldest old use old phones. They don't want to learn about it so there's inconvenience. Even if they know how to do it, because it's the smartphone, their eyes don't work very well.

(Participant E, 50, business owner, China)

The problem is that I think our age group, especially for working stuff, so much of that is done through phones by young people. I think we, the older generation, we don't do it the same way.

(Participant M, 63, doctor, England)

While smartphones and the internet have seamlessly integrated into many older adults' daily lives, with some even experiencing phone addiction, their engagement with these technologies tends to be restricted. For many of our participants, their interaction with these devices is often limited to a few familiar and frequently used applications. Compared to the younger generation, the breadth and depth of engagement with digital technologies remain constrained. The older participants often need assistance from the younger generation. This intergenerational disparity in digital readiness opens a conversation about educational support.

In the broader scope of our study, a trend emerged regarding self-assessment of technological competence among our participants. Participants from developing countries tended to rate themselves as less proficient in technology in comparison to the developed counterparts. Participants from more developed regions exhibited a higher degree of confidence in digital competency perhaps due to a different set of educational and societal influences.

I'm extremely good with technology. My first job was working on designing computers. I'm well-trained in that area. So, I have made microcontroller devices, built the hardware, write the software, and a lot. I guess there were not many of us back then.

(Participant O, 70, business owner, England)

Yeah. I'm quite familiar with smartphones and technology. I'm on Facebook and WhatsApp, social things.

(Participant S, 55, carpenter, England)

I'm not familiar with using a smartphone or technology. I mean, it's not necessary. I'm old and I don't want to do too much.

(Participant C, 70, retiree, China)

Some older adults are more receptive than others. While some older participants are open and eager to explore, others are less inclined to venture into the unfamiliarity of digital innovation. For instance, when asked if she would be interested in learning about new technologies, Participant C immediately showed her unwillingness. Her reaction was not unique. Many older adults shared her hesitation. This reluctance usually comes from different factors like comfort level, the believed usefulness, and their perceived ease of use.

No, I'm not very good with computers or technology. Well, we use WeChat Pay and Alipay all the time. I'm quite familiar with them. Apart from that, I'm not good....I'm quite lazy. I don't really want to learn. It definitely requires computer skills and stuff. There will be difficulties.

(Participant B, 51, housewife, China)

Participant B expressed that she has poor memory, finding it challenging to retain information. This personal disclosure shows her concerns regarding her cognitive capabilities

and low self-efficacy. A segment of older participants also confronts similar challenges. These cognitive concerns can have a negative effect on their engagement with new learning opportunities, particularly in the domain of technology.

4.4.1.2. Desire for Solitude

A commonly examined element in literature related to motivations for participating in the sharing economy is the opportunity to meet new people. Lutz and Newlands (2018) offered insights into consumer profiles and provider targeting for two different types of accommodation - shared rooms versus entire homes. Older guests were found to be targeted more for entire homes, aligning with our findings. Many of our older participants expressed that they prefer to be alone. This means that meeting new people is not always on their agenda. The desire for privacy and space often takes precedence. Bresciani et al. (2021) suggested that during the COVID-19 pandemic, people were reluctant to book shared rooms, and health and safety concerns exacerbated their inclination for privacy. This development may have a lingering effect and further influence older people's intention to share.

I personally like being alone. I don't really like being with others.

(Participant I, 63, teacher, China)

I've been alone for most of my life. It's something I'm used to.

(Participant O, 70, business owner, England)

I don't feel lonely at all, you know. I like being by myself.

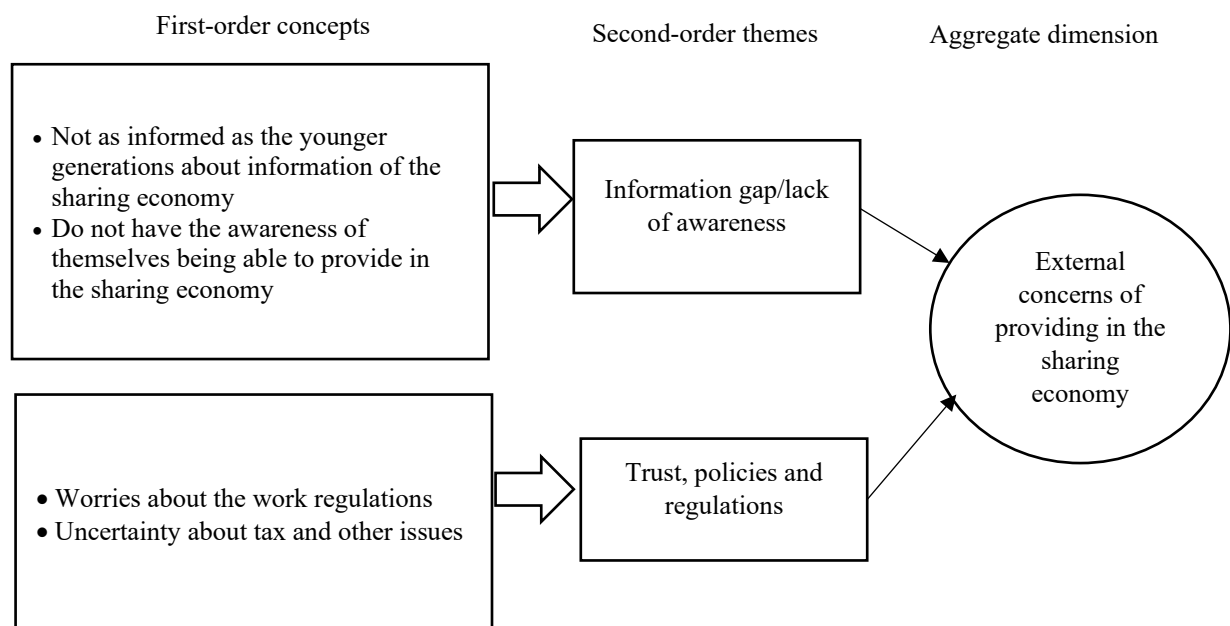
(Participant P, 63, housewife, Spain)

Tools are very personal things. I probably wouldn't consider sharing in the future. I'm quite a personal person.

(Participant S, 55, carpenter, England)

4.4.2. External concerns

Figure 4 Data structure of external concerns of providing in the sharing economy



4.4.2.1. Information gap/lack of awareness

We found that while many older adults have heard of popular sharing platforms, the prospect of becoming a service provider on these platforms never crossed their minds. The sharing platforms are acknowledged and recognised; however, the step towards contributing is rarely considered. This gap between recognition of the sharing economy and participation within it shows an information gap.

Oh, that never came across my mind. I suppose that's a sensible thing to try. I would consider it (renting out a room) when there's no more children here or something like that.

(Participant S, 55, carpenter, England)

Marketing communications from most businesses are often targeted younger consumers. While there is a general acknowledgement among marketers of the economic contributions older adults can make, there appears to be a gap in engaging the older generation effectively through tailored marketing communications. There is a need to evolve marketing communications to be both inclusive and relevant to ensure that the offerings align with the life stages and values of the older adults.

I haven't really thought about it. Actually, I want to rent out my flat here. When my son is settled down, I'd start thinking about renting out the flat online if I could. I like this idea. I will do things like that online for sure.

(Participant G, 64, doctor, China)

4.4.2.2. Trust, policies, and regulations

Trust, along with policy and regulations, plays an important role in the sharing economy.

The basis of the sharing economy is built on the principle of trust. Trust facilitates transactions and interactions within the sharing economy business model. For businesses operating within the sharing economy to perform smoothly and expand, certain policies and regulations need to be in place. Apart from instilling confidence among participants, these policies and regulations can ensure the ecosystem operates with transparency and integrity. The synergy of trust, policies, and regulations is essential in building a reliable and sustainable sharing economy that can adapt to evolving societal needs and challenges.

I think since they're widely used by the society, the government also protects these companies. They can't be fake or something. Like some people worry about safety and stuff...I think since the government approves, the companies won't do bad. I also approve of it. I feel relieved using them.

(Participant G, 64, doctor, China)

In the beginning, I was a little hesitant to use the services. Now it's all registered under a real-name system. That's how they do business here. I don't think I need to worry about it. The government monitors them.

(Participant H, 55, manager, China)

I've thought about it. I don't think it would work....I've got a lot of electronics gear tools. There is a makerspace in a nearby town that I thought of getting involved with. I don't think those ideas work very well, you know, it's difficult to set it up so that you can lend somebody else your tools and make sure that they don't get broken or they are still available for you when you do need them...I thought about it quite a lot when that place was set up, I thought, 'Could I contribute something? Could I cooperate in some way?' And I went and talked to them about it, but I didn't really come up with anything that seemed like it would work.

(Participant O, 70, business owner, UK)

There exists a nuanced difference in the perspectives regarding trust and regulations within the sharing economy among our participants from diverse regions. Some participants showed a higher level of trust in sharing platforms due to approval from their government. The assurance from the governmental authorities provides a sense of security and reliability among these participants. On the other hand, participants from other regions exhibited a more intricate approach to assessing the sharing economy. They are inclined to delve deeper into the legislative frameworks of these sharing platforms. When asked about the outlook on the future of the sharing economy, these participants conveyed a sentiment of measured optimism. Their positive outlook depends on the development and strict enforcement of rules and regulations to protect people involved in the sharing economy:

I think it's up in the air. There are definitely question marks, which as far as worker's rights are concerned. The law hasn't really caught up with the technology. It can happen, but yeah, there is a lack of that, which I think things are going to change. It's not satisfactory how it is the legal protection for workers. Also, the resolution of disputes between providers and users, the whole system isn't really fit for purpose yet. So it could well get sorted out and work properly or it could fall in a heap. Who knows. Yeah, so I'm equivocal.

(Participant O, 70, business owner, England)

It's unclear if the providers were employed by you, or not employed, or are they allowed holiday sick pay, all that sort of thing. So, I mean, these issues can be a big part of the sharing economy.

(Participant K, 62, retiree, England)

5. Discussion

5.1. Contributions to the Literature

Consistent with previous literature, the current study reaffirms that economic and social drivers are primary catalysts motivating people to join the sharing economy (Zhang et al., 2019; Benoit et al., 2017; Boxall et al., 2017; Karlsson and Dolnicar, 2016). Our study contributes to the literature by focusing on the specific older age group and identifying their special motivations and barriers.

Compared to the younger generation, older adults have a stronger sharing mindset and exhibit a propensity for generosity, underlined by a willingness to contribute and give back to the community. A surprising finding is the entrepreneurial passion among older adults. This is a facet that has been underexplored in existing literature. This discovery opens avenues for further exploration and analysis.

On the other hand, older adults have unique set of challenges when it comes to participating in the sharing economy as providers. Age-related concerns are significant barriers, often compounded by low self-efficacy and limited digital readiness. The interplay between motivational drivers and barriers shows the need for tailored strategies and interventions. Addressing these elements is crucial in fostering an inclusive and dynamic sharing economy ecosystem that is adaptive to the distinct needs and challenges of the older adults. Our study offers enriched insights and perspectives that are instrumental in shaping a sustainable sharing economy.

5.2. Practical Implications

We contribute to practice in two key ways. First, we observe a prevalent oversight where many digital sharing platforms have not strategically focused on attracting older adults or baby boomers as service providers. Engaging more older adults into providing in the sharing economy not only enhances the performance of the business but also advantages the older adults through financial gains, personal development and potentially an uplift in their overall wellbeing.

Our recommendation pivots on refining marketing recommendations to be more resonant and engaging for the older population. The insights from our findings are instrumental in shaping strategies that are tailored to the unique experiences and concerns of older adults, to ensure that technological advancements are inclusive and accessible to this age demographic.

Additionally, there is a need for adaptive and compassionate approaches to technology education enhance bolster older adults' self-efficacy,

Second, sharing platforms should offer more assistance to the older adults for their special needs and expectations. Addressing concerns that are intrinsically linked to ageing, including decreasing cognitive function and digital readiness is pivotal. For example, businesses can provide easier-to-digest information specifically aimed at this age group.

6. Limitations and future research

Our study offers insights into the complex dynamics of older adults' perceptions and engagement with the sharing economy. When considering becoming a service provider in the sharing economy, older adults can be motivated by entrepreneurial passion, enterprising mindset, and economic drivers, altruistic motivations, social and emotional drivers. Internal concerns such as age, cognitive and digital readiness/technological competency, desire for solitude and external concerns including information gap/lack of awareness and trust, policies, and regulations are the preventing older adults to provide in the sharing economy.

However, this study is not free from limitations. First, the study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which introduces a layer of complexity that cannot be overlooked. We suspect that people's perceptions may have been influenced by the policies in place at the time, and they may have provided opinions more specific to the time being. Secondly, since we conducted the interviews online during the pandemic, the sample might be limited. For instance, we may have interviewed more older adults who had the facilities to be interviewed online, excluding those who did not have the resources.

Looking ahead, it is imperative to explore the post-pandemic landscape to decide if the insights are steady or if the pandemic has induced a paradigm shift in older adults' perceptions of the sharing economy, similar to the widespread acceptance of working from home (WFH). Understanding these factors could help us see more clearly how older adults' participation in

the sharing economy is changing. Future research can focus on addressing older adults' unique needs, such as age-related concerns, and developing effective marketing communications targeted at this age group.

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Appendix A. Topics, subtopics, interview questions, and exemplified probing questions for interviews

Main themes	Subtopics within main themes	Interview questions	Selected probing questions
Perception towards the sharing economy as a service user	Usage of sharing services; knowledge on the sharing economy/sharing platforms; positives of the sharing economy; negatives of the sharing economy	• Have you heard of the term ‘sharing economy’? • Have you used any sharing services? • Can you tell me about your experiences using the sharing platforms?	• What are some popular sharing economy platforms you’re aware of? • How did you first learn about the sharing economy? • How often do you use these sharing services? • What specific sharing services have you used? Why did you choose them? • What was your initial expectation before using the services? Were those expectations met? • Have you faced any challenges using these sharing platforms? • What improvements do you think could be helpful to address the negative aspects of the sharing economy?
Perception towards the sharing economy as a service provider	Experience of providing in the sharing economy; potentials of providing in the sharing economy; challenges of providing in the sharing economy	• If the participant has provided services on a sharing platform – How did you start? What motivated you to provide in the sharing economy? How has the experience been for you? What challenges have you encountered? Has providing on the sharing platform had a big impact on your life? • If the participant has never provided on a sharing platform – Have you thought about providing on a sharing platform? Why? Why not? What	• For service providers: What steps did you take to begin providing services in the sharing economy? Was there a learning curve? How did you navigate it? How do your motivations align with your personal or professional goals? What have been your most rewarding experiences so far? And least rewarding experiences? Can you share some examples of challenges you faced? In what ways has it affected your life? • For non-service provider: What factors do you consider in evaluating the option? What appeals to you about becoming a service provider in the SE? What deters you? How do you perceive the

		are the motivations? What are the challenges for you?	benefits of being a provider in the sharing economy? What concerns do you have about becoming a provider in the sharing economy?
Personal preferences and lifestyle	Social activities; technology competence; financials	• What do you enjoy doing? • How good are you with technology? • Do you consider yourself an open-minded person? • Would you say you're living a comfortable life?	• Can you share some hobbies or activities that you enjoy? • How do these activities contribute to your wellbeing? • How important is social interaction and community engagement to you? • Have you faced any challenges in using technology or digital platforms? How did you overcome them? • Does technology affect your decision to use or provide in the sharing economy? • How do you define a comfortable life for yourself? • Does your financial situation influence your decisions to use/not use or provide/not provide in the sharing economy?
Goals and future	Plans for the future; work and retirement	• What goals or plans do you have for the next five years? • What activities do you plan to do in your retirement? • Can providing in the sharing economy bring any benefits to your retirement?	• How do you envision your daily life during retirement? • How adaptable are your future plans to changing circumstances or opportunities? • Have you considered 'semi-retired'? • Have you considered starting some form of business activity?

