

Traditional and Developing Segments of the Sharing Economy from the Point of View of Customers

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The sharing economy represents a phenomenon which is increasing in importance as time goes by, even from the point of view of less developed countries. The aim of the study is to evaluate the knowledge of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy and their platforms and to analyse and evaluate the level of their use employing the example of customers (the younger and the older generation) in one of the post-communist countries – the Czech Republic. Data was collected on the basis of a questionnaire survey (N=614). This was processed using descriptive statistics tools. The study shows that respondents are the most familiar with forms of sharing not only from traditional segments (passenger transportation and accommodation) but also from the financial segment. The best-known platforms include Uber, Airbnb and Zonky. Platforms from traditional segments are used the most. The younger generation has better awareness, both about possible forms of sharing and also about the existing platforms. However, the study did not prove any differences in the level of use of platforms between the younger and older generation.

Keywords: *Sharing Economy; Collaborative Consumption; P2P Sharing; Sharing Accommodation; Carpooling; Sharing Finances.*

Introduction

The sharing economy represents one of the fastest developing phenomena in history, development of information and communication technologies in particular contributing towards its evolution (Hamari *et al.*, 2016; Lessem *et al.*, 2016). A logical condition for its development is growth in awareness of this phenomenon (Hamari *et al.*, 2016). The number of research papers on this topic has been increasing since 2011 (Cheng, 2016), achieving a level of 2,750 papers registered in the Web of Science database in July 2021. The above-mentioned papers are in particular devoted to the business models of the sharing economy and its impacts (Cheng, 2016), e.g. Kathan *et al.*, 2016; Munoz & Cohen, 2017; Siuskaite *et al.*, 2019. Some authors discuss the context of the sharing economy and sustainability (e.g. Geissinger *et al.*, 2019; Laukkanen & Tura, 2020) or, to a lesser scope, the individual sharing platforms (e.g. Adamiak, 2019; Pepic, 2018; Stanoevska-Slabeva *et al.*, 2017), whereas the studies about tourism and transport are dominant (Anglada & Hernandez Lara, 2020). The accommodation and transport segments represent established, traditional segments of the sharing economy (Schor, 2016; Schor & Cansoy, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2019).

However, only a few studies so far have been devoted to more in-depth investigation into the awareness of customers about this phenomenon and the levels of use of the services in the sharing economy (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017b). We can mention the study by Kim *et al.* (2018), which was performed in 2016 and which investigates the consequences of the awareness of respondents about the sharing economy using the example of the Republic of Korea. However, considering the speed in which the phenomenon of the sharing economy is developing, it is

necessary to push knowledge in this field further. This was, for example, attempted by Andreotti *et al.* (2017b), whose study on the awareness of the sharing economy and participation in its activities from the point of view of the inhabitants of twelve European countries may be regarded as very beneficial. However, no Eastern European country was included in this study with an exception of Poland. The fact of the matter is that the sharing economy model is in particular established in the United States and Western Europe (Radwan *et al.*, 2019). The question, therefore, is what the level of knowledge about and the level of use of sharing economy services and sharing economy platforms in the countries of Eastern Europe is. This is a topic which, so far, has not been part of the mainstream investigation. Only partial data is available on the level the citizens of the EU 28 countries used sharing economy services in six selected segments, these specifically being the segments of transport, accommodation, food-related services, household services, professional services and collaborative finance, published in 2018 by Eurobarometer (2018). It is evident from the aforementioned that until now the authors have devoted their efforts for the resolution of other issues. Only insignificant research has been performed into the given phenomenon from the point of view of customers who are the key component and driving force behind the sharing economy. In addition to this, the authors devoted their research to the phenomenon of sharing economy mainly from the point of view of developed countries and neglected the study of this issue from the point of view of post-communist countries, which could be a source of interesting findings. A significant gap in the research is, therefore, evident, as is the need to develop knowledge in this area and contribute towards the development of the theory and practice of sharing economy. The aim of the study is to evaluate the

knowledge of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy and their platforms and to analyse and evaluate the level of their use employing the example of customers (the younger and the older generation) in one of the post-communist countries – the Czech Republic.

Primary data, acquired in the form of a questionnaire survey using a sample of 614 respondents, are analysed in the article using descriptive statistics tools. Analysis and evaluation are performed on the level of knowledge about and the level of use of sharing economy services and their platforms by customers in the Czech Republic. Differences are examined not only from the point of view of the segments of the sharing economy and their platforms (traditional versus developing segments), but also from the point of view of various age groups of respondents (the younger versus the older generation). The findings are subsequently discussed in the context of the relevant international studies.

