Study on factors that affect the sharing justice and network relationship to develop the engagement in freelance

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Abstract

The objective of this paper was to investigate the factors that affect the sharing of justice and network relation to developing the engagement in freelance. The study was conducted from in-depth interviews and used Grab as a case study of sharing economy businesses. In-depth interviews were done with experts in sharing businesses and operators who own vehicle assets. In addition, relevant literature and theories were reviewed to consider the conceptual framework and factors obtained from this study. This study is only part of the main research that the author is currently studying. From the results of the interviews, Grab's sharing justice had a clear sharing of financial interests along with support in finding customers. In terms of network support, there was support to work together, and Grab's members shared their career knowledge. It was found that sharing justice and network relation could well develop the engagement in freelance and that they were highly linked to each other. According to the conceptual framework and results obtained from this study, the factors that affect the development of sharing economy businesses to create the engagement in freelance could be divided into two parts: sharing justice consisting of (1) distributive justice, (2) procedural justice, and (3) interactional justice, and network relation consisting of (1) physical support, (2) knowledge sharing support, (3) emotional support, and (4) companionship support. Finally, in the near future, after data collection and analysis have been completed, the author will present this research in a complete form that presents the whole conceptual framework because some of the content is still in the process of collecting population samples.

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1. Introduction

The management of business resources originally relied on the owner's resources used to conduct business. However, later, when the general public has surplus assets along with communication technology to support, there has been an idea of using and managing the remaining assets as a business to create value from such resources, known as resource sharing system, and the sharing economy may be in the form of products or services. When these properties have not been fully used up or left, they will be shared with those who wish to use them in exchange for monetary compensation (Matzler et al., 2015). Sharing economy is considered asset management to create the most value for the owners. In addition, these owners are independent in doing their business and have the right to cancel their services without having to do many commercial formalities like doing business in the private sector in general. Sharing economy is a business developed from the B2C (Business to Customer) model based on the mechanism of technologies. There may be intermediary companies that coordinate in the system between the customers and the property owners participating in the business, such as Grab and Airbnb, which act as an intermediary to coordinate the business in providing care or residential services successfully in all countries that facilitate general users. In addition, the benefits of existing resources can also be maximized (Allen and Berg, 2014). Everyone in society can participate in this business, and it is an opportunity to have business competitiveness for people who have little

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capital and lack knowledge in some areas, such as technology.

Moreover, sharing economy is an economy with groups of participants jointly borrowing or exchanging unused properties or investing in products and services. This concept is a new paradigm of consumption that reduces excessive possession of properties.

The advantage of this concept is economic benefits. Aside from helping to save money, it can also encourage consumers to use their residual income to invest for further expansion as well as to consume other types of products. While having the same income, the quality of life can be better and more convenient. The spending can be efficiently managed, including generating income for people who have unused resources.

For example, Grab comes from a simple concept that can solve the problems of taxi shortage and refusing to accept service users. This concept can benefit property owners, users, and intermediaries connecting between the property owners and the users, which affects the growth of the business and create stability as a career. In the case of cars, the property owners serve as an executive and employee at the same time. In addition, to Grab, Airbnb's residential sharing economy is considered a successful sharing economy that has been commonly known. According to the sharing economy survey conducted with 1,000 consumers in the United States by PwC Consulting, the sharing economy in 2025 would be involved with the businesses of travel, car sharing, finance, staffing, and music and video streaming, which would drive the value of the sharing economy market in the United States growing to 11 trillion baht (3.35 hundred billion US dollars) from the current value approximately at 5 hundred billion baht. Nowadays, the business that is becoming a buzz in online communities around the world is Airbnb, a community market where guests can book accommodation from its owners, by focusing on presenting the experiences of the guests and the hosts and connecting people who have free accommodation to those who are looking for accommodation. Currently, there are about 425,000 users per night with a network of 190 countries around the world. It is considered one of the fastest-growing and successful startups in this market.

The heart of a successful sharing economy business is based on three conditions: honesty, trust, and sincerity, which leads to confidence. Confidence involves user safety because users necessarily use services from strangers who may appear in the form of drivers, passengers, and house lessees and lessors. Technology is used as a medium for connecting and communicating between people in the community and for exchanging products and services between them. In addition, freelance of car services allows the freelancers to be more agile and able to manage their business and themselves in the right direction with only a condition that they must have a working time of more than 3 hours per day and have a car. At the same time, their business and lifestyle management can be consistently and independently done because it is a business that they are both the owner and employee (Barman et al., 2015).

From the above-mentioned sharing economy, this study selected the case of operators who came in conjunction with Grab and revealed the key management-related characteristics that affect the operators' engagement in freelance (Robbins and Judge, 2013). Assets are utilized, and at the same time, business benefits finally belong to grab. Achieving sustainability in this business depends on the perception of Grab's justice that is allocated to the participating car owners. In addition, the process of this business is also connected to the network, namely car owners themselves, who must have a good relationship to help and support each other in the network and build a stable career.