Appendix B. Selective quotes from the interviews

Second-order themes	Selective quotes
Convenience and usefulness	“I think they provide very convenient services for traveling, very good. We had some bad experiences in the past, but I still use ride sharing and home sharing services because it’s really useful and convenient.” – <i>Manager, China</i> “[...]I used Didi (Chinese equivalent of Uber) quite a lot. It’s quite good. Very convenient.. [...]” – <i>Business owner, China</i> “It’s very good and convenient. It’s the same as viewing flats online, I don’t need to trouble myself to go there. I just look online and book whichever I want. This way I won’t waste my time and energy.” – <i>Doctor, China</i>
Privacy and security concerns	“I prefer staying at a hotel. I like being looked after where you would get your bed changed every day, towels changed every day. I don’t want to feel like home when I’m going on holiday. It’s not as much of a holiday experience if I stay at someone’s home. I’d like more privacy.” – <i>Retiree, England, UK</i> “I probably wouldn’t [use a sharing service]. I’m quite a personal person....Well if it was a vehicle, I’ll totally consider using that. Not so much if it was someone’s apartment or whatever, I’d rather use a hotel. Someone’s apartment is very personal. They’ve got their own ornament, their own taste whereas hotels are slightly mutual. And I care about privacy.” – <i>Carpenter, England, UK</i> “If I was travelling with someone and the host was another female. Yes, I’d do that. And if it was somewhere that I was going that I hadn’t been before and I was travelling alone, then I would double check everything and I would be happier sharing with another female. Yeah, I’d like to have correspondence with them before I go.” – <i>Retiree, England, UK</i> “I suppose you learn about them through different friends and family members. I suppose that knowing they’re safe and reliable. And obviously, I want to be sure of...the money going through from your account to them etc. that sort of thing is secure. For the likes of Airbnb, transferring money etc...that is safe.” – <i>Doctor, England, UK</i>

Perceived ease of use	“I don’t know anything about that. It’s not necessary to me. I don’t want to make such big effort to try those things. It must be complicated. It took me some time to learn how to send a voice message on WeChat and other things from my children. I’m old. [...]” – <i>Retiree, China</i> “I don’t think I’m capable of doing that. I mean, I’m familiar with Douyin (Chinese Tiktok) and WeChat. I use Douyin when I’m bored. It makes me laugh. But other apps or websites that we don’t use often, they may be too much for me.” – <i>Business owner, China</i>
Entrepreneurial passion, enterprising mindset, and economic drivers	“I think the manufacturing I’m doing... we have a relatively good team. Basically, the whole operation is quite independent. So, I don’t participate a lot at the moment. I think I have trust on the team..... I’d love to share the idle machines from my factory via the internet. But that’s too complicated for me. I’m too old to do things like that now. I’d need a young team to do that for me. I’m not sure if that will happen.” – <i>Business owner, China</i> “I don’t like the idea of being employed. I like being my own boss and have my flexibility..... I get to meet new people and learn about them when they book our place.” – <i>Airbnb host, England, UK</i> “It’s interesting. I would like to be a service provider, but not for a long time, just short term. I want to have some new experience.” – <i>Housewife, Spain</i> “I’ve got a real passion for art and design. I used Airbnb money to buy ceramics and other pieces in my house because I really like it. It’s a beautiful area. A lot of creatives live here. And I still enjoy it very much. Being a host has changed my quality of life quite significantly. I really enjoy receiving guests from all over the world through Airbnb. It’s widened my horizon.” – <i>Airbnb host, England, UK</i>
Altruistic motivations, social & emotional drivers	“Doing philanthropy makes me happy. I don’t think about retiring completely so early yet because I like to help people.” – <i>Manager, China</i> “Whatever (food) I have, I share (eat) with others. I never look down on people.” – <i>Retiree, China</i> “These things, if you use them, they’ll wear out; if you leave them aside, they’ll also wear out. Why not use them more often then? At least [letting others use them] helps with their financial burden. I’m happy to share or lend my things to others.” – <i>Retiree, China</i> “We believe that our home should be a haven for both the friend and the stranger. You can be white, you can be black, you can be green, come in my house and front door, let’s have something to eat first. Then let’s talk.” – <i>Airbnb Superhosts, US</i>

	“People lost their relatives, their family, their friends and also their homes. That was like, ‘I have the space, let them come over.’ I want to give something back and I think I got much more back myself.” – <i>Airbnb Superhost, Italy</i>
Age, cognitive and digital readiness/technological competency concerns	“I haven’t thought about starting a business in the sharing economy..... For people of my age, or a little bit older than me, they’re quite slow to learn new things....When people reach my age, it’s enough to just know and use the basics (of technology).” – <i>Teacher, China</i> “A lot of the oldest old use old phones. They don’t want to learn about it so there’s inconvenience. Even if they know how to do it, because it’s the smartphone, their eyes don’t work very well.” – <i>Business owner, China</i> “The problem is that I think our age group, especially for working stuff, so much of that is done through phones by young people. I think we, the older generation, we don’t do it the same way.” – <i>Doctor, England, UK</i> “I’m not familiar with using a smartphone or technology. I mean, it’s not necessary. I’m old and I don’t want to do too much.” – <i>Retiree, China</i> “No, I’m not very good with computers or technology. Well, we use WeChat Pay and Alipay all the time. I’m quite familiar with them. Apart from that, I’m not good....I’m quite lazy. I don’t really want to learn. It definitely requires computer skills and stuff. There will be difficulties.” – <i>Housewife, China</i>
Desire for Solitude	“I personally like being alone. I don’t really like being with others.” – <i>Teacher, China</i> “I’ve been alone for most of my life. It’s something I’m used to.” – <i>Business owner, England, UK</i> “I don’t feel lonely at all, you know. I like being by myself.” – <i>Housewife, Spain</i> “Tools are very personal things. I probably wouldn’t consider sharing in the future. I’m quite a personal person.” – <i>Carpenter, England, UK</i>
Information gap/lack of awareness	“Oh, that never came across my mind. I suppose that’s a sensible thing to try. I would consider it (renting out a room) when there’s no more children here or something like that.” – <i>Carpenter, England, UK</i> “I haven’t really thought about it. Actually, I want to rent out my flat here. When my son is settled down, I’d start thinking about renting out the flat online if I could. I like this idea. I will do things like that online for sure.” – <i>Doctor, China</i>
Trust, policies, and regulations	“I think it’s up in the air. There are definitely question marks, which as far as worker’s rights are concerned. The law hasn’t really caught up with technology. It can happen, but yeah, there is a lack of that, which I think things are going to change. It’s not satisfactory how it is the legal protection for workers. Also, the resolution of disputes between

	providers and users, the whole system isn't really fit for purpose yet. So it could well get sorted out and work properly or it could fall in a heap. Who knows. Yeah, so I'm equivocal." – <i>Business owner, England, UK</i> "It's unclear if the providers were employed by you, or not employed, or are they allowed holiday sick pay, all that sort of thing. So, I mean, these issues can be a big part of the sharing economy." – <i>Retiree, England, UK</i>
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Appendix C. Archival Videos

Video Title	Link
Welcome to Danville Host Stories Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aDeU9Kzlxh4&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=6
Meet In Ja and James Airbnb Superhosts Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vC14BSU-fno&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=6&ab_channel=Airbnb
Meet Els Airbnb Superhosts Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XO04VjKNTjw&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=11
Senior hosts on Airbnb earned \$2 Billion in 2017 Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkQNVMIz4Eg&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=17
Meet Greg & Lauren New State of Welcome Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5JwUpHyGeUo&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=19
Malu, a Host in Rio Stay with Me Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SG3r23vJbv0&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=29
Dieneke Meet the Hosts Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1Nhr6cueGg&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=51
Nelson Meet the Hosts Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQUPH7MAr4w&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=66
Meet Our London Hosts Airbnb	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arPaQm62L1c&list=PLe_YVMnS1oXbXw49uFkG4448qMsn6qvch&index=87

Appendix D. Archival articles

1. The sharing economy booms for boomers, CNBC
<https://www.cnbc.com/2016/06/17/the-sharing-economy-booms-for-boomers.html>
2. Can Airbnb Help Seniors Stay in Their Homes?, THE STREET
<https://www.thestreet.com/retirement/can-airbnb-help-seniors-stay-in-their-homes-13627183>
3. The Sharing Economy Attracts Older Adults, The New York Times
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/26/your-money/the-sharing-economy-attracts-older-adults.html>
4. The Sharing Economy Spells Doom - Or Boom - For The Senior Housing Industry, Forbes
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/josephcoughlin/2018/07/30/the-sharing-economy-spells-doom-or-boom-for-the-senior-housing-industry/>
5. The sharing economy for seniors, Senior Concerns
<https://www.seniorconcerns.org/the-sharing-economy-for-seniors/>
6. Promoting Active Ageing in the Digital Economy: Inclusion, Adaptation and Innovation, OECD
https://www.oecd.org/sti/ieconomy/OECD_GCOA%20Report%202015.pdf
7. Could the sharing economy care more for the elderly?, Liftshare
<https://blog.liftshare.com/industry/could-the-sharing-economy-care-more-for-the-elderly>
8. The people stuck renting who can't afford to retire, BBC News
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-63389860>
9. Retirees take on the sharing economy, Money.com
<https://money.com/retirees-take-on-the-sharing-economy/>
10. Seniors Want in on the Sharing Economy, Money.com
<https://money.com/sharing-economy-senior-citizens-uber-airbnb/>
11. 3 Ways the Sharing Economy Can Improve The Lives of Seniors, PARQEX
<https://www.pargex.com/3-ways-sharing-economy-can-improve-lives-seniors/>
12. This is how boomers are reinventing retirement living, MarketWatch
<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/boomers-are-reinventing-retirement-housing-imagine-galleries-walkability-and-multi-age-communities-2019-05-22>
13. What happens when the sharing economy meets up with home care?, Boss Magazine
<https://thebossmagazine.com/sharing-economy-elder-care/>

14. Co-living for retirees, or the sharing economy for seniors, Europaproperty
<https://europaproperty.com/co-living-for-retirees-or-the-sharing-economy-for-seniors-6669/>
15. Home help platform Good Life Sorted joins Sharing Economy UK, Sharing Economy UK
<https://www.sharingeconomyuk.com/blog/home-help-platform-good-life-sorted-joins-sharing-economy-uk>
16. How two entrepreneurs have seen the opportunity and the reward - in supporting an ageing society, through Good Life Sorted, 2021
<https://www.sharingeconomyuk.com/blog/solve-a-problem-grow-a-business-the-cbi-interviews-good-life-sorted>
17. Japanese seniors show increased interest in sharing economy, Nippon.com
<https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-data/h00553/japanese-seniors-show-increased-interest-in-sharing-economy.html>
18. The silver economy is coming of age: A look at the growing spending power of seniors, BROOKINGS
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2021/01/14/the-silver-economy-is-coming-of-age-a-look-at-the-growing-spending-power-of-seniors/>
19. How new Taipei is turning back the tide on ageing, GOVINSIDER
<https://govinsider.asia/intl-en/article/new-taipei-sharing-economy-for-elderly-eric-chu>
20. Colabor-active Project: Active ageing through sharing economy, iED
<https://ied.eu/project-updates/colabor-active-project-active-ageing/>
21. Can the sharing economy solve the financial overload of the ageing growth problem?, Huffpost
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/can-the-sharing-economy-s_b_8638368
22. The sharing economy at the service of promoting active ageing: the case of the European Colabor-Active project, Medium
<https://medium.com/@coordina.consultores/the-sharing-economy-at-the-service-of-promoting-active-ageing-the-case-of-the-european-d07c89d474c1>
23. My path to hosting on Airbnb
https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/my-path-hosting-airbnb-catherine-powell/?trk=organization_guest_main-feed-card_reshare_feed-article-content

Appendix E Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Participant Information Sheet

Research Project Title: The bright and dark sides of the sharing economy for senior citizens

You are invited to participate in this research about sharing economy. It is important for you to understand the basic information of the research. Please take time to read the following information before you decide to take part in the research. If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.

Purpose of the Study: To gain a better understanding of seniors' incentives to participate in the sharing economy platforms. This research is a task in the public interest.

Voluntary Participation: You are invited because you meet our research criteria which is over the age of 50. There will be 20 participants in total interviewed for the research.

Participation to the study is voluntary. It is your choice to decide whether to participate or not. If you do decide to participate, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without negative consequences.

Procedure: 20 participants will be interviewed within the period of 30 days. The approximate total time of each interview should be 30-35 minutes.

Expected Risks: There are no foreseeable risks to you by completing the interview, as all results will be kept completely confidential.

Expected Benefits: While there are no immediate benefits for people participating in the project, it is hoped that this work will provide insights on bettering seniors' well-being using sharing economy from social, economic, etc. aspects.

Confidentiality: Confidentiality will be maintained for all participants. You will not be able to be identified in any publications or reports. At no time will individual identifying information be provided to outside sources unless required by law. At all times, your privacy will be respected.

Audio recordings: The audio recording made during the interview will be used only for analysis. No other use will be made of them.

Use of Research Results: Due to the nature of this research it is very likely that other researchers may find the data collected to be useful in answering future research questions. We will ask for your explicit consent for your data to be shared in this way. Results may be presented at research conferences and in scientific publications by the principal investigator. Results will be presented in aggregate form only. No names or individually identifying information will be revealed.

Notes on some academic words:

1. Sharing economy: the monetisation of underutilised assets that are owned by service providers (firms or individuals) through short-term rental (Kumar et al., 2017)
2. Sharing economy platforms: digital platforms that allow individuals or firms to obtain and provide assets and services including property sharing (e.g. Airbnb), ride sharing (e.g. Uber), tools sharing, device sharing, etc.

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that University of Sheffield is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by Management School.

Future Questions: If you have any questions concerning your participation in this study now or in the future, you can contact the principal investigator, Jingshan Yang via e-mail: jyang103@sheffield.ac.uk or the supervisor of the research, Dr. Yichuan Wang, e-mail: yichuan.wang@sheffield.ac.uk. If you need to make a complaint, you can contact Mrs Sophie May from the University Research Support Team via e-mail: s.may@sheffield.ac.uk, or Mr Sachin Anand at s.anand@sheffield.ac.uk. The Research Support Team will give you advise after complaint is made. If you are not satisfied with the complaint, you may contact Research Hub Manager Ms Catherine Workman via e-mail: c.workman@sheffield.ac.uk.

Consent to Participate: I have read or had read to me all of the above information about this research study, including the research procedures, possible risks, side effects, and the likelihood of any benefit to me. I understand the content and the meaning of the information. I hereby consent and do voluntarily offer to follow the study requirements and take part in the study



Participant Number/Initials

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Title: The bright and dark sides of the sharing economy for senior citizens: A Qualitative study

Consent Form for Interviews

Thank you for reading the information sheet about the interview. If you are happy to participate, then please complete and sign the form below. Please initial the boxes below to confirm that you agree with each statement:

Please Initial box:

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated [XX/06/2020] and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.

