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The role played by relational turbulence in managing agency problems among value chain partners in the sharing economy: A review of the antecedents, benefits, risks, and boundary conditions

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to present a detailed theoretical review based on the "relational turbulence model," revealing current research gaps and demonstrating its applicability to the management of agency problems among value chain partners by using antecedents, benefits, risks, and boundary conditions. "Relational turbulence theory" proposes a communication perspective on interpersonal relationships that explains how relationship transitions polarize emotions and cognitive assessments, disrupting partner communication in the sharing economy. Relational turbulence theory has recently gained traction in value chain literature in relation to the management of agency problems between partners within the sharing economy context; however, there is a surprising lack of agreement on the antecedents, benefits, risks, and boundary conditions of such relationships. To address this gap, we reviewed 52 peer-reviewed publications published between 2011 and 2021. Furthermore, this paper reveals the current research gaps and future research topics by recommending the application of relational turbulence theory with respect to antecedents, benefits, risks, and boundary conditions in the management of agency problems among value chain partners.

1. Introduction

The implications of the sharing economy for marketing theory and practice, based on relationship improvement platforms, remain ambiguous in the literature (Goodboy, Dillow, Knoster, & Howard, 2021; Jones & Theiss, 2021). An economic model of the sharing economy characterizes it as an activity that involves acquiring, providing, or sharing access to goods and services among peers through community-based online platforms (Goodboy et al., 2021; Jones & Theiss, 2021; Jones, Yoon, Theiss, Austin, & Lee, 2021; Sigala, 2018). Our review also highlighted that, while the "relational turbulence model" can provide benefits, it can also pose threats in managing any agency problems between partners in the value chain, implying a "double-edged sword" effect by exhibiting a variety of benefits followed by primary level and support value activities. However, these benefits can vary as a function of several boundary conditions. In light of the emergence of the sharing economy over the past decade, an array of studies have been conducted, both within and outside the marketing discipline, on topics pertaining to the relational turbulence perspective (Goodboy et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2021; Jones & Theiss, 2021). We aimed to enrich and extend prior research conducted in this area by exploring the sharing economy's disruptive potential for traditional marketing beliefs and practices (Goodboy et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2021; Jones & Theiss, 2021). In this study we broadly define the sharing economy and identify its key characteristics—access, rather than ownership—that challenge the existing marketing concepts. According to the literature on value chains, sharing economy is deeply rooted in the concept of resource ownership based on relationship improvement platforms (Brisini, Solomon, & Nussbaum, 2018; Chaperon & Bramwell, 2013; Durach, Kembro, & Wieland, 2017; Goodboy et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2021; Jones & Theiss, 2021).

In various literatures, lower costs and increased accessibility are

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