

The Role of Sustainable Supply Chain and Customer Care in Sharing Economy: The Moderating Effect of Customer Attitude: A Case of Ridesharing and Carsharing

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Abstract:

Sharing economy is known as a growing sector in the contemporary business environment with a significant benefit for the customers. This study aims to examine the influence of sustainable supply chain (SSC), customer care (CC) on sharing economy with the moderating role of customer's attitude. To address the study objective, a valid sample of 445 respondents from ASEAN economies was collected and empirically analyzed, testing the relationship between the variables of interest. Findings of the study show that there is a significant and direct impact of SSC and CC on sharing economy under full sample of the study. Besides, the interaction effect of the customer's attitude between SSC-SE, and between CC-SE demonstrate that this relationship is stronger. Study discussion indicates an excellent theoretical and empirical contribution in the literature of sharing economy and sustainability due to novel interaction role of customer's attitude. Academicians, researchers, industry experts, and business decision-makers can significantly use the study findings. However, several limitations are also observed in this study. First, this research has investigated the one factor of sharing economy (car-sharing, ride-sharing) while ignoring the overall industry. Therefore, future research is highly recommended to cover other dimensions of sharing economy sector, containing a range of characteristics and business models. Second, sample of interest is 445, who came from selected ASEAN economies. For future studies, the sample size could be expanded with in-depth analyses based on the sub-grouping of the respondents as per regional economies. Third, this research has adopted a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between variables of interest, with no focus on qualitative techniques like interview. A further contribution could be justified by addressing these limitations.

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Introduction

Since the start of the recent decade, the growth in the field of sharing economy is remarkable. A major development is observed for the hospitality, entertainment, automobile, financial, and retail

sector in the field of sharing economy (Codagnone & Martens, 2016; Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2016; Katz, 2015; Quattrone, Proserpio, Quercia, Capra, & Musolesi, 2016; Rauch & Schleicher, 2015). The concept of sharing economy (SE) is

entirely different from the traditional business activities where business firms are continually working for the purchase and sale of physical products (Hu, Liu, Yuen, Lim, & Hu, 2019). However, SE is focusing only on inviting the various group of individuals, businessmen, and members from the society to provide their products/service in exchange for some earning (Hu et al., 2019). This offer of product/service has made sharing economy more flexible for the customers with the convenient at the same time too. Although a significant growth factor is observed for the SE, yet various other fields associated to it are yet to be explored. The reason is that research contribution in the area of SE is still emerging, hence providing a good opportunity to observe its latest trends in the modern world (Heinrichs, 2013; Lehdonvirta, Kässi, Hjorth, Barnard, & Graham, 2019; Loh & Agyeman, 2019; Parente, Geleilate, & Rong, 2018). Meanwhile, various policymakers have their concerns regarding the long-run influence of sharing economy on the business, societies, and both local and international communities. A limited number of research work is contributed in the field of sharing economy, exploring its association with the concept of sustainability and natural environment. In recent years, authors have defined the idea of sustainability in terms of green management addressing the terms like green supplier management, eco-design, green customer management, and green supplier management too (Hamdy, Elsayed, & Elahmady, 2018; Melander, 2018; Yu, Zhang, & Huo, 2019).

The term collaborative consumption is also used for the sharing economy initially discussed by the Felson and Spaeth under the theory of human ecology to specify the collaborative type of consumption in overall society (Dredge & Gyimóthy, 2015). However, the research work under the title of collaborative consumption is primarily divided into three major categories. The first one has examined a specific type of CC, like some online platforms. The second type specifies the collaborative consumption as a whole

phenomenon as its related terms whereas the third type shows those activities which investigate the modes of consumption and exchanges as well. However, authors explain collaborative consumption as a process of consuming goods and services in a set of joint activities (Belk, 2014; Felson & Spaeth, 1978; Perren & Grauerholz, 2015).