The research objectives are as follows:

1. To obtain a conceptual framework that affects the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance; and
2. Know the factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance.

2. Literature review

The factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance are divided into two parts. First, sharing justice consists of (1) distributive justice, (2) procedural justice, and (3) interaction justice. Second, network relationship consists of (1) physical support, (2) knowledge sharing support, (3) emotional support, and (4) companionship support.

2.1. Sharing justice

Benefit-sharing justice means the perception of the stakeholders in managing the benefits between the giver and the receiver, where the giver is the resource investor, and the receiver is the beneficiary of that investment. The distribution of benefits to receivers must be acceptable to both parties based on transparency, accountability, and consistent standard (Elster, 2011).

Justice is the foundation of unity, trust, and solidarity, which will also lead to peace among people in the network businesses. Justice, therefore, is one of the important factors in linking people and interest groups to live together in peace. An unjust society is a society that is rich in conflicts and chaos, and that is not possible to create pride in members of society, leading to various crises. Whenever society begins to question or doubt about justice, whether it is organizational or social justice, the situation of mutual distrust often occurs, which results in discordant relationships between people in the organizations and society. If the network businesses lack justice, it will cause suffering, conflicts, distractions, and crises of people in the organizations that work together. Therefore, justice
in the network businesses is important because it helps reduce conflicts and create unity and solidarity in the organizations (Sheppard et al., 1992). In this study, employees were independent operators who own assets, i.e., cars, while the organization was Grab. For this sharing business, benefits are not salary but income from car owner's work. The organization provides information and methods to operators or car owners, and the proposal is the revenue generated from providing services to customers, which is high or low depending on the ability of car owners.

2.1.1. Distributive justice

Distributive justice is that a person is aware of the fairness of what he or she has received from a decision. The sharing of benefits is used in different ways. For example, for management within a business organization, the giver is the organization or business owner, and the recipient is the employee in the organization under the established rules and norms for mutual justice. The process of decision making to allocate compensation and treat each other between people in order to ensure fairness, equality, and appropriateness is based on the appeared information (Dworkin, 2011).

Normally, studies on corporate justice often apply to employees in companies. These employees always expect to receive various benefits from their organizations by assessing whether their own investment at work meets their expectations. Many studies provided the same definition. According to Sen (2009), recognition of justice in an organization means the recognition of the appropriateness of rewards given to oneself and others by the organization, including the process of considering such rewards and the equal treatment on employees in the organization. In addition, according to Dworkin (2011), justice in an organization means the employee's perception of fair treatment given by their organization, including fairness in resource allocation, by adhering to the fairness of economic and social exchanges occurring in the organization between individuals, colleagues, superiors, subordinates, and organization as a whole.

2.1.2. Procedural justice

Procedural justice is that a person is aware of the fairness of the decision-making process or that an employee acknowledges the accurate and appropriate policy or process of determining compensation. According to Elster (2009), the use of principles of justice administration in organizations can be explained that employees perceive they are supported by their organization through executives, policies, regulations, or activities that show their care and concern for the well-being of employees. This inevitably causes employees to feel that they have to work to compensate their organization to the best of their ability, which will lead to better work efficiency. Aside from good company policies and regulations, the leader of the organizations is the most important person to maintain justice in the organizations and to drive the organizations to success.

Justice management can also support human resource management. According to Babic et al. (2015), the leaders are important in driving this concept to be formulated as a management policy to promote the well-being of employees and to maintain the existence of employees with the organizations. In addition, some studies support the influence of justice on resource sharing, such as compensation. Training knowledge is a factor that helps employees determined to find and apply knowledge in their organization, and they will feel that they are valuable and successful (Poramet et al., 2019), also manage their work and family life better (Babic et al., 2015). Therefore, sharing justice positively impacts organizational engagement (Rahman et al., 2016) and perception of their own capabilities (Harper, 2015).

2.1.3. Interactional justice

Interactional justice is that a person is aware of the fairness of being treated equally and appropriately.

Because this study is based on the context of small entrepreneurs and sharing business owners, the related justice is the justice in the allocation of resources shared by business owners to entrepreneurs based on the basic view of the factor of justice in resource allocation.

According to Elster (2009), the justice in resource allocation is about payment of compensations, consideration of merits, sharing of dividends, and rewarding those who work at their best based on their investment. Fair compensation for Grab means a payment of compensation according to the diligence of work or deduction of benefits from small entrepreneurs, including rewards or other resources, to create motivation to work in the network in order to create more organizational engagement (Meimoon, 2019). According to the analysis of the work of the Indian companies, work satisfaction was at a good level, and justice was another factor for employee satisfaction at work.