Literature Review and Hypotheses

There is no comprehensive conceptual approach to the phenomenon of the sharing economy (Gerwe & Silva, 2020), the reason for this being its diversity combined with the existence of many platform and various types of sharing (Habibi *et al.*, 2016). In addition to this, several other terms are also used to identify it other than the term sharing economy, e.g. the original (Schor & Cansoy, 2019) collaborative consumption (Botsman & Rogers, 2011), a term which is however found less these days (Anglada & Hernandez Lara, 2020). We can also come across other alternative terms, e.g. the term collaborative economy (European Commission, 2016; Gruszka, 2017; McKee, 2017). The most popular expressions are sharing economy and collaborative consumption (Gorog, 2018; Anglada & Hernandez Lara, 2020). In addition to this, these terms are not even defined in a uniform manner (Gorog, 2018; Anglada & Hernandez Lara, 2020). Each of the many authors devotes their attention to a different aspect of this phenomenon (De Rivera *et al.*, 2017; Godelnik, 2017). For example, Botsman & Rogers (2011, p. xv) focus on the possible forms of sharing and state that collaborative consumption includes “traditional sharing, bartering, lending, trading, renting, gifting and swapping, redefined through technology and peer communities”. Voytenko Palgan *et al.* (2017, p. 71) define the term sharing economy from the point of view of possible sharing initiatives, stating that we can define the sharing economy as “a variety of bottom-up initiatives, public-private-people partnerships, business start-ups and local government schemes, all of which utilise the idling capacity of our material world”. A common trait to be found in many definitions of the term sharing economy, but also alternative terms, is the possibility of sharing unused assets (Voytenko Palgan *et al.*, 2017). The definition, for example by Frenken & Schor (2017, pp. 4-5), is based on emphasis of this aspect of sharing, according to whom the essence of the sharing economy consists in “consumers granting each other temporary access to under-utilised physical assets (“idle capacity”), possibly for money”. Guyader & Piscicelli (2019, p. 1061) also draw attention to the key aspect of unused assets, according to whom the sharing economy

represents “an umbrella term for business and consumption practices that are based on sharing underutilised resources (e.g., goods, services, and spaces) for free or for a fee, typically enabled by online platforms and peer communities”. Comprehensive definition of this phenomenon is offered by the European Commission which uses the term collaborative economy (European Commission, 2016). According to the European Commission (2016, p. 3) “collaborative economy refers to business models where activities are facilitated by collaborative platforms that create an open marketplace for the temporary usage of goods or services often provided by private individuals”; these transactions generally do not involve a change of ownership and can be carried out for profit or not-for-profit.

We can distinguish many forms of sharing (Table 1). From the point of view of entities which are involved, we can regard C2C (customer to customer) sharing, or P2P (peer to peer) sharing (Guyader, & Kienzler, 2019), and B2C (business to customer) sharing (Ertz *et al.*, 2017; Puschmann & Alt, 2016; Radwan *et al.*, 2019) as the two basic concepts. Some authors further distinguish B2B (business to business) sharing (Demary, 2015; Sujova & Remen, 2018; Tetrevova & Kolmasova, 2021), B2G (business to government) sharing (Richter & Slowinski, 2018) and G2G (government to government) sharing (Ertz *et al.*, 2017) from the point of view of the entities involved. B2U (business to university) sharing also comes into consideration, as does U2B (university to business) sharing or U2G (university to government) sharing (Tetrevova & Vlckova, 2018, 2019).

We can also differentiate sharing from the point of view of the technology used, this being into sharing with use of online platforms (Ertz *et al.*, 2019; May *et al.*, 2017; Richardson, 2015; Sutherland & Jarrahi, 2018) and sharing without use of online platforms (Ertz *et al.*, 2019; Schor, 2016). Ertz *et al.* (2019) further classify sharing with use of online platforms into pure online sharing, sharing in which the online platform is a major component, sharing in which the online platform is a facilitating component and sharing in which the online platform is a minor component.

Motives leading economic entities to share may be driven by profit or not (Belk, 2014; Schneider, 2017; Schor & Cansoy, 2019). If the motive is profit, we talk of commercial sharing (Bucher *et al.*, 2016). If the motive is not to make a profit, this may be altruism (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017b; Bucher *et al.*, 2016; Harvey *et al.*, 2020), this then concerns so-called charitable sharing (Tetrevova, 2020). However, the motive may also be compensation of costs (Ertz *et al.*, 2019) and we can label this form of sharing hybrid (Tetrevova, 2020). A different view of non-profit motives for sharing is provided by Schor & Cansoy (2019), according to whom, the possible motive for sharing may be an effort to gain new friends or experiences, or an effort to minimise negative impacts on the environment. A contribution towards sustainability in the economic, social and environmental fields is deemed to be the original (Geissinger *et al.*, 2019) and the key (Barnes & Mattsson, 2016; Habibi, 2019) motive for sharing.

In general, from the point of view of the subject of sharing, it is possible to share products (Harvey *et al.*, 2020), money (Barnes & Mattsson, 2016), services (Cheng *et al.*, 2019) or knowledge and abilities (Barnes & Mattsson,

2016). In relation to this typology, we can distinguish the following key forms of the sharing economy:

- carsharing (Bellos *et al.*, 2017; Standing *et al.*, 2019);
- carpooling/ridesharing (Standing *et al.*, 2019; Zhu *et al.*, 2017);
- electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing (Geissinger *et al.*, 2019; Mi & Coffman, 2019);
- shared transport of goods or food (Cohen & Munoz, 2016; Ferrell *et al.*, 2017; Geissinger *et al.*, 2019);
- sharing accommodation (Bokyeong & Cho, 2016; Casado-Diaz *et al.*, 2020);
- sharing tools and equipment (e.g. machinery, equipment, tools, sporting equipment or furniture) (Belk, 2014; Ferrell *et al.*, 2017);
- sharing space (e.g. parking spaces, storage space, premises for DIY) (Cohen & Munoz, 2016; Geissinger *et al.*, 2019);
- sharing services (e.g. cleaning, childminding, looking after and caring for pets or repairs) (Ferrell *et al.*, 2017; Zhang *et al.*, 2019);
- sharing work or time (e.g. occasional work while employed, consultancy) (Ferrell *et al.*, 2017; Markendahl *et al.*, 2018);
- sharing finances (loans and investment) (Leone & Schiavone, 2018; Wei & Lin, 2017);
- sharing insurance (Milanova & Maas, 2017);
- shared education (e.g. language preparation or textbooks) (Geissinger *et al.*, 2019; Markendahl *et al.*, 2018);
- shared entertainment (e.g. books, games, films or music) (Belk, 2014; Geissinger *et al.*, 2019).