I agree for this interview to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made of this interview will be used only for analysis and that extracts from the interview, from which I would not be personally identified, may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.

I agree that my anonymised data will be kept for future research purposes such as publications related to this study after the completion of the study.

I agree to take part in this interview.

Name of participant

Date

Signature

Principal Investigator

Date

Signature

Copies: *Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and the information sheet. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the main project file which must be kept in a secure location.*

Tailoring Marketing Communication for Older Adults in the Sharing Economy: A Socioemotional Selectivity Theory Perspective

Abstract

According to socioemotional selectivity theory, individuals tend to focus on more present-oriented goals as they age. This study investigates whether this tendency applies to the context of the sharing economy and micro-entrepreneurship by testing marketing messages (future-oriented vs. present-oriented) on both younger and older groups. Additionally, we examine whether marketing communications from different focus (platform vs. service provider) influence people's adoption intentions within the sharing economy. Contrary to expectations, our findings do not support the hypotheses. This suggests that, in the context of home sharing services, time orientation may not significantly impact people from different age groups. Additionally, in the context of digital skill/knowledge sharing, preferences for marketing communications did not align with previous research. Despite the lack of support for our hypotheses, this study still contributes to the ongoing dialogue in the sharing economy and marketing communication literature.

Keywords: the sharing economy, marketing communications, micro-entrepreneurship, Socioemotional Selectivity Theory, time perspective, older adults

1. Introduction

Over the past five years, there has been a surge in research on the sharing economy. With organisations within the sharing economy (e.g., Airbnb and Uber) expanding and consumer behaviours changing, it provides a great opportunity to conduct research within the sector. The widespread adoption of the sharing business model has created jobs and built wealth for people all around the world. It also continues to expand the definition and understanding of the sharing economy. Nowadays, there is a significant overlap between the sharing economy and terms such as “gig economy”, “peer-to-peer economy”, “access economy” and “platform economy”. These terms can be used interchangeably in certain contexts. And we believe not giving the phenomenon a fixed definition is acceptable since it keeps evolving with everchanging human activity and the development of technology and social media.

Recognising the potential of the sharing business model, businesses have made consumers aware of the benefits they bring. According to Google Trends (2023), the interest in organisations using a sharing business model (Fiverr, Airbnb, Uber and Upwork are chosen as representatives, see Figure 5,6,7,8) has grown exponentially since the early 2010s. While drops in interest in some platforms such as Airbnb and Uber were seen due to the impact of COVID-19 and off-season fluctuations, knowledge-based sharing platforms like Upwork and Fiverr witnessed a steady increase during COVID-19. Industry estimates forecast that by 2027, the sharing economy will grow to \$600 billion (Proficient Market Insights, 2022).

Figure 5 Google Trends Global Interest in the Term “Fiverr”



Figure 6 Google Trends Global Interest in the Term “Airbnb”

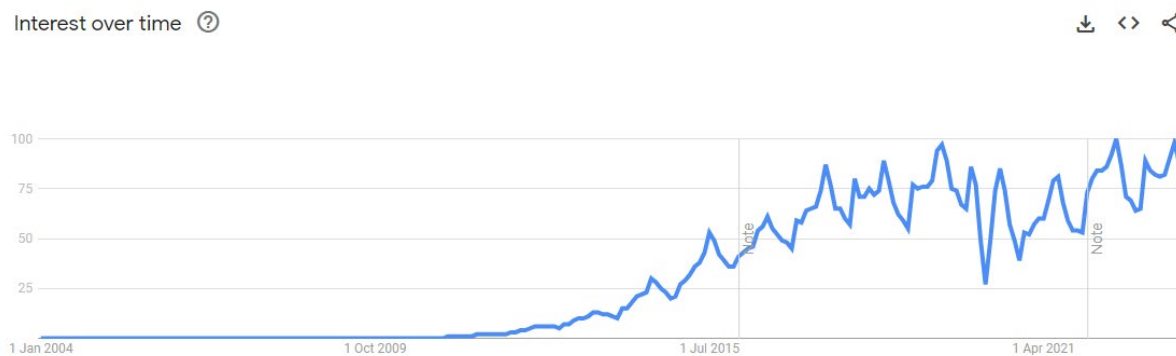


Figure 7 Google Trends Global Interest in the Term “Uber”

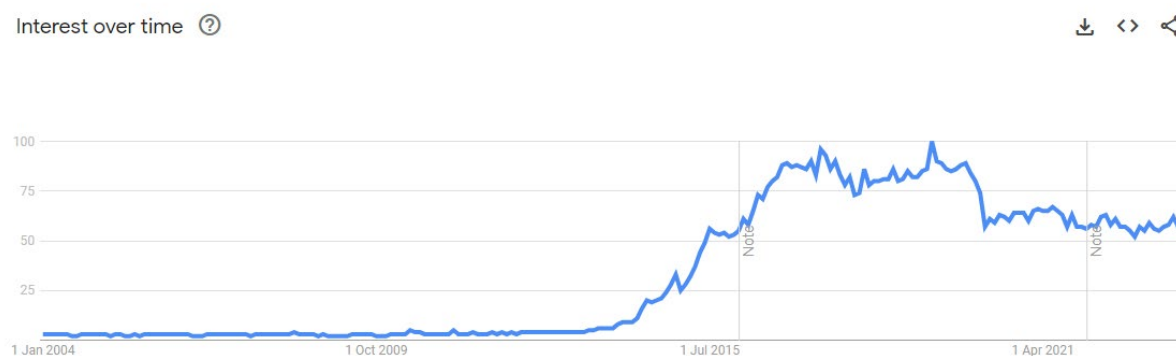
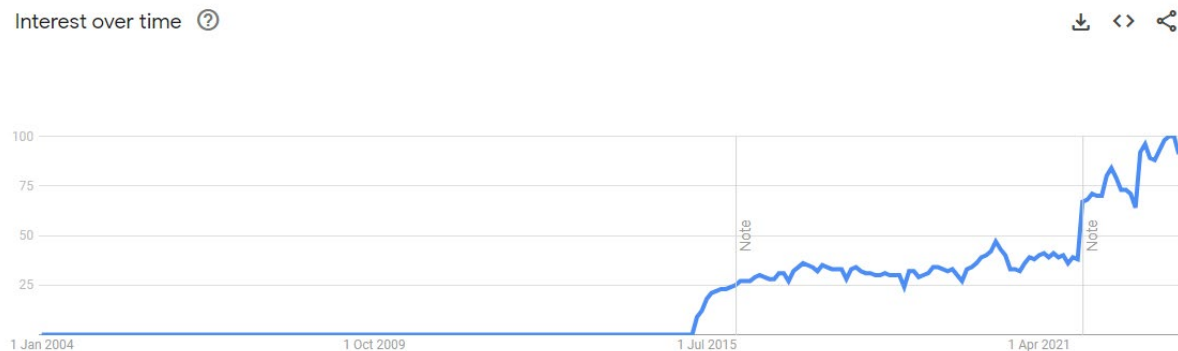


Figure 8 Google Trends Global Interest in the Term “Upwork”



The anticipated growth of the sharing economy market suggests that it will continue to play an important role for the global economy. Researchers and organisations alike have a strong focus on topics such as regulations and policy impacts (Koopman et al., 2014; Liu and Chen, 2020), trust and reputation systems (Ert et al., 2016; Ter Huurne et al., 2017; Tussyadiah, 2018; Kong et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2020; Akhmedova, 2021), environmental sustainability (Frenken, 2017; Skjelvik et al., 2017; Mi and Coffman, 2019), business models and innovation (Kumar et al., 2018; Ritter and Schanz, 2019), stakeholder motivations (Böcker and Meelen, 2017; Dreyer et al., 2017; Buhalis et al., 2020; Chandna, 2022).

Despite the large amount of research in the sharing economy over the past 5 to 10 years, there are still areas that are underexplored, such as its relationship with the ageing society. Older adults, or baby boomers, are believed to have more resources such as properties compared to younger age groups (National Association of Realtors, 2023) and more free time. They can be strong contributors to the sharing economy. Businesses built on sharing business models can benefit greatly by attracting the attention of older adults. By encouraging older adults to share their assets or skills, sharing platforms could provide more variety to consumers, keeping the business vibrant and sustainable.

Compared to the young generation, older adults are less targeted by businesses and may easily miss opportunities. This is also due to their self-perception (Jang et al., 2004). When they are concerned about their age, they may ignore new opportunities that can improve their

lives. Existing research on motivations to join the sharing economy as service providers focus on generic goals such as making money and meeting new people (Hamari et al., 2016; Zhu et al., 2017; Graessley et al., 2019). However, little is known about the deeper goals that motivate people to choose to make money or meet new people through the sharing economy. This research aims to explore the deeper motivations for people to share their assets or resources on sharing platforms using the socioemotional selectivity theory. Additionally, we want to understand if marketing communications delivered by service platforms or service providers make a difference on people's motivation to participate.

We aim to explore the connections between the sharing economy and the ageing population by evaluating the following two research questions:

- RQ1: To what degree are older adults motivated by future-oriented/present-oriented goals to join the sharing economy as service providers?
- RQ2: To what degree are individuals motivated by marketing communication from the sharing platform and from the service provider?

We examine these questions through two online experiments. The first experiment is set in the context of home sharing, while the second experiment is set in the context of online freelancing and skill-sharing. The randomisation of the experiments (Baddeley, 1966; Papineau, 1994) allows us to evaluate the causal relationship between the studied factors.

Our study contributes to several different streams of literature. Firstly, we tested the socioemotional selectivity theory (SST) within the sharing economy and micro-entrepreneurship. The result suggests that SST may not work in this context, suggesting a potential misalignment; SST, established three decades ago (Carstensen, 1995), may not be as influential in the contemporary digital context. Secondly, although our study did not yield significant results to support our hypotheses, we still provide insights into the ongoing

discourse on the participation in the sharing economy. Each non-significant result serves as a stepping stone for future research, inviting researchers to explore and delve deeper.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Sharing economy and micro-entrepreneurship

It is a challenge to clearly define the term ‘the sharing economy’ as it has been used in different ways in practice over the years (Schor, 2014; Martin, 2016). Initially, before services such as bike sharing became popular, the term ‘sharing economy’ was widely used for peer-to-peer consumption services where digital platforms do not own the products being shared. Many researchers have conducted studies within the sharing economy and its alternative framings without emphasising a strict definition, similar to this paper’s approach.

However, there is a clear difference between entrepreneurship in the sharing economy and micro-entrepreneurship in the sharing economy. Ahsan (2018) argues that the concept of entrepreneurship is often misused in the sharing economy when it refers to different forms of employment status. In the context of this paper, entrepreneurship within the sharing economy refers to starting an organisation using the sharing business model, acting as the ‘digital middleman’. On the other hand, micro-entrepreneurship refers to being a service provider in the sharing economy. This paper focuses on the relationship between service providers and digital sharing platforms.

Sundararajan (2014) and Martin (2016) indicated that individuals who work as providers in the sharing economy can be categorised as microentrepreneurs. According to Vial and Hanoteau (2015), a microentrepreneur is a self-employed individual or a company with less than five employees within their operations. What motivate people to become a microentrepreneur includes self-realisation, economic independence, emotional needs and working without hierarchies (Bögenhold and Klinglmair, 2015; Paoloni and Dumay, 2015). In

their study conducted in 2019, Zhang and his team identified eight driving forces including societal interaction, economic incentives, cultural influences, operational simplicity, accessibility of assets, autonomy, versatility, and optimism towards forthcoming prospects, that propel microentrepreneurs in the home-sharing sector. Furthermore, they highlighted five favourable outcomes including economic benefits, fostering social relationships, immersion in cultural education, individual development, and a sense of accomplishment, and the challenges they face, including potential dangers, diminished privacy, and emotional strain from guest feedback.

2.2. Socioemotional selectivity theory

Activity theory (Havighurst, 1961) demonstrated that remaining active and engaging in social relationships are vital to contentment in later life. However, this theory cannot explain the phenomenon of withdrawing from social activities and reducing social contacts in old age. Disengagement theory suggests that older individuals are conscious of their remaining time in life, leading to increased self-awareness and withdrawal from society (Cumming and Henry, 1961). This social inactivity is considered a normal adaptive process (Cumming and Henry, 1961). Carstensen (1995) argued that disengagement theory neglected the fact that withdrawal does not only begin in later life. Older people seem to regulate their emotions well, and social inactivity is a developmental process (Carstensen, 1995).

Drawing from both activity theory and disengagement theory, and evidence from a developmental phenomenon, Carstensen et al. (1993, 1995, 1999) suggest that people's goals change throughout their life as they perceive time differently depending on their age. As people grow older, their focus on preparing for their future (obtaining new knowledge, meeting new people, etc.) gradually shifts to emotionally meaningful activities such as maintaining relationships with family and close friends. Figure 9 shows three social motives across lifespan (Carstensen et al, 1995).

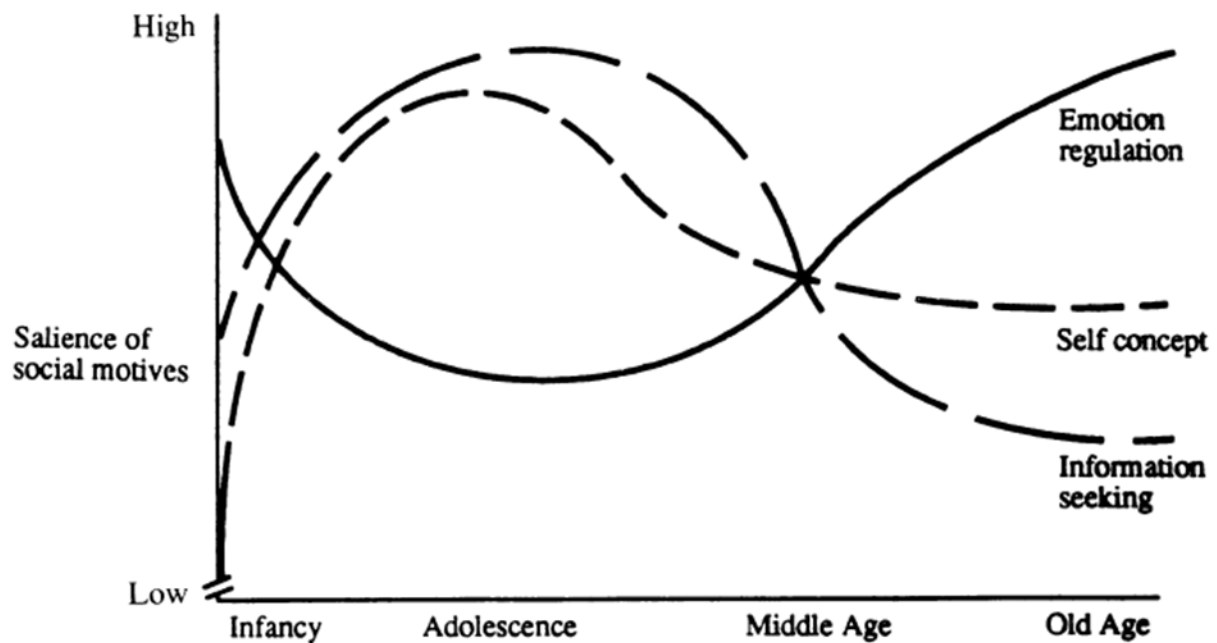


Figure 9 Idealised model of socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al., 1995)

Socioemotional selectivity theory has been applied to research in various fields, including psychogerontology, communication studies and business studies. In research on multimodal connectedness, technology adoption and wellbeing, Chan (2014) found that younger people's wellbeing decreased as they acquired more communication technologies and weak-tie relationships. In contrast, older people were more satisfied adopting multiple communication technologies and engaging in strong-tie relationships, which Chan (2014) argues can be explained by socioemotional selectivity theory.