2.2. Network relationship

Network relation refers to the interaction between groups of people or business units in society, which may be a direct interaction or communication (Krähenbühl and Koltun, 2011). It is often aimed at sharing knowledge and doing activities together. In general, if network relation is in the form of social support, it will create a mutual gain. For network relation of businesses that need to support each other, such as in the case of Grab, there is communication about the routes among Grab's members, including customers, car owners, and Grab itself. Support from network relation thus connects all the members together with both business and
social interaction (Lakey, 2010). In addition to the expression of activities, support from network relation can also be mentally expressed called emotional support, including caring, love, trust, recognition, encouragement, or attention. Most studies discussed this network relation in terms of social relation by focusing on virtual society through online social media or integrating it with medical knowledge for health education. In addition, this concept is used to communicate with customers/consumers, retain old customers, find new customers, and develop products to match customer needs. These characteristics can be created for customers based on intelligent marketing communication by telling the story of that brand continuously and in line with the popularity of consumers/customers, who can finally tell the story of such a brand to the society, called a co-creator. As a result, the brand has an identity that is distinctive and different from competitors’ products and can meet the target. In addition, communication between customers themselves, or positively social communication, can create economic or image value for the product or organization, which is also considered support from network relation. What is quite distinctive and unique to Thai social support is having a supportive culture or collectivism, which is inherited from the religious principles of sacrifice and sharing with no hope of return (Allik and Realo, 2004). Network relationship means an interaction between groups of people or business units in society. This may be a direct interaction or through communication (Krähenbühl and Koltun, 2011). Support from network relationship is to connect all members with both business and social interactions to each other (Lakey, 2010). According to Carreira et al. (2012), network support is divided into four ways as follows: The factors that affect the self-practice of employees can be divided into two types: 1) Intrinsic factors and 2) Extrinsic factors.

### 2.2.1. Physical support

Physical support is the provision of resources for a career or sustenance, such as money, food, medicine, professional tools, and buying agricultural products at low prices. These forms of resources are found in the public donations to those affected by the disasters (Krähenbühl and Koltun, 2011). Buying agricultural products at low prices is one aspect of marketing for social assistance called ‘cause-based marketing/cause-related marketing (Yu and Koltun, 2015). This study was involved with customer support for using the services while Grab supports a tool for communication between networks.

### 2.2.2. Knowledge sharing support

Knowledge sharing support is for work or to give useful suggestions to people in the network, such as customers and customers/consumers, customers and drivers or Grab, and drivers and drivers. This knowledge will enable the recipients to solve problems or create commercial value (Annalectic, 2017). According to Perrey and Spillecke (2013), consumers who decide to buy products/services are mostly influenced by people with product knowledge, such as customers with long experience in such products or services. Similarly, from information in online markets, 60 percent of online businesses use these influencers to help in marking communication known as "influencer-based marketing."

#### 2.2.3. Emotional support

Emotional support is an expression of attention, caring, love, trust, acceptance, encouragement, or empathy given by various people in society through various means in order to provide emotional support (Taylor, 2011). Emotional support makes the people who receive it recognize themselves as valuable in the eyes of society, resulting in "being respectful” (Carreira et al., 2012). This feeling will become the perceived "value" of the recipients, resulting in the effort to find knowledge, and provide the recipients with self-development until they have knowledge and ability to "self-management."

#### 2.2.4. Companionship support

Companionship support provides people in a society with a sense of social belonging along with tangible friends and "virtual belonging" These feelings make such people not alone with a feeling of empowerment to participate in social activities with their friends (Carreira et al., 2012).

#### 2.2.5. Importance of support from network relation

The development of network relation affects social change and human well-being and makes the world developed into the age of information. Nowadays, no matter where in the world we are, we are able to communicate as if we were near each other. In business networking, many businesses have been linked to making communication between each other by using computer technology with a need to increase the capability of the system. Once combined, they can work more, share resources, and exchange information with each other resulting in convenience in use and increased speed. For Grab, the case study of this research, it has the technology as a medium for combining itself, operators or car owners, and customers into the same network.

### 2.3. Engagement in freelance

According to Tasa et al. (2011), engagement in an organization means a status in which employees bound themselves to the organization and its goals and desire to maintain their membership in that organization. Therefore, high participation in an organization refers to engagement in a job, while a
high engagement in an organization refers to the engagement in the employing organization. Similarly, according to Weingart and Cronin (2009), engagement in an organization means a relationship that shows all the connections between the employees and the organization, including the elements of job satisfaction and the concentration of characteristics of each person involved in working for the organization. This engagement has the following three characteristics:

1. Confidence and acceptance of the organization's goals.
2. Willing to make a full effort for the benefit of the organization.
3. Desire to continue to be a member of the organization.