Table 1

Typology of Sharing

Aspect	Entities involved	Technical means	Motive for sharing	Subject of sharing
Specific forms of sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C2C (P2P) sharing • B2C sharing • B2B sharing • B2G sharing • G2G sharing • B2U sharing • U2B sharing • U2G sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pure offline sharing • online sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * online platform as minor component * online platform as facilitating component * online platform as major component * pure online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • commercial sharing • charitable sharing • hybrid sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carsharing • carpooling • electric scooter sharing • bicycle sharing • shared transport of goods or food • sharing accommodation • sharing tools and equipment • sharing space • sharing services • sharing work or time • sharing finances • sharing insurance • shared education • shared entertainment

Within the European Union, we can find both platforms originating in Europe (mainly from France and the UK) and platforms originating in other countries (typically the US) (Fabo *et al.*, 2017). Local European platforms predominate (Stanoevska-Slabeva *et al.*, 2017). In the most cases (approx. 90 %), these are for-profit platforms (Stanoevska-Slabeva *et al.*, 2017). A lot of them (approx. 36 %) are constituted by platforms with a turnover of up to EUR 1 million (Fabo *et al.*, 2017). Really large platforms generating a turnover of more than EUR 100 million constitute approx. 15 % of platforms (Fabo *et al.*, 2017). An interesting fact is that platforms of domestic origin constitute almost half of all platforms operating in the Czech Republic (Fabo *et al.*, 2017). However, use of sharing economy platforms is not very widespread in the Czech Republic for the time being. For example, shared accommodation was used by only 5 % of Czechs (European Commission, 2019) and shared transport by only 3 % of Czechs (Czech Statistical Office, 2018) in 2018.

The above-mentioned sharing segments develop at a different speed. According to Zhang *et al.* (2019, p. 7) “in this context, the lodging and transportation sectors can be considered the pioneers of peer-to-peer business”. Schor &

Cansoy (2019) also came to a similar conclusion, according to whom, accommodation and carpooling can be regarded as successfully established segments of commercial sharing. Schor (2016, p. 9) even states that “Airbnb (note: a sharing economy platform in the field of accommodation) is practically synonymous with the sharing economy”. A conclusion regarding perception of the accommodation and transport segments as established, or traditional segments of the sharing economy is also drawn by the study performed by Bocker & Meelen (2017), Cheng (2016), Frenken & Schor (2017), or Godelnik (2017). According to the majority of experts, the reason for this is operations performed by the multinational giants Airbnb and Uber in the given segments of the sharing economy (PwC, 2015; Schor & Cansoy, 2019), associated with their extensive investments (Godelnik, 2017). In the case of the transport segment, positive environmental impacts can also be regarded as a reason (Nijland & van Meerkerk, 2017). Further growth of these traditional segments of the sharing economy is anticipated in future, but also the development of sharing in the field of collaborative finance, on-demand household services or on-demand professional services (PwC, 2016). The available data (Eurobarometer, 2018) and

studies (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017a; IPSOS, 2020) also show that services in the accommodation and transport segment rank among the most important in EU countries and are dominant within the framework of services used in the sharing economy. On the basis of the aforementioned, we can formulate hypotheses valid for the monitored group of Czech customers.

- hypothesis H1: “*Customers are more familiar with options for sharing in the field of traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport as opposed to the other segments of the sharing economy.*”;
- hypothesis H2: “*Customers are more familiar with the existence of platforms in the field of traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport as opposed to the other segments of the sharing economy.*”;
- hypothesis H3: “*Customers use the services of platforms in traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport to a greater extent as opposed to services in other segments of the sharing economy.*”.

The awareness of the possibility of using services in individual segments of the sharing economy and the awareness about platforms of the sharing economy and the level of their use is, among other things, affected by age. According to Andreotti *et al.* (2017a), customers aged 18-34 exhibit a greater level of the awareness of and participation in the sharing economy. A study performed by IPSOS (2020) came to a similar conclusion, according to which people aged 18-29 from large cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants are more frequently aware of platforms of the sharing economy. They also more frequently use sharing economy services and the services of the Uber and Airbnb platforms (IPSOS, 2020). We can also formulate hypothesis H4: “*The younger generation is more aware of the possible forms of sharing in comparison with the older generation.*”, hypothesis H5: “*The younger generation is more aware of the existence of platforms of the sharing economy in comparison with the older generation.*” and hypothesis H6: “*The younger generation uses the services of individual platforms of the sharing economy to a greater extent in comparison with the older generation.*”.

The scope of knowledge and the level of use of services and individual platforms of the sharing economy is also influenced by other factors. It is affected positively by the level of education achieved (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017a; Eurobarometer, 2018). A difference is also evident in the awareness of and the level of use of sharing economy services between people living in large cities and those living in the countryside, the rural population having lower awareness and using these services less (Dudek & Salek, 2016; Eurobarometer, 2018). On the contrary, no major differences in the awareness of and the level of use of sharing economy services between men and women were proven in the past (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017a; Eurobarometer, 2018).