Wright et al. (2010) argue that older people and those with severe illnesses are not in favour of weak-tie health-related and computer-mediated support networks, although younger and healthier people prefer weak-tie support networks. The associations are aligned with socioemotional selectivity theory. According to Leen and Lang (2013), older adults show a stronger interest in intrinsic and self-determined learning in computer-based learning, while young adults' motives to learn are more competition-related. This association between

computer-based learning motivations and age sheds light on socioemotional selectivity theory (Leen and Lang, 2013).

In online dating, age is a key predictor of turning online dating offline (Hallam et al., 2019). Hallam et al. (2019) showed that the inclination to move from online to offline dating as people age resonated with socioemotional selectivity theory, as adults long for finding a life partner. In Perry et al.'s (2015) study of family business and the exploratory application of socioemotional selectivity theory, they found that trust in family members or professional advisors depended on the family business's emphasis on financial or socioemotional wealth, with this focus related to the age of the business. Perry (2015) believes that socioemotional selectivity theory has much to provide in business studies.

Looking at these studies from different fields, it appears that socioemotional selectivity theory is suitable for studies that place an emphasis on age. Most studies in the sharing economy have adopted theories that are too general, such as socio-technical theory, technology acceptance model (TAM), and social identity theory. These theories do not provide plausible age-specific explanations for this research.

According to Kumar et al. (2017), people who are involved in the sharing economy are mostly Generation X and Generation Y; other generations are still in the early stages of adopting sharing economy services. Kumar et al. (2017) provided four attributes of baby boomers: "value-driven, open to adopt technology, active retirement and seek expert advice". However, socioemotional selectivity theory seems ambiguous regarding the two attributes of being "open to adopting technology" and "seeking expert advice". The theory suggests that individuals' motivation of information seeking decreases as they age. On the other hand, it can be argued that the two attributes are in accordance with emotional regulation. Therefore, it is critical to examine older adults' perceptions and motivations in the context of sharing platform adoption.

Drawing on socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen, 1995), this study divides goals/motivations into two different aspects: present-oriented goals/motivations, which emphasises on immediate satisfaction; and future-focused goals/motivations, which relate to long-term outcomes and benefits (Ziaei and Fischer, 2016).

2.3. Marketing communications in the sharing economy

Key (2017) suggests that branded mobile applications help users overcome common barriers - trust, utility, and user experience - to joining the sharing economy. In contrast, Costello and Reczek (2020) found that adopting a provider-focused marketing communication strategy leads consumers to feel empathetic about helping a peer, making them more likely to purchase compared to receiving marketing communications from the platforms. This effect is specific to businesses using a sharing model. The two studies present somewhat contradictory findings. We believe that testing these ideas on older adults could provide useful insights into how to effectively attract them to provide in the sharing economy.

Furthermore, Kumar et al. (2018) noted significant variations in marketing communication effectiveness depending on the generation being targeted, especially within the context of the sharing economy. For example, there are distinct responses to traditional marketing communication channels across different age groups.

As shown in Table 10, several studies have explored different aspects of marketing communications in the sharing economy:

Table 10 Studies of marketing communications in the sharing economy

Studies	Marketing communication	Description	Outcomes	Key findings
Costello and Reczek (2020)	(Providers vs. Platforms)	Provider-focused: Marketing communications from the perspectives of the service provider	Compared to platform-focused marketing communications, provider-focused marketing communications	Provider-focused marketing communications increases consumers' buying intention due to adopting

		Platform-focused: Marketing communications from the perspectives of the platform	are more effective in increasing consumers' willingness to purchase	an 'empathy lens' from the provider's perspective • This only applies to the sharing economy business model
Polanco-Diges and Debasa (2020)	UGC and e-WoM	UGC: User generated content e-WoM: e-WordOfMouth	Identified useful sources for companies	• UGC and e-WoM are useful in the marketing of the sharing economy
Roblek et al. (2016)	Viral marketing (portals, blogs, chat rooms, etc.) Word of mouth	UGC: User generated content	Identified important marketing strategies for the sharing economy in tourism	• Viral marketing and word-of-mouth-marketing are effective marketing strategies for the sharing economy in tourism
Singh (2022)	Value-based Social issues	Value-based: cost-effective and short-term access Social issues: environment conservation and resource efficiency	Suggested four focuses for promoting the sharing economy	• Convey behavioural influencing messages • Highlight alternative solutions by companies • Alleviate concerns related to safety, privacy, security and hygiene • Highlight benefits such as environmental impact and cost savings
Current study	(Future-oriented vs. Present-oriented; Platform-focused vs.	Future-oriented: A goal orientation that is focused on the future (long-	We expect that young people prefer the marketing communications from future-	• First study to test provider-focused and platform-focused marketing

	Provider-focused)	term outcomes and benefits) Present-oriented: A goal orientation that is focused on the present (immediate rewards and satisfaction) Platform-focused: marketing communication from the service platform Provider-focused: marketing communication from the service provider	oriented perspective, while the older generation will prefer marketing communications from a present-oriented perspective We also expect that both groups prefer receiving marketing communications from service providers	communications on service provider's intention to provide in the sharing economy • First study to test socioemotional selectivity theory in the context of the sharing economy
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Several implications can be drawn from the findings. As indicated in Costello and Reczek (2020)'s study, marketing communications adopting an 'empathy lens' is effective in increasing consumers' buying intentions. This suggests that marketing strategies can emphasise personal stories and benefits to build a connection with potential consumers. The importance of user generated content (UGC) and e-WoM in the sharing economy needs to be addressed (Polanco-Diges and Debasa, 2020). These strategies can build trust and credibility among potential users. Kumar et al. (2018) and Singh (2022) suggest that marketing communications should be tailored to the preferences of different generations.

2.4. Digital skill sharing in the sharing economy

Platforms such as Fiverr and Upwork operate under a sharing business model (Markman et al., 2021). These digital skills sharing platforms not only provide immense opportunities for gig workers and freelancers but also offer convenience to consumers who are seeking specialised services. Gig workers on these platforms are motivated by drivers including flexibility, financial benefits, insecurity from employment (Tripathi et al., 2022; Salleh et al., 2023). This is understandable since these digital platforms offer gig workers freedom to choose projects and working hours. While the platforms take a percentage of the income as a platform service fee, gig workers and freelancers can still earn a reasonable amount of money. Gig work or freelancing provides an alternative for people facing job insecurities (Green et al., 2018).

Similar to other sharing economy platforms like Uber and Airbnb, the digital skill sharing platform place an importance on trust and reputation systems (Popescu and Ciurlău, 2019; Benson et al., 2020). These platforms also incorporate rating systems and secure payment methods to build credibility and ensure quality (Xie and Lui, 2016).

While most academic research in the sharing economy focus on businesses that involve physical products, we advocate that it is equally important to study digital skill sharing platforms where products or services are shared virtually. Thus, we aim to extend our initial study to the context of skill sharing. The focus will be to explore the effects of time orientation and different marketing communications approaches.

3. Hypotheses and Overview of the Studies

We present two studies aimed at evaluating the influence of time orientation goals and advertisement focus on the intention to participate in the sharing economy as a service provider, and the entrepreneurial intention across two separate age groups. Study 1 is contextualised within home sharing. We experimentally manipulated time orientation goals, differentiating between future-oriented and present-oriented perspectives, and ad focus, distinguishing between platform-focus and provider-focus approaches. Study 2 integrates these variables –

time orientation goals and ad focus – and applies the experimental framework to the context of skill sharing.

The following hypotheses are developed based on the theoretical framework of Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (SST) and prior research on marketing communications in the sharing economy. Socioemotional Selectivity Theory suggests that as individuals age, their focus shifts towards present-oriented goals from future-oriented goals (Carstensen, 1995). This shift suggests that older adults are more likely to respond positively to present-oriented messages that address immediate emotional satisfaction and meaningful experiences. On the contrary, according to SST, younger people tend to focus on future-oriented goals that are driven by potential future outcomes and achievements (Carstensen et al., 1999). Therefore, we expect that younger people will respond more positively to future-oriented messages that address long-term achievements.

Hypothesis 1: Time Orientation Goals

Intentions to Participate in the Sharing Economy as a Service Provider

H1a: Older participants exposed to present-oriented messages will show higher intentions to participate in the sharing economy as a service provider compared to those exposed to future-oriented messages.

H1b: Younger participants exposed to future-oriented messages will show higher intentions to participate in the sharing economy as a service provider compared to those exposed to present-oriented messages.

Entrepreneurial Intentions

SST suggests that older adults prioritise present-oriented goals. Hence, present-oriented messages are likely to increase their entrepreneurial intentions and behavioural intentions by aligning with their focus. Younger adults are more future-oriented and motivated by goals that

promise long-term benefits. Therefore, future-oriented messages are expected to increase entrepreneurial intentions and behavioural intentions in younger adults.

H1c: Older participants will show higher entrepreneurial intentions in the sharing economy when exposed to present-oriented messages compared to future-oriented messages.

H1d: Younger participants will show higher entrepreneurial intentions in the sharing economy when exposed to future-oriented messages compared to present-oriented messages.

Behavioural Intentions

H1e: Older participants will show higher behavioural intentions in the sharing economy when exposed to present-oriented messages compared to future-oriented messages.

H1f: Younger participants will show higher behavioural intentions in the sharing economy when exposed to future-oriented messages compared to present-oriented messages.

Hypothesis 2: Ad focus

Previous research has shown that provider-focused marketing communications can increase consumers' willingness to engage by fostering empathy and personal connection (Costello and Reczek, 2020). This effect is expected to be consistent across different age groups. This should also extend to entrepreneurial intentions and behavioural intentions.

Intentions to Participate in the Sharing Economy as a Service Provider

Hypothesis 2a: Advertisements focused on service providers will be more effective in increasing intentions to become a service provider in the sharing economy compared to platform-focused advertisements across all age groups.

Entrepreneurial Intentions

Hypothesis 2b: Advertisements focused on service providers will increase entrepreneurial intentions in the sharing economy compared to platform-focused advertisements across all age groups.

Behavioural Intentions

Hypothesis 2c: Advertisements focused on service providers will increase behavioural intentions in the sharing economy compared to platform-focused advertisements across all age groups.

Hypothesis 3: Interaction Effects

The interaction between time orientation, advertisement focus, and age group is expected to affect intention to provide in the sharing economy, entrepreneurial intentions and behavioural intentions.

Hypothesis 3a: There will be an interaction effect between time orientation, advertisement focus and age group on intentions to become a service provider in the sharing economy.

Hypothesis 3b: There will be an interaction effect between time orientation, advertisement focus and age group on entrepreneurial intentions in the sharing economy.

Hypothesis 3c: There will be an interaction effect between time orientation, advertisement focus and age group on behavioural intentions in the sharing economy.

These hypotheses are grounded in Socioemotional Selectivity Theory and previous research on marketing communications within the sharing economy.

4. STUDY 1: TIME ORIENTATION AND AD FOCUS IN HOMESHARING

4.1.Method

Participants

We recruited 600 participants (300 of them are aged 18~49 and 300 of them are aged above 50) on Prolific. Participants received £1.5 when they finished the task.

Experimental Design

In this study, we conducted a 2 x 2 x 2 between-subject experimental design. We followed Harris (2008)'s guideline closely to design the experiment. Participants were randomly assigned to distinct categories, segmented by age (young vs. old) and subsequently exposed to one of the four specific conditions differentiated by goal orientation (either future-oriented or present-oriented) and advertisement focus (either hosts-focused or platform-focused).

Procedure

Participants are randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (future-oriented or present-oriented; hosts vs. platform). Participants were told to read the email and imagine that they own a house with a spare room, then answer a series of questions.

Stimuli

While participants in all conditions were exposed to advertisements conveying identical information about the sharing platform and the associated benefits of participation. However, the framing of the information varied between groups. The messages were developed from Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (Carstensen, 1992), previously used messages to test the impact of future-oriented and present-oriented frames (Carstensen, 2003; Zhang et al., 2009; Erickson et al., 2017), and information from sharing platform websites such as Airbnb.com. Photos are from the stock photography and footage website-Pexels.

For a detailed overview of the variations in marketing communication employed across different conditions, see appendix.

Pilot tests

a) check future-oriented and present-oriented framed messages

30 participants recruited from Prolific were shown the marketing communication messages (future-oriented condition and present-oriented condition). They were asked to

choose if the messages reflect future-oriented appeal or present-oriented appeal. The results (see Appendix) show that all messages can reflect their intended appeals.

b) check the questionnaire

We recruited 50 participants to test the questionnaire. The pilot test is useful for improving the measurement scales, check and enhance the quality of the questions. After making the required modifications, we proceeded with the main experiment-based study.

Measures

1. Intention to become a host on SharingX: three items made up the scale assessing intention to become a host on SharingX. Participants rated each item on a seven-point scale. The items were adapted from Ajzen (1991).

2. Entrepreneurial intention: the entrepreneurial intention consisted of three items using a modified version of the scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009).

3. Behavioural milestone: we adopted ‘Learn more about the SharingX’ as a behavioural milestone to examine participants’ behavioural intention (Schanke et al., 2021).

Participants also reported demographic information, including gender, ethnicity, annual income and frequency of using and providing in the sharing economy.

4.2. Results

Intention to Become a Host

A three-way ANOVA was performed to examine the effects of time orientation (future vs. present), ad focus (platform vs. hosts), and age groups (18-49 vs. 50+) on intentions to become a host. The descriptive statistics for intention to become a host across different levels of the independent variables are presented in Table 11.