According to Weingart and Cronin (2009), engagement in freelance is when people recognize the organization's goals and want to work for the organization with their commitment and satisfaction in duties that influence each other. From the above concept, it can be concluded that engagement in freelance is very important to the operations of the organization because it will enable the organization to acquire valuable personnel who have devotion, dedication, and energy in working for the organization. As a result, the organization is able to fight with competitors and exist under the uncertainty of the economic conditions stably and sustainably, which depends on the organization's ability of how much it can push personnel to be more engaged to the organization. As mentioned earlier, engagement in freelance is based on a process of cultivating norms of freelance with a goal in transferring them to society and people. For example, Grab's operations can have created uniqueness in benefit-sharing justice and network relation in order for many customers to become accustomed and feel that they should use the services of the Grab network at a reasonable and fair price. Knowledge about socialization in this freelance can directly affect engagement in freelance.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Data collection

This research began with literature review from relevant databases along with in-depth interviews to examine opinions by means of brainstorming of Grab executives, property owners, Grab drivers who are knowledgeable about the opportunities of the sharing economy to the engagement in freelance. Thirty people were selected by purposive sampling.

3.2. Data analysis

After collecting data from in-depth interviews, we analyzed the data, and various elements were divided as shown in Table 1.

4. Results

From in-depth interviews, Grab's sharing justice had a clear sharing of financial interests along with support in finding customers and providing up-to-date information and knowledge. It also offered compensation justice accepted by vehicle asset owners. It was helpful when members had problems as well as provided support for the health of drivers. For network support, there was support to work together, and Grab's members shared their career knowledge. Grab, and its network were of mutual concern. When a problem arose, everyone in Grab's community would cooperate to solve the problem. It also gave mutual information to its members. Grab’s community recognized those who performed well and effectively leading to the engagement in freelance. According to the interviews, sharing justice and network relation could well develop the engagement in freelance and they were highly linked to each other. The results of this study and literature review mentioned above can be synthesized as a conceptual framework for this research. The factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating an engagement in freelance are shown in Fig. 1.

Factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance are divided into two parts. First, sharing justice consists of (1) distributive justice, (2) procedural justice, and (3) interaction justice. Second, network relationship consists of (1) physical support, (2) knowledge sharing support, (3) emotional support, and (4) companionship support.

5. Discussion

From the In-depth interviews and literature review, the factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance can be summarized in Table 1.

5.1. In-depth interviews

It was found that Grab's sharing justice had a clear sharing of financial interests along with support in finding customers and providing up-to-date information and knowledge. It also offered compensation justice accepted by vehicle asset owners. For network relations, there was work support for each other. Grab's members shared their career knowledge, and people in the network were concerned about each other. When a problem occurred, everyone in Grab's community would cooperate to solve the problem. Some operators or car owners said that working with Grab allowed them to manage themselves and feel proud in working as a freelancer. They were also happy to work in this way and receive the benefits of this career, which was worth their dedication. Moreover, they were able to manage themselves efficiently and successfully, leading to engagement in this
profession. Finally, they felt that this profession was appropriate because it was an independent career or freelance that could create unlimited income if asset owners were diligent in their work.

Fig. 1: The factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance

Table 1: Factors that affect the development of the sharing economy for creating engagement in freelance

| Factor                      | Method                                                                 | Source                        |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Distributive justice     | -Recognition of appropriateness of rewards given to employees by the organization |
|                             | -Intercultural practices are equal and fair                             | Dworkin (2011)                |
|                             | -Perception of employees on fair practices                               | Sen (2009)                    |
|                             | -Policies, regulations, and activities                                   | Babic et al. (2015)           |
| 2. Procedural justice       | -Commitment to the organization                                         | Rahman et al. (2016)          |
|                             | -Recognition of self-efficacy                                           | Hosseinkhani and Giyaove (2015) |
| 3. Interactional justice    | -Fair compensation allocation                                          | Babic (2009)                  |
|                             | -Motivation for career                                                  | Elster (2009)                 |
| 4. Physical support         | -Corporate support given to employees                                    | Krähenbühl and Koltun (2011)  |
|                             | -Rewarding for doing good making the recipients recognize the value they receive | Yu and Koltun (2015)          |
| 5. Knowledge sharing support| -Knowledge used in the profession and promote well-being                | Annalect (2017)               |
|                             | -Development recommendations to promote career                         | Perrey and Spillecke (2013)   |
| 6. Emotional support        | -Caring                                                               | Taylor (2011)                 |
|                             | -Trust                                                                 | Carreira et al. (2012)        |
| 7. Companionship support    | -Support for social networks                                           | Harper (2015)                 |

6. Suggestions

In this study, three components were investigated, i.e., organization, network, and self-regulation. If there will be a further expansion to cover all dimensions of the sharing economy, the researcher suggests that in the next study, there should be an investigation on the consumer side to benefit companies, organizations, or those interested in doing this sharing economy in the future.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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