Data and Methodology

The aim of the study is to evaluate knowledge of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy and their platforms and to analyse and evaluate the level of their use employing the example of customers (the younger and the older generation) in one of the post-communist countries – the Czech Republic. In the given context, the study should answer the following research questions:

1) To what extent are customers familiar with possibilities for sharing from the point of view of the individual segments of the sharing economy? Do any differences exist in familiarity of customers with possibilities for sharing from the point of view of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy?

2) To what extent are customers familiar with the existence of platforms of the sharing economy? Do any differences exist in familiarity with platforms from the point of view of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy?

3) To what extent do customers use the services of selected sharing economy services? Do any differences exist in use of the services of platforms of the sharing economy from the point of view of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy?

4) Does the age of respondents have any impact on familiarity of customers with the possibilities of sharing, familiarity with platforms of the sharing economy or the level of their use?

The need to investigate the given issue from the point of view of a post-communist country such as the Czech Republic stems from the paradox which arises from the papers published so far. This is to say that on the one hand, the authors state that sharing is preferred in emerging economies as opposed to developed economies (Parente *et al.*, 2018). On the other hand, certain authors have come to the conclusion that sharing is used to a minimum extent in this country in comparison with the other countries of the European Union (Czech Statistical Office, 2018; European Commission, 2019).

The need to investigate knowledge and use of alternative sharing services and their platforms is given by the gap in research in this area, where authors have so far paid the minimum of attention to this topic. This assertion can be proven by the fact that there are only four publications on this topic registered in the Web of Science database as at 1 July 2021.

The reason for focusing on the aspect of age is in particular the fact that age plays a crucial role in the phenomenon of sharing, closely linked to ICT, as Elena-Bucea *et al.* (2020) point out with reference to data provided by the United Nations. This is a key socio-demographic characteristic of all relevant research in this area, as evidenced by the studies performed to date, e.g. (Andreotti *et al.*, 2017a).

On the basis of the literary research performed, the accommodation and passenger transportation segments are hereinafter regarded as traditional segments. The other segments are deemed to be developing segments.

Elaboration of the submitted study is based on systematic literary research. This was followed up with quantitative research, which allows for elimination or

minimisation of the subjectivity of judgment (Kealey & Protheroe, 1996), closely following of the original set of research goals, arrival at more objective conclusions, testing of the hypothesis, and identification of aspects of causality (Matveev, 2002). Primary data was obtained on the basis of a questionnaire survey performed from September to October 2019. A questionnaire survey was chosen with regard to its indisputable benefits consisting in low cost, relatively large sample sizes, and speed of data collection (Meadows, 2003; Thornton et al., 1997). The survey was conducted electronically, it being possible to fill in the questionnaire using the LimeSurvey application. The electronic form the survey was chosen in view of the fact that it is associated with benefits in the form of fewer missing data (Liaw, 2002) and saving on time relating to coding and analysis of data on a computer (Choy, 2014; Wright, 2006).

In view of the limits imposed by time, staffing numbers and finances, the quota sampling method was used for selection of respondents, this being the most commonly used method in sociological research (Chakrapani, 2000; Rada & Martin, 2014). The quota characteristics, the most commonly used in sociological studies, were used, these being sex and age (Manstead & Livingstone, 2012). Cross quotas were used. With its structure in line with the quota characteristics, the selection set corresponded to the structure of the population of the whole of the Czech Republic according to these check characteristics published on the website of the Czech Statistical Office and was made up of 630 respondents. The survey was performed using a network of interviewers from the ranks of the students of Pardubice University, who contacted the determined number of respondents on the basis of a breakdown of quotas and asked them to fill in the electronic questionnaire. A total of 614 completely filled-in questionnaires was received, this constituting a success rate of almost 98 %. The structure of respondents is evident from Tables 2–3.

Table 2

Structure of Respondents by Age

Age	N	%
15–29	224	36 %
30–80	390	64 %
Total	614	100 %

Table 3

Structure of Respondents by Sex

Sex/Age	15–29		30–80		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	114	51 %	192	49 %	306	50 %
Female	110	49 %	198	51 %	308	50 %
Total	224	100 %	390	100 %	614	100 %

The questionnaire in particular included semi-closed questions, in which respondents chose several possible answers from the offer and were also able to add other options. This format ascertained familiarity among respondents with alternative forms of sharing, familiarity with the existence of individual platforms of the sharing economy and the level of use of individual platforms of the sharing economy. Closed questions were used for identification of respondents.

Primary data obtained via the questionnaire survey was processed using IBM SPSS Statistics, version 24 statistical software. Descriptive statistics tools were applied. Knowledge of forms of sharing and individual platforms of the sharing economy among respondents (both respondents as a whole and also with their division into the younger and the older generation) was analysed with the aid of relative frequencies. The scope of use of individual platforms of the sharing economy was also analysed using relative frequency. As regards analysis of differences in familiarity among the younger and the older generation with possibilities for sharing, the individual platforms of the sharing economy and differences in the level of their use, we used Pearson's chi-square test for the purpose of statistical validation of differences. Differences were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. Statistically significant differences are indicated in bold in the tables.

Results

Knowledge of Forms of Sharing and Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy

Within the framework of the study, we first of all ascertained the scope in which respondents are familiar with the possibilities for sharing from the point of view of the individual segments of the sharing economy. We also ascertained whether any differences exist in familiarity among respondents from the point of view of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy. As mentioned earlier, we regard shared accommodation and shared passenger transportation to be traditional segments.

Table 4 clearly shows knowledge of the individual forms of sharing within the framework of the possible segments of the sharing economy. Eleven of the thirteen forms evaluated are known by half or more of the respondents. Sharing accommodation and carpooling can be regarded as the best known, i.e. traditional segments of the sharing economy, knowledge of which was indicated by 82 % of respondents.

