


Chapter 4

Sharing Economy and Applications: Business and Marketing Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Sharing economy has emerged as influential economic model in the last decades. A considerable literature has grown up around the sub-themes of sharing economy including business-related, system-related, and other context-related studies. Examining a general phenomenon in a limited scope is a strategy for specific perspective and conclusions. Therefore, examining sharing economy phenomenon in a business and marketing perspective can be useful for business related viewpoint. The study is composed of three parts and begins with a theoretical review of conceptual background. It will then go on to three level structures for this study, including consumer level, business and brand level, and system levels. The remaining part includes context-based studies about level structure. After reviewing topics in contexts, there are presented selected studies about related contexts. The study aims to research sharing economy in a general view and review business- and marketing-related topics and studies.

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INTRODUCTION

Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all. (Hardin, 1968)

Hardin (1968) (as also cited in (Feeny et al., 1990)) mentioned a metaphor about a pasture and capacity of commons. If one of herdsman would add an additional animal to his herd, then another herdsman, then another. What would be the result of this? For years it would be not a problem because of tribal wars, poaching and diseases. Because they could keep the capacity balanced. But what would happen if conditions are better for these problems? Every herdsman would like to add additional animals to their herds. Finally, tragedy starts, each man is locked into a system which force him to a limited capacity world. This is the economic starting point for sharing economy or more basicly “sharing.”

As sharing is an old phenomenon as humankind (Belk, 2014), the extended or augmented form of sharing has been seen in consumption patterns for years. Sharing economy one of reflections in consumption pattern in economy, is popular concept in recent years for both scholars and practitioners. For consuming side, many years ago Belk (1988) stated that possessions of people both contribute and reflect identities. After years, Belk (2014) updated the statement with “you are what you share” conclusion. According to author it was indicating that people may be entering a new economy which includes a post-ownership characteristic.

The production and consumption patterns of people on earth have been an important factor throughout history. When the historical stages are examined, the change of people’s production methods, for example the industrial revolution, is an important development which also affects other factors. How we consume products and services following this is an important research topic. How to get products and services, how to consume them and how to keep consuming them are important questions. The sharing economy is a concept that leads to changes that involve consumption patterns at this stage.

In addition to the conceptual conception of the share economy, it will be useful to examine statistics for economic significance. In 2015 sharing economy revenues were \$15 billion and five key sharing sectors – car sharing, travel, staffing, finance and music and video streaming- were estimated to reach \$335 billion by 2025 (PwC, 2015).

As importance of sharing economy and its applications is clear, this is originating the first part of title “sharinge economy and applications”. Sharing economy has a wide range of research areas including law to sustainability, tourism to accommodation and etc. Concluding a specific study relies on limiting scope well. In this study, the limit of scope including business and marketing applications in sharing economy which leads to “business and marketing perspective” part.

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