Literature Review and variables

Sharing Economy

Literature contribution is emerging day-by-day to provide an understanding of the sharing economy in different industries. For instance, Yi, Yuan, and Yoo (2019) investigated the effect of perceived risk factors on the adoption of sharing economy in the tourism industry. With the sample respondents of 300 customers, study findings have reasonably provided the argument that factors like privacy and financial risks are negatively affecting the intention to use the sharing economy. However, risk factors under the title of physical and performance are positively related to the behavioral intention for using the sharing economy. It is widely accepted that the disruptive nature of Airbnb is the significant cause of risk paradox, and sharing economy concept is widely introduced in various sectors with the provision of range of benefits to asset-owners and consumers too. Hofmann, Sæbø, Braccini, and Za (2019) have investigated the role of public sector in sharing economy in defining public values. The reason for the motivation for this study specifies the significant growth of sharing economy and its corresponding implication for the sharing values. Xu (2019) highlights the fact that consumers who are providing online reviews of various products and services have shared range of reviews. However, higher sharing consumers care more about economic values and social interaction. Li, Ding, Cui, Lei, and Mou (2019).

Sustainable Supply Chain

Various aims of supply chain management are defined in the literature, but the most significant is to cope the customer demand promptly while taking

care of the cost and more satisfaction too. One of the most growing fields in the research of supply chain is sustainable supply chain and its development, which aims to address the current needs of the individuals without hurting the natural environment (Chienwattanasook & Jermstittiparsert, 2018; Jermstittiparsert, Joemsittiparsert, & Phonwattana, 2019; Somjai & Jermstittiparsert, 2019). To get sustainable supply chain development, the management of various resources, material, information with the consideration of social, economic and environmental factors (Hu et al., 2019). Various authors have provided a range of descriptions for sustainable supply chain (Carter & Rogers, 2008; Dubey et al., 2017; Eskandarpour, Dejax, Miemczyk, & Péton, 2015; Saenz, Koufteros, Touboulis, & Walker, 2015; Seuring & Müller, 2008). For example, Keating, Quazi, Kriz, and Coltman (2008) expressed their opinion that sustainable supply chain analyzes the organizational earning and social benefit with the lower environmental adverse effects. Besides, the existing trends of literature primarily focus on the business practices of sustainable supply chain and its influence on business performance. However, the field of sharing economy and its relationship with sustainable supply chain has provided a significant theoretical and empirical gap to explore.

Customer Care

Every business organization is striving to provide maximum care to its customers for attaining a growth opportunity in the market place. However, the role of innovative technologies is instrumental in bringing companies and their customers closer. For instance, Gorry and Westbrook (2011) have investigated the role of technology and empathy in customer care. Meanwhile, the relationship between the business and customer can significantly enrich if the senior managers affirm their commitment and empathic involvement with the customers. O'Hagan and Persaud (2008) consider the customer-service in the health sector as a significant priority as it can provide more patient care and reduction of medical errors. Additionally, their paper has integrated the

discussion for the customer service in terms of theory and practices from existing literature. The present research has also considered the factor of customer care as a significant determinant in sharing economy.

Customer Attitude

Various theories and empirical contributions in the field of social science have provided the right meaning of customer attitude and behavior. For example, the fundamental assumption of theory of planned behavior or TBP has analyzed the decision-making process of the customers. It is assumed that customer's decision is primarily defined by his/her attitude and overall subjective norms. A similar assumption is observed under theory of reasoned action, but several limitations are also assumed in the literature work for both of these theoretical assumptions. Besides, some authors have claimed that emotional and functional values of the customer are equally crucial in the decision making (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Viswanathan, Rosa, & Harris, 2005).