Table 4

Knowledge of Forms of Sharing

Forms of sharing	N	%
Carpooling	502	82 %
Sharing accommodation	501	82 %
Sharing finances	494	81 %
Carsharing	473	77 %
Electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing	460	75 %
Sharing services	426	69 %
Shared transport of goods or food	408	66 %
Sharing tools and equipment	352	57 %
Shared entertainment	328	53 %
Sharing work or time	316	51 %
Sharing space	307	50 %
Shared education	216	35 %
Sharing insurance	214	35 %

Forms of sharing such as carsharing, electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing can also be regarded as very well-known, knowledge of these being declared by three-quarters or more of the respondents. Sharing of finances can also be ranked among very well-known forms of sharing with 81 % of the respondents knowing of its existence.

We subsequently ascertained the scope in which respondents are familiar with the existence of individual platforms of the sharing economy (Table 5). We also ascertained whether any differences exist in knowledge of platforms from the point of view of traditional and developing segments.

Table 5

Knowledge of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy

Segments/Forms	Platforms	N	%
Accommodation			
	Airbnb	386	63 %
	Couchsurfing	130	21 %
	Mojechaty	119	19 %
	Flatio	54	9 %
Passenger transportation			
<i>Carpooling</i>	Uber	487	79 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Liftago	245	40 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Taxify	197	32 %
<i>Bicycle sharing</i>	Rekola	176	29 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Blablacar	128	21 %
<i>Carsharing</i>	Car4way	93	15 %
<i>Carsharing</i>	HoopyGo	33	5 %
Finance			
	Zonky	497	81 %
	Startovač	132	22 %
	Fundlift	50	8 %
	Crowder	44	7 %
Other			
Sharing services	Hlidačky.cz	151	25 %
Shared transport of goods or food	Ubereats	129	21 %
Sharing services	Nejremesnici	82	13 %
Shared transport of goods or food	Zavezu	79	13 %
Sharing work or time	Supersoused	53	9 %
Sharing tools and equip.	SharyGo	39	6 %
Sharing work or time	LidskaSila	33	5 %

Knowledge of individual platforms of the sharing economy is clear from Table 5. From the point of view of familiarity with them, the Zonky platform (81 %) from the finance segment, the Uber platform (79 %) from the passenger transportation segment and the Airbnb platform (63 %) from the accommodation segment can be ranked among the TOP 3 platforms. Other monitored platforms, apart from the Liftago platform (40 %), are known by less than a third of respondents. Respondents also declared their knowledge of other platforms (e.g. Lime, Nextbike, FlixBus, Booking.com, Trivago, Trustroots, Kickstarter, Hithit, or damejidlo.cz), but only in a few cases.

The survey which was performed also shows that not a single platform from the passenger transportation segment is known to 14 % of respondents, 15 % know none from the finance segment, 26 % know none from the accommodation segment and 48 % of respondents do not know a single platform from the other segments of the sharing economy.

Use of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy

Within the framework of the study, we also ascertained the scope in which respondents use the services of selected platforms of the sharing economy (Table 6). At the same

time, we ascertained whether any differences exist in use of the services of platforms of the sharing economy from the point of view of traditional and developing segments of the sharing economy.

Table 6

Use of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy

Segments/Forms	Platforms	N	%
Accommodation			
	Airbnb	162	26 %
	Mojechaty	24	4 %
	Couchsurfing	23	4 %
	Flatio	1	0.2 %
Passenger transportation			
<i>Carpooling</i>	Uber	156	25 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Taxify	59	10 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Liftago	37	6 %
<i>Carpooling</i>	Blablacar	30	5 %
<i>Bicycle sharing</i>	Rekola	29	5 %
<i>Carsharing</i>	Car4way	9	2 %
<i>Carsharing</i>	HoopyGo	4	1 %
Finance			
	Zonky	20	3 %
	Startovač	10	2 %
	Fundlift	2	0.5 %
	Crowder	1	0.2 %
Other			
Sharing services	Hlidačky.cz	19	3 %
Shared transport of goods or food	Ubereats	25	4 %
Sharing services	Nejremesnici	11	2 %
Shared transport of goods or food	Zavezu	12	2 %
Sharing work or time	Supersoused	3	1 %
Sharing tools and equip.	SharyGo	3	0.5 %
Sharing work or time	LidskaSila	1	0.2 %

At the start of this section, it is necessary to mention that 360 (i.e. 59 %) of respondents stated that they had not used any of the platforms of the sharing economy as a user yet.

The scope in which respondents participated as users in sharing via the individual platforms of the sharing economy is evident from Table 6. It must be added that three respondents also stated that they use the Booking.com platform, two respondents that they used the damejidlo.cz platform and one respondent that they use the nesnezeno.cz platform.

Table 6 clearly shows that respondents use platforms in the accommodation and passenger transportation segments in the greatest scope. This specifically concerns the Airbnb (26 %) and Uber (25 %) platforms. Carpooling platforms rank among those platforms of the sharing economy which are used majorly from the point of view of the respondents we monitored.

Knowledge of Forms of Sharing and Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy in the Context of the Age of Respondents

The subject of the study was also to ascertain whether any differences exist in the awareness of the individual forms of sharing and platforms of the sharing economy between the younger and the older generation. First of all,

analysis was performed of the difference in familiarity with the individual forms of sharing between the younger generation aged 15 to 29 and the older generation aged 30 to 80.