Table 11 Descriptive statistics of intention to become a host

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
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Future	platform	18-49	3.63	1.64	74
		50+	3.23	1.77	94
		Total	3.41	1.72	168
	hosts	18-49	3.99	1.83	72
		50+	2.98	1.64	64
		Total	3.51	1.80	136
	Total	18-49	3.81	1.74	146
		50+	3.13	1.72	158
		Total	3.46	1.76	304
Present	platform	18-49	3.94	1.59	79
		50+	3.08	1.63	62
		Total	3.56	1.66	141
	hosts	18-49	3.85	1.85	71
		50+	2.86	1.67	77
		Total	3.34	1.82	148
	Total	18-49	3.90	1.71	150
		50+	2.96	1.65	139
		Total	3.45	1.74	289
Total	platform	18-49	3.79	1.61	153
		50+	3.17	1.71	156
		Total	3.48	1.69	309
	hosts	18-49	3.92	1.83	143
		50+	2.91	1.65	141
		Total	3.42	1.81	284
	Total	18-49	3.86	1.72	296
		50+	3.05	1.69	297
		Total	3.45	1.75	593

The 2x2x2 ANOVA results are summarised in Table 12. The results indicated a significant main effect of age group on the intention to become a host, $F(1, 585) = 33.360, p < .001$. Younger participants (18-49) reported higher intentions to become hosts ($M = 3.86$) compared to the 50+ age group ($M = 3.05$). However, time orientation and ad focus did not significantly affect hosting intentions, $F(1, 585) = 0.030, p = .864$ and $F(1, 585) = .134, p = .715$, respectively. Additionally, no significant interaction effects were observed among time orientation, ad focus, and age group ($p > .05$ for all interactions) (Goodman, 2008). In sum, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 12 ANOVA Results: Intention to become a host as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	108.130 ^a	7	15.447	5.277	<.001
Intercept	6958.843	1	6958.843	2377.111	<.001
Time Orientation	.087	1	.087	.030	.864
Ad Focus	.392	1	.392	.134	.715
Age Group	97.660	1	97.660	33.360	<.001
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	1.482	1	1.482	.506	.477
Time Orientation * Age Group	1.879	1	1.879	.642	.423
Ad Focus * Age Group	4.852	1	4.852	1.657	.198
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	2.101	1	2.101	.718	.397
Error	1712.550	585	2.927		
Total	8905.222	593			
Corrected Total	1820.680	592			
a. R Squared = .059 (Adjusted R Squared = .048)					

Figures 10 and 11 present the estimated marginal means of intention to become a host across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 10 Estimated Marginal Means of Intention to become a host at platform-focused ad

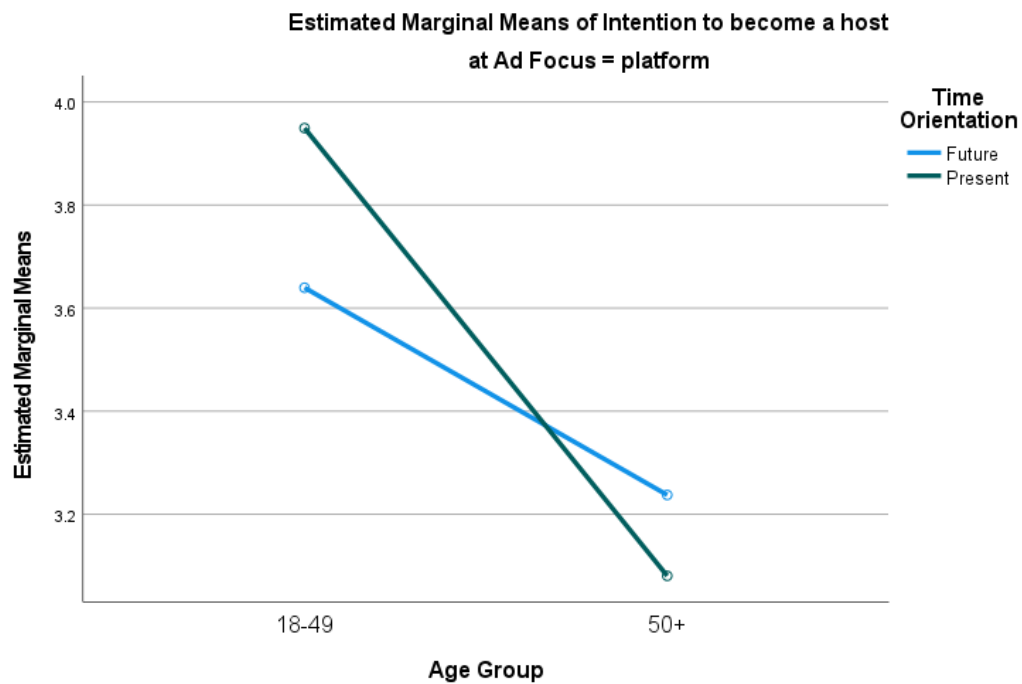
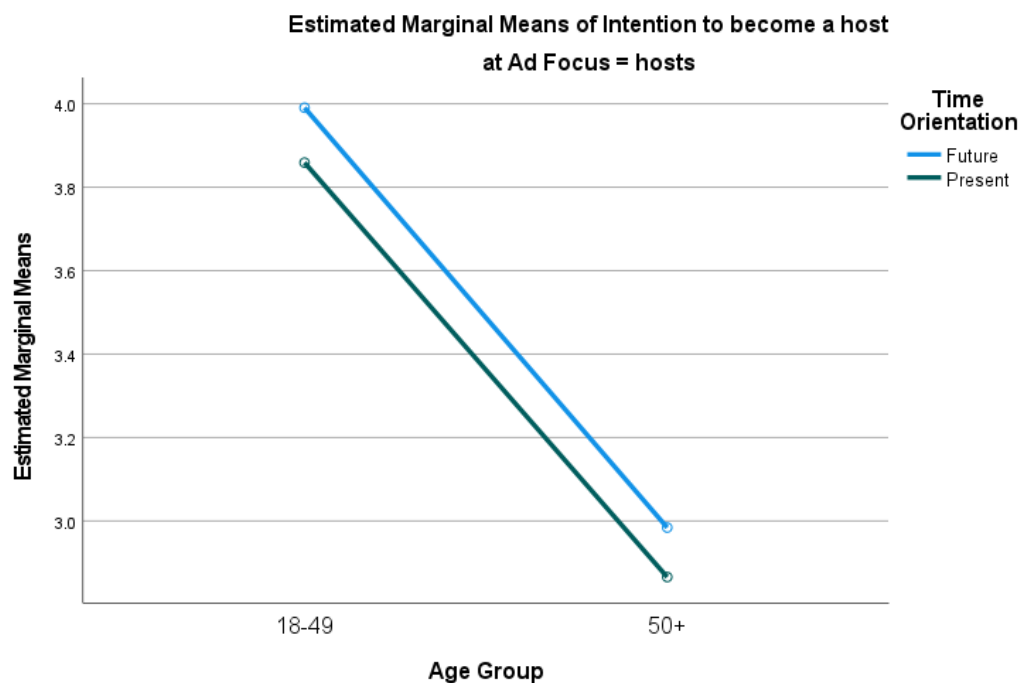


Figure 11 Estimated Marginal Means of Intention to become a host at provider-focused ad



Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)

The descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial intention across different levels of the independent variables are presented in Table 13.

Table 13 Descriptive statistics of Entrepreneurial Intention

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Future	platform	18-49	3.50	1.536	74
		50+	3.10	1.793	94
		Total	3.27	1.691	168
	hosts	18-49	3.72	1.739	72
		50+	2.79	1.590	64
		Total	3.28	1.727	136
	Total	18-49	3.61	1.637	146
		50+	2.97	1.715	158
		Total	3.28	1.705	304
Present	platform	18-49	3.57	1.626	79
		50+	2.89	1.691	62
		Total	3.27	1.683	141
	hosts	18-49	3.63	1.805	71
		50+	2.80	1.689	77
		Total	3.20	1.788	148
	Total	18-49	3.60	1.708	150
		50+	2.84	1.684	139
		Total	3.23	1.735	289
Total	platform	18-49	3.53	1.579	153
		50+	3.02	1.750	156
		Total	3.27	1.685	309
	hosts	18-49	3.67	1.766	143
		50+	2.80	1.639	141
		Total	3.24	1.757	284
	Total	18-49	3.60	1.671	296
		50+	2.91	1.699	297
		Total	3.26	1.718	593

The 2x2x2 ANOVA showed no significant main effect of time orientation on Entrepreneurial Intention, $F(1, 585) = .149, p = .699$. Similarly, ad focus did not significantly influence Entrepreneurial Intention, $F(1, 585) = .041, p = .839$. The age group had significant effect on Entrepreneurial Intention, $F(1, 585) = 25.487, p < .001$. Younger participants (18-49) reported higher entrepreneurial intention ($M = 3.60$) compared to the 50+ age group ($M = 2.91$). The interaction effects among these factors were non-significant (all $p > .05$). Thus, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 14 ANOVA Results: Entrepreneurial Intention as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	77.283 ^a	7	11.040	3.866	<.001
Intercept	6168.288	1	6168.288	2160.124	<.001
Time Orientation	.427	1	.427	.149	.699
Ad Focus	.117	1	.117	.041	.839
Age Group	72.778	1	72.778	25.487	<.001
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	.030	1	.030	.011	.918
Time Orientation * Age Group	.293	1	.293	.102	.749
Ad Focus * Age Group	4.285	1	4.285	1.500	.221
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	1.280	1	1.280	.448	.503
Error	1670.482	585	2.856		
Total	8033.556	593			
Corrected Total	1747.765	592			
a. R Squared = .044 (Adjusted R Squared = .033)					

Figures 12 and 13 present the estimated marginal means of entrepreneurial intention across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 12 Estimated Marginal Means of Entrepreneurial Intention at platform-focused ad

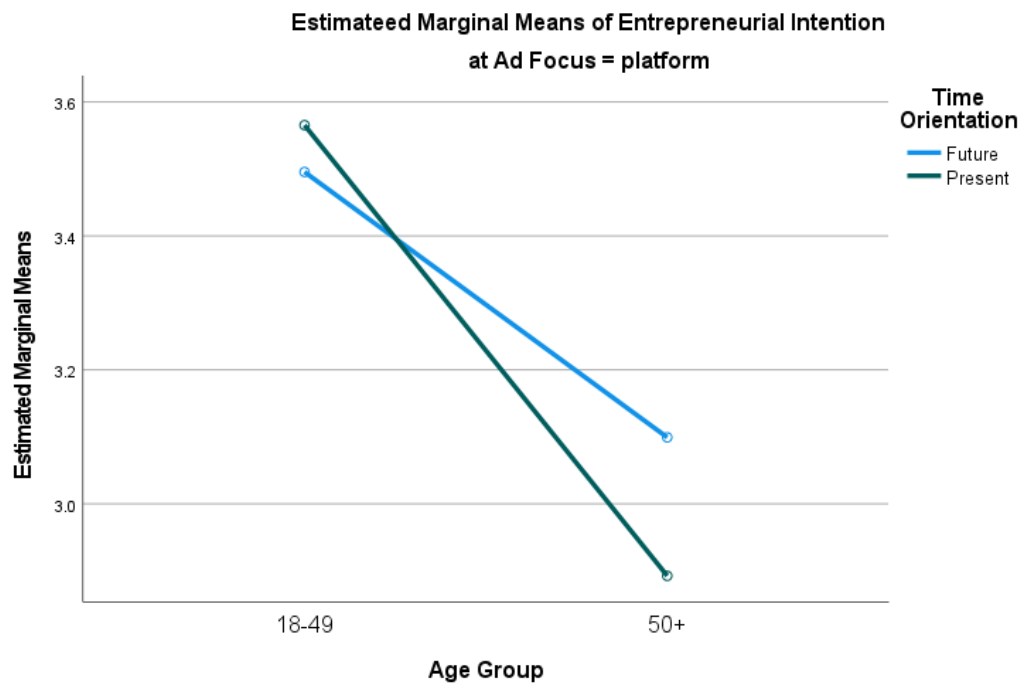
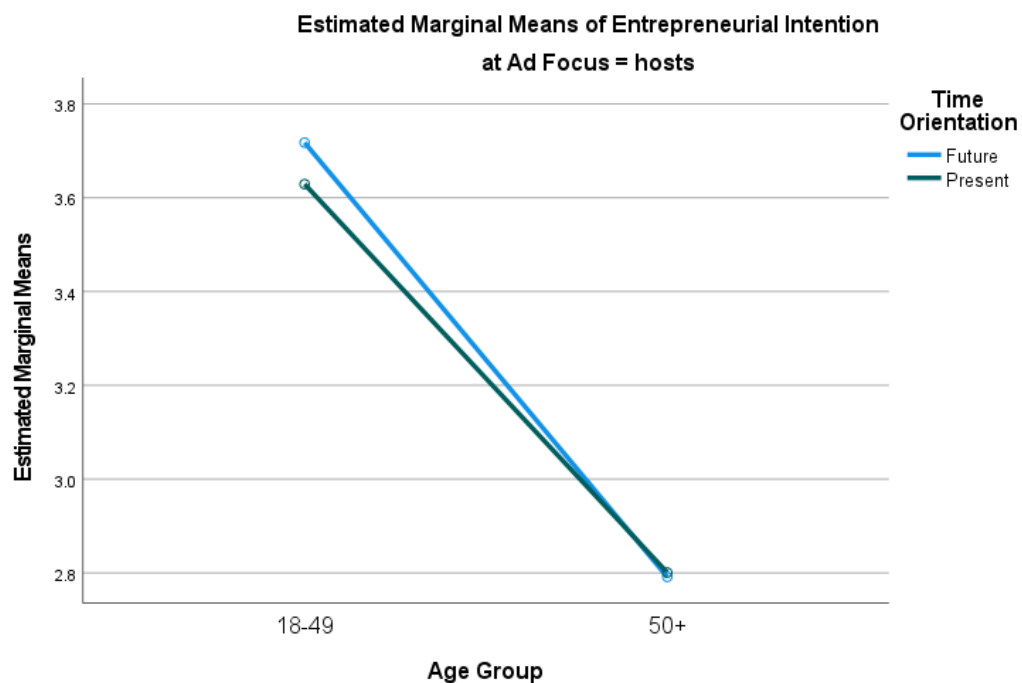


Figure 13 Estimated Marginal Means of Entrepreneurial Intention at provider-focused ad



Behavioural Intention (Find Out More)

The behavioural intention, measured as the intention to "Find Out More" about SharingX, was assessed among participants across different segments of time orientation (future vs. present), ad focus (freelancer vs. platform), and age groups (18-49 vs. 50+). The descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial intention across different levels of the independent variables are presented in Table 15.

Table 15 Descriptive statistics of Behavioural Intention (Find Out More)

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Future	platform	18-49	5.07	1.731	74
		50+	4.65	2.072	94
		Total	4.83	1.935	168
	hosts	18-49	5.24	1.772	72
		50+	4.50	2.337	64
		Total	4.89	2.082	136
	Total	18-49	5.15	1.747	146
		50+	4.59	2.177	158
		Total	4.86	1.999	304
Present	platform	18-49	5.20	1.742	79
		50+	4.34	1.983	62
		Total	4.82	1.895	141
	hosts	18-49	5.03	1.789	71
		50+	4.04	2.099	77
		Total	4.51	2.012	148
	Total	18-49	5.12	1.761	150
		50+	4.17	2.046	139
		Total	4.66	1.958	289
Total	platform	18-49	5.14	1.732	153
		50+	4.53	2.037	156
		Total	4.83	1.914	309
	hosts	18-49	5.13	1.777	143
		50+	4.25	2.214	141
		Total	4.69	2.051	284
	Total	18-49	5.14	1.751	296
		50+	4.39	2.124	297
		Total	4.76	1.980	593

The three-way ANOVA results are summarised in Table 16. The results indicated a significant main effect of age group on the intention to become a host, $F(1, 585) = 21.761$, $p < .001$. Younger participants (18-49) showed higher intentions to click find out more ($M = 5.14$) compared to the 50+ age group ($M = 4.39$). However, time orientation and ad focus did not significantly affect hosting intentions, $F(1, 585) = 1.714$, $p = .191$ and $F(1, 585) = .497$, $p = .481$, respectively. Additionally, no significant interaction effects were observed among time orientation, ad focus, and age group ($p > .05$ for all interactions). Again, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 16 ANOVA Results: Behavioural Intention (Find Out More) as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	100.411 ^a	7	14.344	3.779	<.001
Intercept	13226.620	1	13226.620	3484.551	<.001
Time Orientation	6.508	1	6.508	1.714	.191
Ad Focus	1.886	1	1.886	.497	.481
Age Group	82.600	1	82.600	21.761	<.001
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	2.226	1	2.226	.586	.444
Time Orientation * Age Group	4.452	1	4.452	1.173	.279
Ad Focus * Age Group	1.791	1	1.791	.472	.492
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	.337	1	.337	.089	.766
Error	2220.537	585	3.796		
Total	15779.000	593			
Corrected Total	2320.948	592			
a. R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .032)					