A statistically significant difference was proven in all of the thirteen monitored forms of sharing between the group

of respondents up to the age of 29 and the group of respondents aged 30 and over. In all cases, the group of younger respondents exhibits a greater awareness of the possibilities for sharing in comparison with the group of older respondents. See Table 7.

Table 7

Knowledge of Forms of Sharing – Differences from the Point of View of the Younger and the Older Generation

Forms of sharing	Relative frequency		Chi-square test	
	Age 15–29	Age 30–80	Chi-square	Sig.
Carpooling	94 %	75 %	34.000	<0.0005
Sharing accommodation	93 %	75 %	29.780	<0.0005
Sharing finances	91 %	75 %	24.659	<0.0005
Carsharing	88 %	71 %	21.828	<0.0005
Electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing	87 %	68 %	27.637	<0.0005
Sharing services	84 %	61 %	37.321	<0.0005
Shared transport of goods or food	83 %	57 %	43.517	<0.0005
Sharing tools and equipment	70 %	50 %	23.473	<0.0005
Shared entertainment	68 %	45 %	31.394	<0.0005
Sharing work or time	66 %	43 %	30.118	<0.0005
Sharing space	65 %	41 %	32.499	<0.0005
Shared education	52 %	25 %	44.973	<0.0005
Sharing insurance	40 %	32 %	4.404	0.036

Analysis was also performed of the difference in familiarity with individual platforms of the sharing economy between the younger generation aged 15 to 29 and the older generation aged 30 to 80. A total of 22 platforms were used for the analysis, four from the accommodation segment, seven from the passenger transportation segment, four from the finance segment and seven from other segments of the sharing economy.

Table 8 clearly show that a statistically significant difference was proven in familiarity with the given platforms of the sharing economy between the younger and the older generation in fourteen cases. Of these, significantly greater familiarity with the given platforms is exhibited by representatives of the younger generation in thirteen cases. In

only one case was a statistically significant difference proven in favour of the older generation.

The fact that the younger generation is better familiarised with the existence of platforms of the sharing economy is also confirmed by the data contained in Table 9. This table provides information about which proportion of respondents from the given group (younger and older generation) is familiar with the existence of at least one platform from the accommodation, passenger transportation, finance and other segments. A statistically significant difference was proven in all segments in general knowledge of platforms between the younger and the older generation. The younger generation exhibits a greater awareness of the platforms of the sharing economy which exist.

Table 8

Knowledge of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy – Differences from the Point of View of the Younger and the Older Generation

Segments/Forms	Platforms	Relative frequency		Chi-square test	
		Age 15–29	Age 30–80	Chi-square	Sig.
Accommodation					
	Airbnb	77 %	55 %	31.176	<0.0005
	Couchsurfing	31 %	15 %	21.458	<0.0005
	Mojechaty	16 %	21 %	2.472	0.116
	Flatio	13 %	7 %	6.036	0.014
Passenger transportation					
<i>Carpooling</i>	Uber	89 %	74 %	21.366	<0.0005
<i>Carpooling</i>	Liftago	61 %	28 %	63.698	<0.0005
<i>Carpooling</i>	Taxify	48 %	23 %	39.806	<0.0005
<i>Bicycle sharing</i>	Rekola	41 %	22 %	26.548	<0.0005
<i>Carpooling</i>	Blablacar	31 %	15 %	23.010	<0.0005
<i>Carsharing</i>	Car4way	19 %	13 %	3.563	0.059
<i>Carsharing</i>	HoopyGo	9 %	4 %	6.696	0.010
Finance					
	Zonky	83 %	80 %	1.000	0.317
	Startovač	32 %	16 %	21.732	<0.0005

Segments/Forms	Platforms	Relative frequency		Chi-square test	
		Age 15–29	Age 30–80	Chi-square	Sig.
	Fundlift	11 %	7 %	3.116	0.078
	Crowder	9 %	6 %	1.647	0.199
Other					
Sharing services	Hlidačky.cz	34 %	19 %	18.197	<0.0005
Shared transport of goods or food	Ubereats	29 %	17 %	12.150	<0.0005
Sharing services	Nejremeslnici	5 %	18 %	19.495	<0.0005
Shared transport of goods or food	Zavezu	13 %	13 %	0.02	0.964
Sharing work or time	Supersoused	8 %	9 %	0.486	0.489
Sharing tools and equip.	SharyGo	9 %	5 %	3.937	0.047
Sharing work or time	LidskaSila	5 %	5 %	0.0002	0.988

Table 9

General Knowledge of Platforms from Individual Segments of the Sharing Economy – Differences from the Point of View of the Younger and the Older Generation

Segments	Relative frequency		Chi-square test	
	Age 15–29	Age 30–80	Chi-square	Sig.
Accommodation	86 %	68 %	23.595	<0.0005
Passenger transportation	96 %	80 %	31.199	<0.0005
Finance	89 %	82 %	5.013	0.025
Other	59 %	48 %	6.323	0.012

Use of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy in the Context of the Age of Respondents

Data was also ascertained as to whether any differences exist between the scope in which the younger and the older generation use individual platforms of the sharing economy. Similarly, as in the case of knowledge of platforms, 22

platforms were evaluated from the fields of accommodation, passenger transportation, finance and other.

Table 10 clearly shows that statistically significant differences in the scope of use of individual platforms was only proven in five cases, this being in the case of the accommodation platform Airbnb and four carpooling platforms (Uber, Taxify, Liftago and Blablacar).

Table 10

Use of Individual Platforms of the Sharing Economy – Differences from the Point of View of the Younger and the Older Generation

Segments/Forms	Platforms	Relative frequency		Chi-square test	
		Age 15–29	Age 30–80	Chi-square	Sig.
Accommodation					
	Airbnb	37 %	21 %	18.975	<0.0005
	Mojechaty	3 %	5 %	1.421	0.233
	Couchsurfing	3 %	4 %	0.377	0.539
	Flatio	0 %	0.3 %	0.448	0.448
Passenger transportation					
<i>Carpooling</i>	Uber	32 %	22 %	7.360	0.007
<i>Carpooling</i>	Taxify	13 %	7 %	5.813	0.016
<i>Carpooling</i>	Liftago	9 %	4 %	5.246	0.022
<i>Carpooling</i>	Blablacar	8 %	3 %	5.545	0.019
<i>Bicycle sharing</i>	Rekola	6 %	4 %	1.827	0.176
<i>Carsharing</i>	Car4way	1 %	2 %	0.802	0.371
<i>Carsharing</i>	HoopyGo	0.4 %	1 %	0.229	0.632
Finance					
	Zonky	2 %	4 %	1.176	0.278
	Startovač	1 %	2 %	0.184	0.668
	Fundlift	0 %	0.5 %	1.152	0.283
	Crowder	0 %	0.3 %	0.575	0.448
Other					
Sharing services	Hlidačky.cz	4 %	3 %	0.268	0.605
Shared transport of goods or food	Ubereats	5 %	4 %	0.636	0.425
Sharing services	Nejremeslnici	0.4 %	3 %	3.627	0.057
Shared transport of goods or food	Zavezu	1 %	2 %	0.696	0.404
Sharing work or time	Supersoused	0 %	1 %	1.732	0.188
Sharing tools and equip.	SharyGo	0.4 %	0.5 %	0.013	0.910
Sharing work or time	LidskaSila	0 %	0.3 %	0.575	0.448

Discussion and Conclusions

The study shows that at least half of the respondents are aware of the fact that they can use carpooling, shared accommodation, sharing of finances, carsharing, electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing, sharing of services, shared transport of goods and food, sharing of tools and equipment, sharing of entertainment, sharing of work and time and sharing of premises within the framework of the sharing economy model. Less than half of the respondents are aware of the fact that sharing can be used in the field of education or insurance. The respondents are the most aware of forms of sharing in the field of traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and passenger transportation (specifically carpooling, carsharing, electric scooter sharing and bicycle sharing). The conclusions reached in the past, for example by Bocker & Meelen (2017), Cheng (2016), Frenken & Schor (2017), Godelnik (2017), or Schor & Cansoy (2019), were thus confirmed. The respondents are also very well-informed about the possibility of sharing finances. This confirms the outlook of PwC (2016) forecasting growth in the importance of sharing finances. If we compare the findings we achieved with the results arrived at by Andreotti *et al.* (2017a) who analysed awareness of possible forms of sharing among 6,111 respondents from eleven Western European countries and Poland, we can state that the level of the awareness is comparable in the field of the traditional segments of the sharing economy – accommodation and passenger transportation. However, the awareness of the possibility of sharing finances is significantly higher, this being 46 %. On the basis of the above-mentioned, it is possible to state that hypothesis H1 (*Customers are more familiar with options for sharing in the field of traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport as opposed to the other segments of the sharing economy.*) was confirmed.

If we focus our attention on the differences in familiarity with the possibilities for or forms of sharing from a generational point of view, we can state that the younger generation (15–29) is significantly better informed about all of the monitored forms of sharing than the older generation (30–80). The given finding was also reached, for example, by Andreotti *et al.* (2017a). Hypothesis H4 (*The younger generation is more aware of the possible forms of sharing in comparison with the older generation.*) was therefore confirmed.

The study we performed also shows that the respondents are familiar to the greatest extent with the existence of platforms from the personal transportation segment (1st place), finance (2nd place) and accommodation (3rd place). This means that it is not only platforms from traditional sectors of the sharing economy which are dominant, sectors such as accommodation (Airbnb) and personal transportation (Uber), the fundamental importance of which is referred to for example by Schor & Cansoy (2019) or Godelnik (2017). A high level of familiarity is also evident as regards one of the financial platforms, this being the Zonky platform. In our opinion, this is associated with the extensive media campaign which has been conducted in the Czech Republic for several years now by this platform, in particular via television adverts. In 2019, for example, this platform spent EUR 4.6 million on advertising (Tramba,

2020). IPSOS (2020), a company which performs surveys mapping interest on the part of the Czech public in the sharing economy, also repeatedly ranks the Zonky, Uber and Airbnb platforms among the three best-known platforms of the sharing economy in the Czech Republic. For comparison, Andreotti *et al.* (2017a) rank Airbnb, Uber and Blablacar among the TOP platforms of the sharing economy. On the basis of the above-mentioned, we can state that hypothesis H2 (*Customers are more familiar with the existence of platforms in the field of traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport as opposed to the other segments of the sharing economy.*) was confirmed partially. This is to say that customers are the most familiar with platforms from the segment of passenger transportation and finance. The accommodation segment holds third place.

As regards differences in familiarity with the individual platforms of the sharing economy between the younger and the older generation, we can state that the younger generation exhibits a greater awareness as compared to the older generation. Statistically significant differences were proven in thirteen of the twenty-two platforms, this concerning platforms from the accommodation, passenger transportation and finance segments, as well as from the other segments of the sharing economy. Only in one case was a statistically significant difference proven in favour of the older generation, this being in the case of a platform which specialises in sharing trade services. IPSOS (2020) also came to the same conclusion in its study. Hypothesis H5 (*The younger generation is more aware of the existence of platforms of the sharing economy in comparison with the older generation.*) was therefore confirmed.