Figures 14 and 15 present the estimated marginal means of behavioural intention across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 14 Estimated Marginal Means of Behavioural Intention (Find Out More) at platform-focused ad

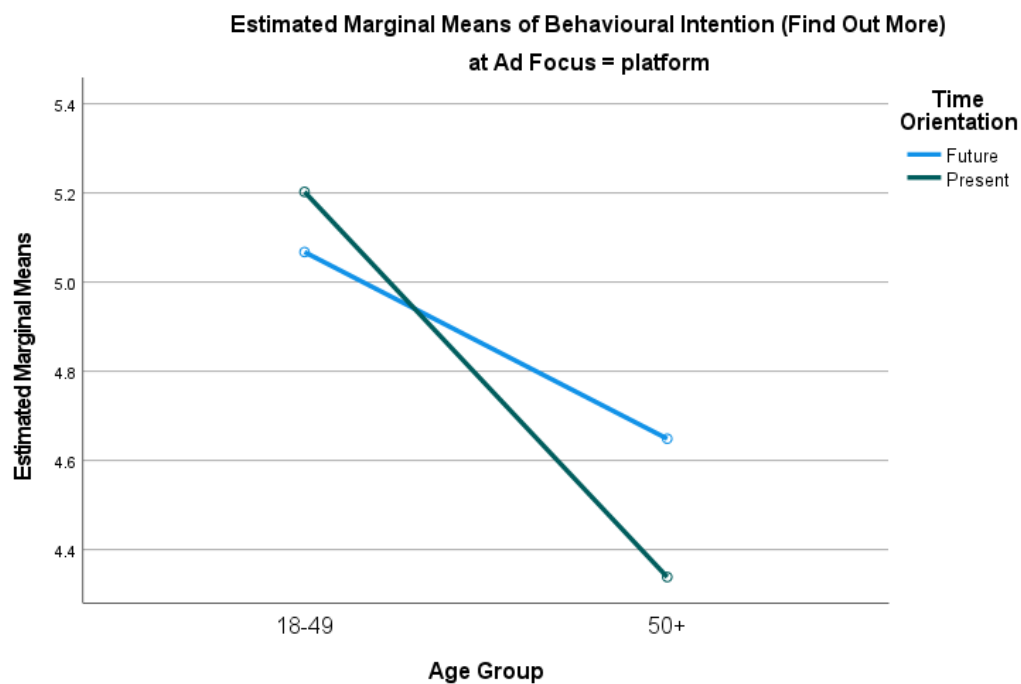
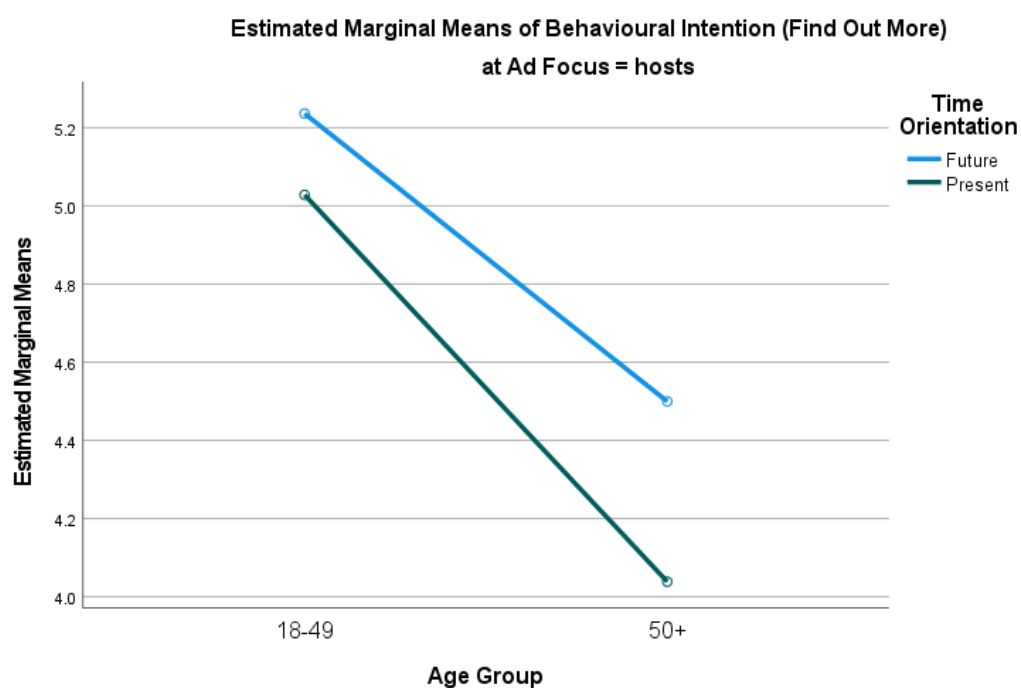


Figure 15 Estimated Marginal Means of Behavioural Intention (Find Out More) at provider-focused ad



5. STUDY 2: TIME ORIENTATION AND AD FOCUS IN SKILL SHARING

5.1.Method

Participants

Same as study 1, we recruited 600 participants (300 of them are aged 18~49 and 300 of them are aged above 50) on Prolific. Participants received £1.5 when they finished the task.

Experimental design

This serves as a replication of the initial study in a different context, with our objective being to assess the consistency of the results (Asdal and Moser, 2012). In this study, we conducted a 2 x 2 x 2 between-subject experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to distinct categories, segmented by age (young vs. old) and subsequently exposed to one of the four specific conditions differentiated by goal orientation (either future-oriented or present-oriented) and advertisement focus (either freelancer-focused or platform-focused).

Procedure

Participants are randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (future-oriented or present-oriented; freelancer vs. platform). Participants were told to read the material and imagine that they have a skill, then answer a series of questions.

Stimuli

While participants in all conditions were exposed to advertisements conveying identical information about the sharing platform and the associated benefits of participation. However, the framing of the information varied between groups. The messages were developed from Socioemotional Selectivity Theory (Carstensen, 1992), previously used messages to test the impact of future-oriented and present-oriented frames (Carstensen, 2003; Zhang et al., 2009; Erickson et al., 2017), and information from skills sharing platform websites such as Fiverr and Upwork. Photos are from the stock photography and footage websites-Pexels and Canva.

For a detailed overview of the variations in marketing communication employed across different conditions, see appendix.

Pilot tests

a) check future-oriented and present-oriented framed messages

30 participants recruited from Prolific were shown the marketing communication messages (future-oriented condition and present-oriented condition). They were asked to choose if the messages reflect future-oriented appeal or present-oriented appeal. The results (see Appendix) show that all messages can reflect their intended appeals.

b) check the questionnaire

Similar to study 1, we recruited 50 participants to test the questionnaire. The pilot test is useful for improving the measurement scales, check and enhance the quality of the questions. After making the required modifications, we proceeded with the main experiment-based study.

Measures

1. Intention to become a freelancer on SharingZ

Three items made up the scale assessing intention to become a freelancer on SharingZ. Participants rated each item on a seven-point scale. The items were adapted from Ajzen (1991).

2. Entrepreneurial intention

The entrepreneurial intention consisted of three items using a modified version of the scale developed by Liñán and Chen (2009).

3. Behavioural milestone

We adopted ‘Learn more about SharingZ’ as a behavioural milestone to examine participants’ behavioural intention (Schanke et al., 2021).

Participants also reported demographic information, including gender, ethnicity, annual income and frequency of using and providing in the sharing economy.

5.2.Results

Intention to become a freelancer

The intention to become a freelancer on SharingZ was evaluated among different segments defined by time orientation (future vs. present), ad focus (freelancer vs. platform), and age group (18-49 vs. 50+). The descriptive statistics for intention to become a freelancer across different levels of the independent variables are presented below, see Table 17.

Table 17 Descriptive statistics of intention to become a freelancer

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Future	platform	18-49	4.96	1.355	75
		50+	4.40	1.403	65
		Total	4.70	1.402	140
	freelancer	18-49	4.81	1.400	87
		50+	3.80	1.400	71
		Total	4.36	1.485	158
	Total	18-49	4.88	1.377	162
		50+	4.09	1.429	136
		Total	4.52	1.454	298
Present	platform	18-49	5.05	1.375	62
		50+	4.47	1.159	74
		Total	4.74	1.291	136
	freelancer	18-49	4.91	1.214	75
		50+	4.21	1.539	73
		Total	4.57	1.422	148
	Total	18-49	4.97	1.287	137
		50+	4.34	1.362	147
		Total	4.65	1.361	284
Total	platform	18-49	5.00	1.360	137
		50+	4.44	1.275	139
		Total	4.72	1.346	276
	freelancer	18-49	4.86	1.314	162
		50+	4.01	1.482	144
		Total	4.46	1.456	306
	Total	18-49	4.92	1.335	299
		50+	4.22	1.398	283
		Total	4.58	1.410	582

The 2x2x2 ANOVA results are summarised in Table 18. The results demonstrated a significant main effect of age group on the intention to become a freelancer, $F(1, 574) = 39.776$, $p < .001$. Younger participants (18-49) reported higher intentions to become freelancers ($M = 4.92$) compared to the 50+ age group ($M = 4.22$). A significant main effect of ad focus on the intention to become a freelancer was found, $F(1, 574) = 6.506$, $p = .011$, with those exposed to the platform condition reported higher intentions to become freelancers ($M = 4.72$) compared to those in the freelancer-focused condition ($M = 4.46$). But no significant effect of time orientation was reported, $F(1, 574) = 2.181$, $p = .140$. The interaction effects among all the variables were not significant (all $p > .05$). Thus, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 18 ANOVA Results: Intention to become a freelancer as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	93.874a	7	13.411	7.257	<.001
Intercept	12083.337	1	12083.337	6539.134	.000
Time Orientation	4.029	1	4.029	2.181	.140
Ad Focus	12.022	1	12.022	6.506	.011
Age Group	73.500	1	73.500	39.776	<.001
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	1.124	1	1.124	.608	.436
Time Orientation * Age Group	.818	1	.818	.443	.506
Ad Focus * Age Group	2.790	1	2.790	1.510	.220
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	1.060	1	1.060	.574	.449
Error	1060.666	574	1.848		
Total	13369.889	582			
Corrected Total	1154.539	581			
a. R Squared = .081 (Adjusted R Squared = .070)					

Figures 10 and 11 present the estimated marginal means of intention to become a freelancer across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 16 Estimated Marginal Means of Intention to become a freelancer at platform-focused ad

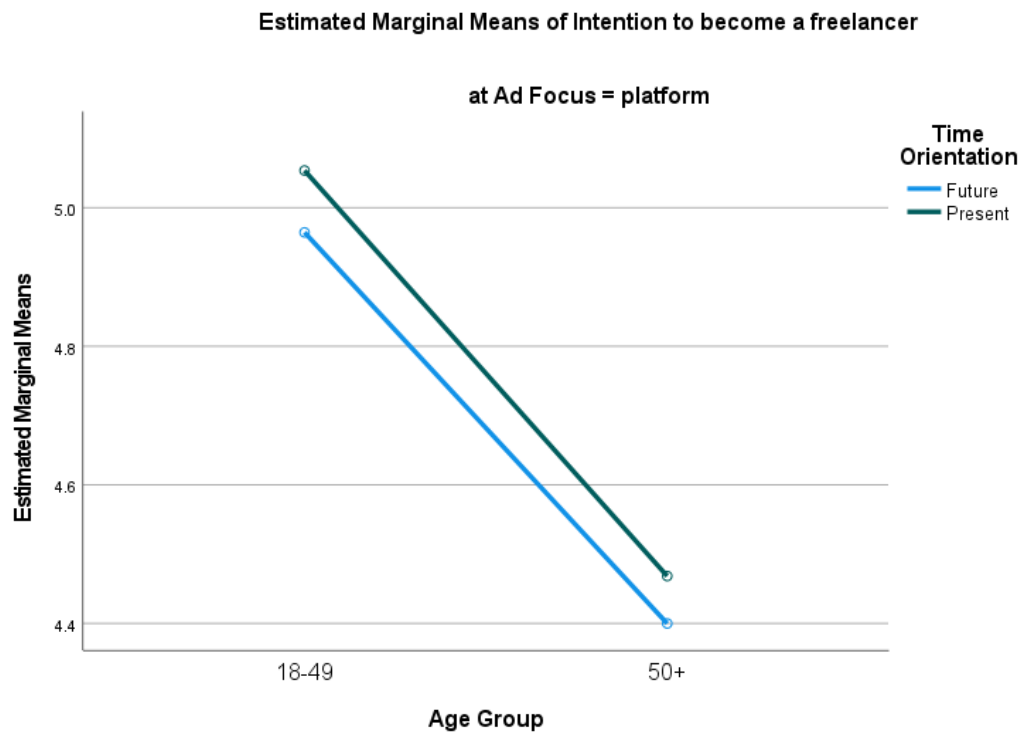
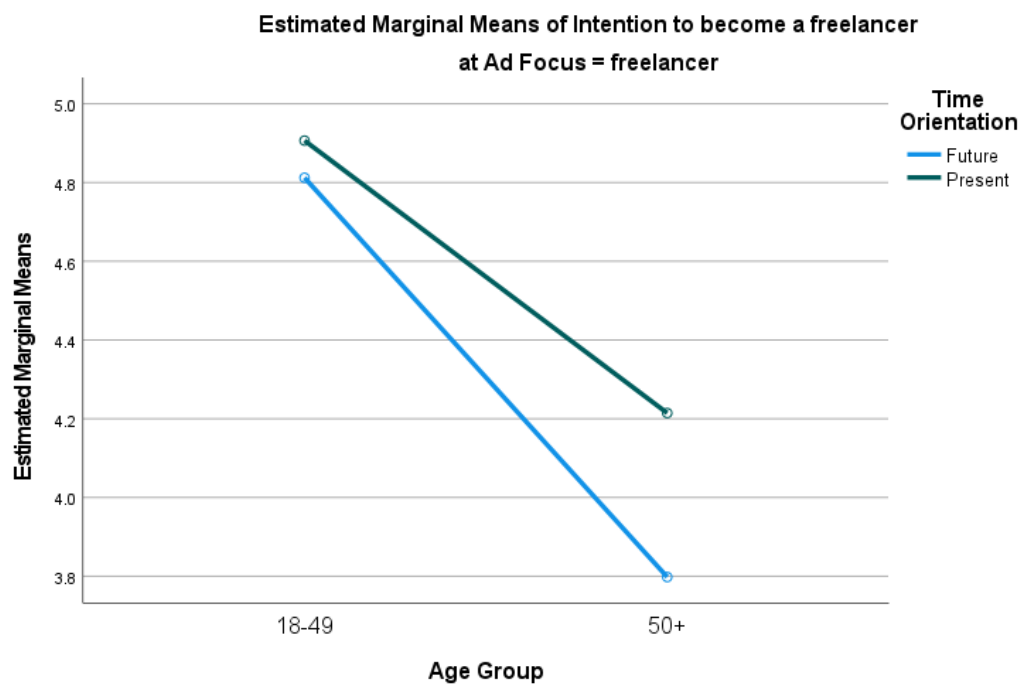


Figure 17 Estimated Marginal Means of Intention to become a freelancer at freelancer-focused ad



Entrepreneurial Intention (EI)

The descriptive statistics for entrepreneurial intention across different levels of the independent variables are presented below, see Table 19.