The study also shows that the respondents use two platforms belonging to traditional segments of the sharing economy in the greatest scope. This concerns the Airbnb platform (26 %), which belongs to the accommodation segment and the Uber platform (25 %), which belongs to the passenger transportation segment, specifically carpooling. We can therefore state that hypothesis H3 (*Customers use the services of platforms in traditional segments of the sharing economy such as accommodation and transport to a greater extent as opposed to services in other segments of the sharing economy.*) was confirmed. Similar findings are reached by the Eurobarometer (2018) study, according to which the population of the EU 28 used accommodation platforms in the greatest scope, followed by platforms in the passenger transportation segment. Among the two main reasons why they did not use platforms of the sharing economy, people living in the EU 28 stated that they did not know what sharing economy platforms were and also that they preferred traditional business models, in particular with regard to personal contact (Eurobarometer, 2018).

In the context of the above-mentioned findings about the difference in the awareness of the forms of sharing and platforms of the sharing economy between the younger and the older generation, the finding regarding the scope in which the younger and the older generation use the services of individual platforms of the sharing economy seems to be very interesting. With the exception of the accommodation platform Airbnb and four carpooling platforms, which are statistically used more by the younger generation, no other

statistically significant differences were identified in use of the monitored platforms between the younger and the older generation. Hypothesis H6 (*The younger generation uses the services of individual platforms of the sharing economy to a greater extent in comparison with the older generation.*) was therefore not confirmed.

The research performed resulted in the following main conclusions and recommendations:

- It can be stated that in the Czech Republic, a relatively good awareness of the general possibilities of sharing exists in particular among the younger generation. On the basis of the level of familiarity with specific platforms ascertained, it seems that the given awareness is very strongly dependent on the media visibility of the specific sharing segment or platform, be this in the positive or negative sense of the word. It would therefore be appropriate to target an information campaign about the possibilities and usefulness of sharing at the older generation of potential users.

- Research uncovered a gap in knowledge and use of the investigated platforms from the “other” segment. For development of this segment, broader information support would seem to be of use, led by both the competent public authorities and private organisations - especially platforms. The reason for this is the potential which this segment of sharing offers from the point of view of the older generation.

- Use of the sharing platforms under investigation in the Czech Republic is relatively low for the time being. We believe that it would be advisable to increase people’s confidence in the security and usefulness of using platforms in the sharing economy. This is a task both for the competent public administration authorities, in particular from the point of view of clarification of the legislative framework and positive media support, and also for the individual platforms, the functioning of which must be of a high quality, transparent and user-friendly. As already indicated above, we see great potential in involvement of the older generation. In their case, their motives relating to frugality, efficiency and saving on resources, which are characteristic for this generation, could be utilised. The fact that the former barrier of low computer literacy among older people is now disappearing also contributes towards the possibility of wider participation by the older generation in sharing. This makes this important field of the economy more accessible to people who may be interested of all ages.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the presented study is a source of knowledge both from a theoretical point of view and also a practical one. From a theoretical point of view, it contributes towards clarification of the view of alternative forms of sharing. This is to say that the issue of the sharing economy is a new topic, largely unexplored, and one which is also constantly developing (Gerwe & Silva, 2020; Habibi *et al.*, 2016). No basic typology is even

available which could be used while researching this phenomenon. However, in view of the diversity of definitions and concepts of sharing, it is difficult to create universal topology. Proposal of typology of forms of sharing is provided in the article, based on the current state of knowledge, respecting the currently existing forms of sharing. The fact that the presented study broadens knowledge about the level of the awareness of the sharing economy and the scope of use of its platforms in one of the post-communist countries can be regarded as a further benefit on the border between theory and practice. The article therefore contributes towards filling in the gaps in research into this issue, one which in particular from the point of view of developing countries, is only of peripheral interest to researchers. From the point of view of practice, the study can be used both by current platform operators and also parties potentially interested in an offer of services within the framework of a sharing economy model, but also by the policy makers. The findings contained in this study can, for example, be used while creating strategy for influencing actual and potential users of platform services, among other things, in terms of their differentiation with regard to various age categories.

Despite the fact that it is a source of original findings, the presented study is associated with certain limiting factors. These may be regarded as the fact that it was performed under the conditions of a small post-communist country – the Czech Republic, in which this phenomenon is still developing. Another limiting factor is the chosen methodology, this being with regard to the choice of the forms of sharing and platforms of the sharing economy. We are aware that their definition was based on the current state of knowledge which will change over time. Last but not least, a limiting factor of the presented study is the fact that it engages in evaluation of status not causal relationships, which was however the intention of the authors in this part of the research.

In the context of the above-mentioned limiting factors, it is possible to determine possible future directions for research. First and foremost, we can recommend performance of comparative studies devoted to monitored issues on an international level, e.g. within the framework of V4 or EU 27 countries. Analysis can also be recommended of the impact of other factors such as education or life in the city or in a village on the scope of familiarity with forms of sharing, platforms of the sharing economy and the level of their use. Last but not least, we would recommend creation of a study analysing the opinions and attitudes of respondents towards selected aspects of the sharing economy, such as the reasons for participating or not participating in it, the level of its regulation or its economic, social and environmental impacts.

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