Table 19 Descriptive statistics of Entrepreneurial Intention

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Future	platform	18-49	4.22	1.598	75
		50+	3.85	1.386	65
		Total	4.05	1.510	140
	freelancer	18-49	4.21	1.651	87
		50+	3.35	1.453	71
		Total	3.82	1.619	158
	Total	18-49	4.22	1.622	162
		50+	3.59	1.438	136
		Total	3.93	1.570	298
Present	platform	18-49	4.42	1.617	62
		50+	3.97	1.266	74
		Total	4.18	1.449	136
	freelancer	18-49	4.34	1.260	75
		50+	3.84	1.620	73
		Total	4.09	1.466	148
	Total	18-49	4.38	1.428	137
		50+	3.91	1.449	147
		Total	4.13	1.456	284
Total	platform	18-49	4.31	1.604	137
		50+	3.91	1.320	139
		Total	4.11	1.479	276
	freelancer	18-49	4.27	1.480	162
		50+	3.60	1.554	144
		Total	3.96	1.550	306
	Total	18-49	4.29	1.535	299
		50+	3.75	1.450	283
		Total	4.03	1.517	582

A 2x2x2 ANOVA (See Table 20) was performed and revealed a significant main effect of age group on entrepreneurial intention, $F(1, 574) = 19.452, p < .001$. Younger participants (18-49) reported higher intentions to become freelancers ($M = 4.29$) compared to the 50+ age

group ($M = 3.75$). However, there were no significant effects of time orientation, $F(1, 574) = 3.612$, $p = .058$, or ad focus, $F(1, 574) = 2.078$, $p = .150$. All interaction effects among these variables were non-significant (all $p > .05$). Thus, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 20 ANOVA Results: Entrepreneurial Intention as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	60.593a	7	8.656	3.890	<.001
Intercept	9346.275	1	9346.275	4200.263	<.001
Time Orientation	8.037	1	8.037	3.612	.058
Ad Focus	4.624	1	4.624	2.078	.150
Age Group	43.284	1	43.284	19.452	<.001
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	.792	1	.792	.356	.551
Time Orientation * Age Group	.783	1	.783	.352	.553
Ad Focus * Age Group	2.694	1	2.694	1.211	.272
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	1.708	1	1.708	.768	.381
Error	1277.244	574	2.225		
Total	10786.333	582			
Corrected Total	1337.837	581			
a. R Squared = .045 (Adjusted R Squared = .034)					

Figures 18 and 19 present the estimated marginal means of entrepreneurial intention across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 18 Estimated Marginal Means of Entrepreneurial Intention at platform-focused ad

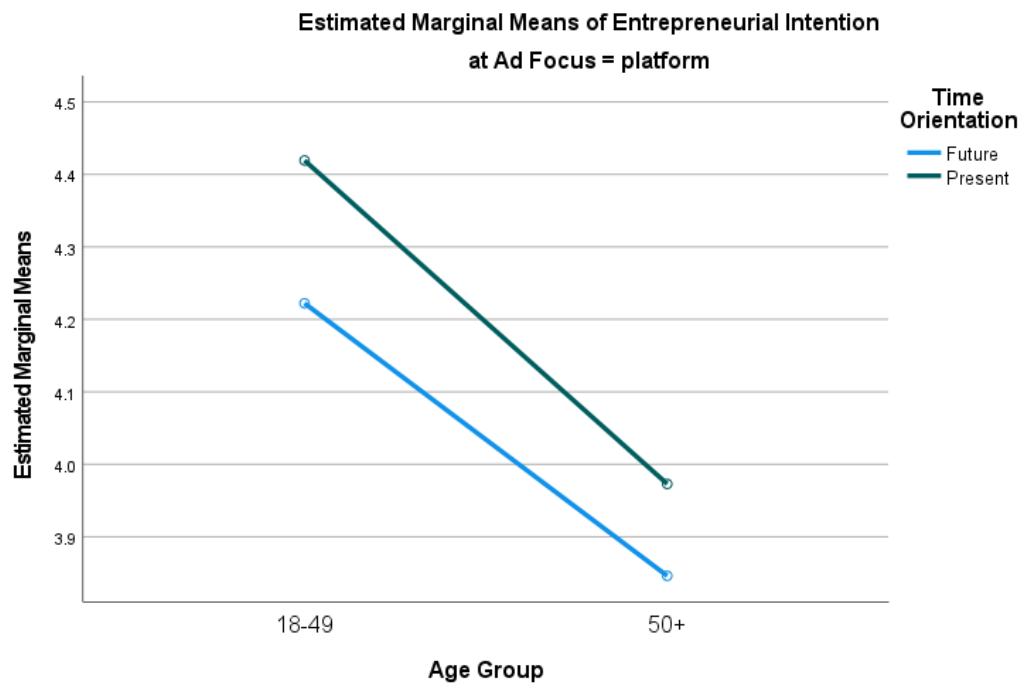
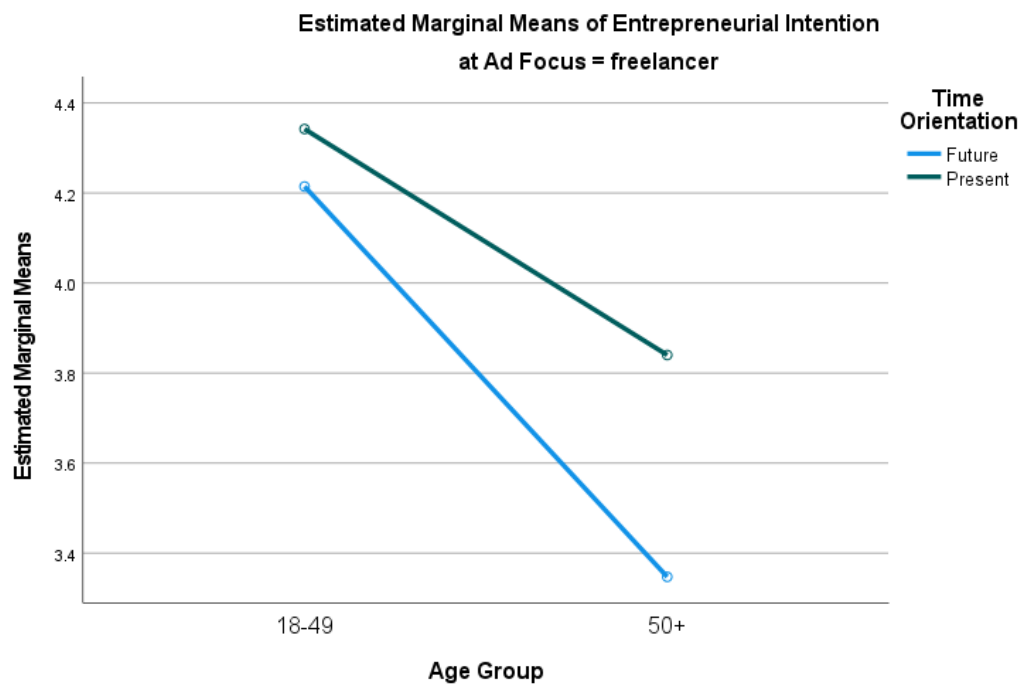


Figure 19 Estimated Marginal Means of Entrepreneurial Intention at freelancer-focused ad



Behavioural Intention (Learn More)

The behavioural intention, measured as the intention to "Learn More" about SharingZ, was assessed among participants across different segments of time orientation (future vs. present), ad focus (freelancer vs. platform), and age groups (18-49 vs. 50+). The descriptive statistics for behavioural intention (Learn More) across different levels of the independent variables are presented below, see Table 21.

Table 21 Descriptive Statistics of Behavioural Intention (Learn More)

Time Orientation	Ad Focus	Age Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Future	platform	18-49	5.93	1.298	75
		50+	6.02	1.179	65
		Total	5.97	1.240	140
	freelancer	18-49	5.94	1.165	87
		50+	5.32	1.722	71
		Total	5.66	1.470	158
	Total	18-49	5.94	1.224	162
		50+	5.65	1.522	136
		Total	5.81	1.373	298
Present	platform	18-49	6.10	1.097	62
		50+	5.81	1.449	74
		Total	5.94	1.304	136
	freelancer	18-49	6.09	1.068	75
		50+	5.63	1.448	73
		Total	5.86	1.287	148
	Total	18-49	6.09	1.077	137
		50+	5.72	1.447	147
		Total	5.90	1.293	284
Total	platform	18-49	6.01	1.210	137
		50+	5.91	1.329	139
		Total	5.96	1.270	276
	freelancer	18-49	6.01	1.120	162
		50+	5.48	1.591	144
		Total	5.76	1.386	306
	Total	18-49	6.01	1.160	299
		50+	5.69	1.481	283
		Total	5.85	1.334	582

The 2x2x2 ANOVA showed a significant main effect of age group on the intention to Learn More, $F(1, 574) = 8.550, p = .004$. Younger participants (18-49) reported higher intentions to become freelancers ($M = 6.01$) compared to the 50+ age group ($M = 5.69$). A marginally significant main effect of ad focus on the behavioural intention was found, $F(1, 574) = 3.882, p = .049$, which is close to the 0.05 threshold. Participants exposed to the platform condition reported higher behavioural intention ($M = 5.96$) compared to those in the freelancer-focused condition ($M = 5.76$). However, there were no significant effects for time orientation, $F(1, 574) = 0.895, p = .345$. All interaction effects among these variables were non-significant, all $p > .05$ except for the interaction between Ad Focus and Age Group, which was marginally significant, $F(1, 574) = 3.986, p = .046$, very close to 0.05. Again, Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 are not supported.

Table 22 ANOVA Results: Behavioural Intention (Learn More) as a Dependent Variable

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	34.542a	7	4.935	2.832	.007
Intercept	19776.035	1	19776.035	11350.942	.000
Time Orientation	1.558	1	1.558	.895	.345
Ad Focus	6.764	1	6.764	3.882	.049
Age Group	14.896	1	14.896	8.550	.004
Time Orientation * Ad Focus	2.236	1	2.236	1.283	.258
Time Orientation * Age Group	.407	1	.407	.234	.629
Ad Focus * Age Group	6.945	1	6.945	3.986	.046
Time Orientation * Ad Focus * Age Group	2.469	1	2.469	1.417	.234
Error	1000.044	574	1.742		
Total	20979.000	582			
Corrected Total	1034.586	581			

a. R Squared = .033 (Adjusted R Squared = .022)

Figures 18 and 19 present the estimated marginal means of entrepreneurial intention across different age groups, time orientations and ad focus conditions.

Figure 20 Estimated Marginal Means of Behavioural Intention (Learn More) at platform-focused ad

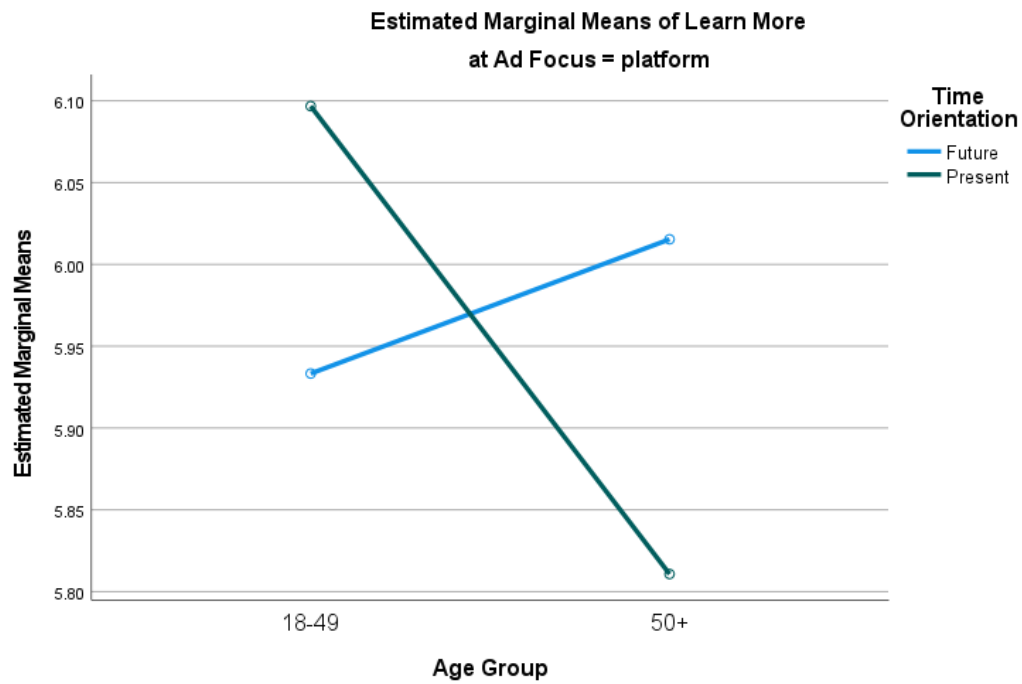
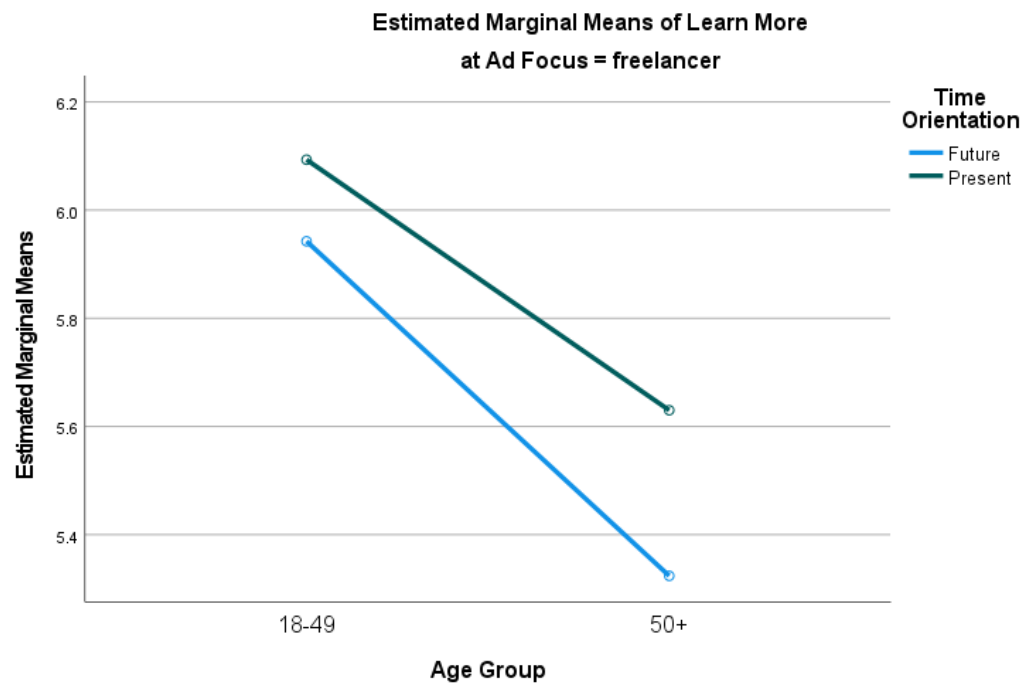


Figure 21 Estimated Marginal Means of Behavioural Intention (Learn More) at freelancer-focused ad



6. General discussion

This paper examines how different age groups, particularly younger and older adults, respond to marketing communications in the sharing economy. However, across both studies, none of the hypotheses regarding time orientation, ad focus, and age were supported. The results were consistent across two different contexts: home-sharing and skill-sharing platforms. No significant findings suggest that the factors influencing people's intentions to provide in the sharing economy can be complex. The role and fit of time orientation and advertisement focus in predicting behavioural intentions raise questions. It compels us to rethink and question the direct applicability of time orientation and advertisement focus as pivotal variables in explaining behavioural intentions.

Despite the absence of affirmative statistical significances to confirm our hypotheses, these insignificant results pave the way for refined hypotheses. Costello and Reczek (2020) found that provider-focused advertisements effectively influence individual purchase intention through an 'empathy lens'. While we tried to replicate their studies from the perspective of providing in the sharing economy, we did not find significant indications similar to theirs. However, we observed interesting findings in our second study that resulted in the opposite findings compared to Costello and Reczek's (2020). Specifically, platform-focused advertisements exposed to participants resulting in higher intention to become a service provider in skill sharing. Several potential reasons could explain why we obtained different results. First, the nature of the service can make a difference. Compared to home sharing, skill sharing is more transactional and less personal, making platform-focused advertisements more effective as they emphasise security and reliability. Secondly, consumer may have different expectations. Platform-focused ad might convey a sense of professionalism and legitimacy, which could be appealing in the skill sharing context where the quality of service is directly linked to the provider's expertise.

Another interesting finding is that across both studies, the age groups yielded significant results. Younger adults had higher intention to provide in the sharing economy, entrepreneurial intention and behavioural intention in both scenarios compared to older adults. Several potential reasons could explain this age-related difference. Firstly, younger adults are generally more comfortable with technology and digital platforms. This familiarity can mean that they have more confidence and intention to engage in the sharing economy as both consumers and providers. Secondly, younger adults tend to have a higher risk tolerance and are more adaptable and open to new opportunities while older adults may prefer stability and predictability (Buss, 2019). Lastly, younger adults tend to value access to experiences over ownership, this can make them more interested in participating in the sharing economy as both providers and consumers (Belk, 2014).

We chose to follow Costello and Reczek's (2020) approach in two different contexts within the sharing economy because we identified that these two contexts had significantly different components. Home sharing requires physical assets while skill sharing does not involve physical assets. We wanted to see if the results could be different in these two completely different contexts. The unexpected outcome in skill sharing, where platform-focused advertisements were more effective, suggest that the context of sharing platforms influences the effectiveness of different marketing strategies.

Our reflections on this research's limitations offer further paths for exploration. Firstly, we conducted the experiments online, which can be hard to generalise to real-world settings. In the first experiment, we suspect that it was difficult for participants to properly owning a house when they did not own one in real life. Secondly, testing other contexts within the sharing economy may be helpful. Different sharing businesses have fundamentally different functions and may lead to different results. Thirdly, in creating stimuli material by manipulating goal orientation and ad focus, only one type of freelancing work was used. This lack of diversity

may not fully represent the range of individuals who might have intentions to undertake other types of skill sharing work, potentially limiting the generalisability of the findings.

Despite the absence of significant statistical findings to support our hypotheses, this research provides a foundation for future research. Future research can incorporate qualitative methods to gain deeper understanding into the nuances of participants' responses to different ad focus and time orientations. This approach could help uncover underlying reasons for non-significant results from our study. Exploring other potential variables, such as trust in the platform, perceived value and individual differences in digital literacy could provide a more comprehensive understanding of people's motivations to provide in the sharing economy. From a theoretical perspective, these findings call for reassessment of the extent to which constructs like time orientation and ad focus can be generalised to predict behavioural intentions in the sharing economy, especially for the service providers. Future studies should examine the applicability of these theories in the digital age and consider how they interact with other behaviour factors.

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Appendix A. Pretest for the experiment stimuli

Stimuli development

Future-oriented goals	Emotionally meaningful goals (present-oriented goals)
Acquisition of knowledge: seeking to gain new information and skills	Friend networks: Smaller but contain a greater proportion of actual friends (Chang et al., 2015)
Seek contacts that could be useful in the more distant future: Establishing connections that may benefit the future	Emotion regulation: Seeking to control emotions or seeking meaningful emotional experiences (Lang & Carstensen, 2002)
Find out about one's role in the society: Gaining social acceptance and understanding vocational or career interests	Generativity: Being or becoming a 'keeper of the meaning' (Vaillant & Milofsky, 1980, p. 1349), taking responsibility for future generations (Ryff & Heincke, 1983)
Instrumental, knowledge-related: Focused on practical and educational outcomes (Lang & Carstensen, 2002)	Preference for familiar social partners: Preferring to interact with well-known individuals (Fredrickson & Carstensen, 1990)
Autonomy: Striving for independence and self-sufficiency	Desire to feel needed by others: Seeking roles that provide a sense of being needed (Fung & Carstensen, 2004)
Social acceptance: Having larger personal networks, more friends, more advice givers	Preference for relatives and formal partners: Choosing interactions with family and formal partners (e.g., helpers) over other social partners (Lang & Carstensen, 2002)

Pretest

Dear homeowner,

We are a professional accommodation sharing platform. We help people like you share your spare rooms or entire house. All you need to do is set up a free profile and put up the listing with descriptions and images for guests.

Here's what our hosts want to share with you.

"Hosting our home on SharingX gives us the joy of helping others live their dreams. Having memorable conversations with guests spice up our family life. The extra income we earn from hosting on SharingX has allowed us to live a happier life with our family." – Alice & Luca, Hosts in Milan

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Here's what our hosts want to share with you.

“Hosting our home on SharingX has introduced us to people around the world. I have learned so much from them and I believe the experiences will benefit me in the future. The extra income we earn from hosting on SharingX has allowed us to lay down a path for our future.”
– Alice & Luca, Hosts in Milan

Which of the following best represents the content in the email you received?

1. Future-oriented goal (a goal that is focused on the future)
2. Present-oriented/emotionally meaningful goal (a goal that is focused on the present and includes motivation to derive emotional meaning from life)

Pretest Results

Contingency Tables

Condition			
Goal orientation	1	2	Total
Future-oriented goal	24.000	2.000	26.000
	80.000 %	6.667 %	43.333 %
Present-oriented	6.000	28.000	34.000
	20.000 %	93.333 %	56.667 %
Total	30.000	30.000	60.000
	100.000 %	100.000 %	100.000 %

Chi-Squared Tests

Value	df	p
X ² 32.851	1	< .001
N	60	

Nominal

	Value
Phi-coefficient	0.740
Cramer's V	0.740

Descriptive results showed that more participants found condition 1 to be future-oriented (80.00%) compared to present-oriented (20.00%); more participants found condition 2 to be present-oriented (93.33%) compared to future-oriented (6.67%).

Results of a chi square test showed that this difference was significant, $X^2(1) = 32.85, p < .001$.

To supplement the chi square statistic, we used two measures to determine the effect size of the differences between the two conditions. The Phi-coefficient was 0.740, indicating a large effect size. Cramer's V was also 0.740, which is consistent with a large effect size.

Overall, the results provide evidence that the experimental conditions have a significant impact on participants' responses, with a large effect size observed between the two conditions.

Appendix B. Questionnaires

Questionnaire 1 [Time orientation : Future-oriented vs. Present-oriented; Ad focus : Platform-focused vs. Hosts-focused]

In this study, we seek to gain a deeper insight into how individuals perceive becoming a service provider on a sharing platform. You will be presented with a scenario and marketing communication to review, and then you will be asked some follow-up questions. Please be assured that this is scholarly research and all personal information will be confidential and used only for research purposes. Your participation will greatly contribute to our study and we thank you in advance for your time and effort.

--Insert button: agree to participate/ do not agree to participate--

Imagine you have a house with a spare room, and you receive the following email from SharingX. Please read the email carefully.

--Participants are randomly assigned to one of the following conditions--

Dear homeowner,

We are a professional accommodation sharing platform. We help people like you share your spare rooms or entire house. All you need to do is set up a free profile and put up the listing with descriptions and images for guests.

Here's what our hosts want to share with you.

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"Hosting your home on SharingX introduces you to people around the world. You can learn so much from them and we believe the experiences will benefit you in the future. The extra income you earn from hosting on SharingX allows you to lay down a path for your future."

– SharingX, Home sharing platform

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SharingX, Home sharing platform

Email 1: Future, hosts



Homeowner, you're invited to
join SharingX!

Inbox



SharingX 09:30

to me ▾



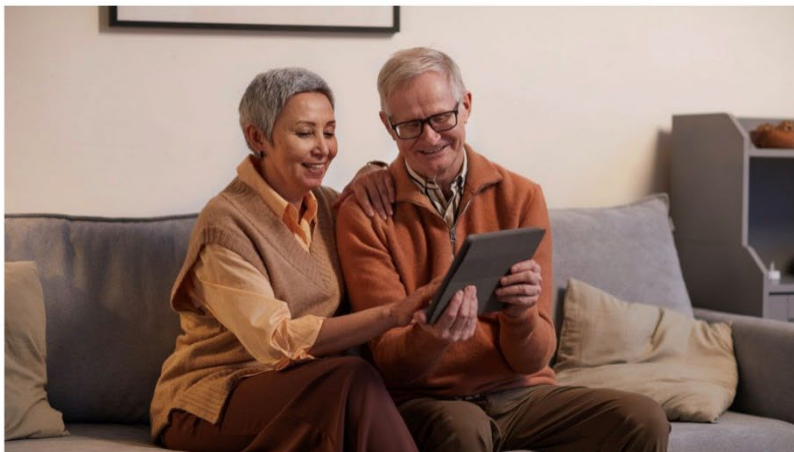
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Here's what our hosts want to share with you.

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Alice & Luca, Hosts in Milan

Find out more about SharingX



Email 2: Future, platform



Homeowner, you're invited to
join SharingX!

Inbox



SharingX 09:30

to me ▾



Dear homeowner,

We are a professional accommodation sharing platform. We help people like you share your spare rooms or entire house. All you need to do is set up a free profile and put up the listing with descriptions and images for guests.



Here's what we want to share with you.

“Hosting your home on SharingX introduces you to people around the world. You can learn so much from them and we believe the experiences will benefit you in the future. The extra income you earn from hosting on SharingX allows you to lay down a path for your future.”



SharingX, Home sharing platform

Find out more about SharingX



Email 3: Present, hosts



Homeowner, you're invited to
join SharingX!

Inbox



SharingX 09:30

to me ▾



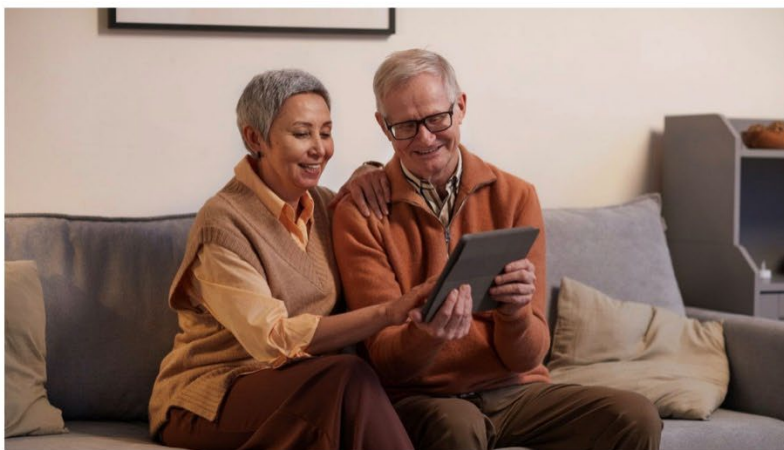
Dear homeowner,

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Here's what our hosts want to share with you.

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Alice & Luca, Hosts in Milan

Find out more about SharingX



Email 4: Present, platform



Homeowner, you're invited to
join SharingX!

Inbox



SharingX 09:30

to me ▾



Dear homeowner,

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Here's what we want to share with you.

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SharingX, Home sharing platform

Find out more about SharingX



(Manipulation check)

Which of the following best represents the content in the email you received?

1. Future-oriented goal (a goal that is focused on the future)
2. Present-oriented/emotionally meaningful goal (a goal that is focused on the present and includes motivation to derive emotional meaning from life)

I prioritise present enjoyment. / I prioritise future achievements.

1—strongly disagree, 2---disagree, 3---somewhat disagree, 4---neither agree nor disagree, 5---somewhat agree, 6---agree, 7---strongly agree

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 7 means “strongly agree”.

(Reminder: imagine you have a spare room in your property)

Q1: I intend to join SharingX to share my spare room.

Q2: I plan to join SharingX to share my spare room.

Q3: It is likely that I will share my spare room on SharingX.

Q4: I intend to join SharingX as a micro-entrepreneur in the near future.

Q5: I am actively planning to become a micro-entrepreneur on SharingX in the near future.

Q6: I expect to become a micro-entrepreneur on SharingX in the near future.

Q7: I would click the “Find out more about SharingX” button to get more information.

Attention Check:

To ensure you have understood the information provided, please enter the name of the accommodation sharing app into the box below.

--Demographic questions--

Q8: Age:

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54

- 55-64
- 65 and over

Q9: Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

Q10: How would you describe your ethnic origin?

- White
- Asian
- Black/African/Caribbean
- Mixed/multiple ethnic groups
- Other ethnic group

Q11: Please tell us the total annual income of your household (before tax and deductions).

- Below £10,000
- £10,001 - £20,000
- £20,001 - £30,000
- £30,001 - £40,000
- Above £40,000

Q12: Employment status

- Employed full-time
- Employed part-time
- Self-employed
- Student
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

Q13: How frequently do you use online sharing services such as short-term rental platform--Airbnb, ride sharing platform--Uber, etc to receive services?

- Very Frequently
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Very Rarely
- Never

Q14: How frequently do you use online sharing services such as short-term rental platform--Airbnb, ride sharing platform--Uber, etc to provide services?

- Very Frequently
- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely

- Very Rarely
- Never

Questionnaire 2 [Time orientation : Future-oriented vs. Present-oriented; Ad focus : Platform-focused vs. Hosts-focused]

In this study, we seek to gain a deeper insight into how individuals perceive becoming a service provider on a sharing platform. You will be presented with a scenario and marketing communication to review, and then you will be asked some follow-up questions. Please be assured that this is scholarly research and all personal information will be confidential and used only for research purposes. Your participation will greatly contribute to our study and we thank you in advance for your time and effort.

--Insert button: agree to participate/ do not agree to participate--

Imagine you have a house with a spare room, and you receive the following email from SharingX. Please read the email carefully.

--Participants are randomly assigned to one of the following conditions--

Introducing SharingZ

We're happy to invite you to join SharingZ, the online freelancing platform. On SharingZ, you'll be able to work your way by sharing the skills you have. We'll make earning easy.

What can you get from your experience on SharingZ?

"At SharingZ, we're excited about the future and the endless opportunities it offers for you to grow and develop.

By investing in your skills and building your network on SharingZ, you'll be able to attract even more high-quality clients and take on more challenging and fulfilling projects in the future." – The SharingZ Team

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The SharingZ Team

[Learn more](#)

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Linda T.
English teacher

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Q5: I am actively planning to become a micro-entrepreneur on SharingZ in the near future.

Q6: I expect to become a micro-entrepreneur on SharingZ in the near future.

Q7: I would click the “Learn more about SharingZ” button to get more information.

Attention Check:

To ensure you have understood the information provided, please choose the name of the skill sharing app.

1. SharingX
2. SharingY
3. SharingZ

--Demographic questions--

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- 18-24
- 25-34

- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 and over

Q9: Gender

- Female
- Male
- Other

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