Research Methodology and Sample

This research is primarily based on the one-step data collection techniques as adopted through a quantitative survey using the close-ended questions in the questionnaire. For this purpose, questionnaire was developed and distributed to various respondents who are familiar with the concept of sustainable supply chain, sharing economy, collaborative consumptions and their intention towards sharing economy. For the development of the scale (covering the variables of interest), existing literature was thoroughly reviewed. Initially, literature contribution was highlighted covering the title of the sustainable supply chain or SSC under the context of sharing economy; relevant items were extracted as adapted for this research (details for each item is provided under analysis and discussion portion). Second, after the review of the relevant literature, overall 12 items for SSC are extracted and somehow upgraded to address the study title and objectives. After the identification of

relevant items for SSC, similar procedure was adopted for the CC, SE, and CAT, respectively. For this purpose, seven items for CC, four items for CAT, and five for SE are selected. After the selection of items for both exogenous and endogenous variables, overall Likert scale of 5-points (from 1=strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree) were added in the questionnaire for which targeted respondents could quickly provide their views. Besides, an introductory section for the understanding of the respondents was also added in the questionnaire containing the purpose and data usage objectives were also explained. After the development of the questionnaire, targeted respondents were various visitors in the ASEAN region observed with the help of group members of 10 individuals. With the help of these teammates, researchers have collected the data from 445 individuals with no missing observations from July-2019 to Sep-2019 respectively. The sample of this study is found to be valid enough for both descriptive and empirical analyses. For the analysis purpose, this study has applied the descriptive findings like the measurement of central tendency and dispersion through mean score and standard deviation from the mean. Additionally, to provide the data trends kurtosis and skewness were also calculated and presented under research findings. After the descriptive findings, factor loadings are also calculated along with composite reliability (CR), error variance, and items R-square along with some model fit indices. For the hypotheses testing, regression coefficients with variance inflation factor VIF score are provided, and discussion is made under subsequent section of the study.

Analysis of the Findings

Descriptive trends of the responses are presented under Table 1 with total observations, mean score, deviation of the mean, and both skewness and kurtosis with their relative standard error of the scores. It is observed that total number of valid responses for each of the items under SSC, CC, SE, and CAT is 445, observing no missing values for them. For sustainable supply chain overall twelve

items ranging from SSCA to SSCL are under consideration where average mean score for ten items out of twelve is above 3, except for SSCF and SSCL, respectively. Similarly, for the relative standard deviation (SD) of selected items, range of values lies between 1 to 1.50 accordingly. Further, the mean score for CC items is also above three except for CCiv; 2.93. It shows that majority of the items for CC are showing a good outcome in the form of central tendency. Lastly, both CAT and SE are also providing a reasonable understanding for their descriptive layout of the data.

Table 1: Descriptive Results

Items with Descriptions	N Statistic	Mean Statistic	SD Statistic	Skewness Statistic	Kurtosis Std. Error	Std. Error
SSCA: experience of eco-friendly products	445	3.3034	1.11707	-.405	.116	-.469 .231
SSCB: experience those products with low use of hazardous materials	445	3.4067	1.17728	-.432	.116	-.628 .231
SSCC: experience those products that design to use recyclable materials	445	3.2472	1.30385	-.221	.116	-1.107 .231
SSCD: use eco-friendly products	445	3.0562	1.16402	.174	.116	-.931 .231
SSCE: use products for company having environmental management system	445	3.8045	1.20434	.039	.116	-1.110 .231
SSCF: use products for company having major suppliers with ISO certification	445	2.8090	1.29688	.116	.116	-1.122 .231

SSCG: use products for company who evaluating supplier practices for environment.	445	3.0225	1.36376.023	.116 -1.306	.231
SSCH: participate in reducing greenhouse gas	445	3.4449	1.30306-.431	.116 -.991	.231
SSCI: Participation in cleaner production	445	3.9753	1.19187.128	.116 -.914	.231
SSCJ: participation in reducing the utilization of N.R	445	3.7438	1.21625.252	.116 -.823	.231
SSCK: participation in promoting eco-friendly product/service	445	3.1955	1.29447-.199	.116 -1.122	.231
SSCL: participation in clear environmental objective of the society	445	2.9955	1.30832-.064	.116 -1.176	.231
CCi: CC is wise enough decision by the companies	445	3.3348	1.20164-.487	.116 -.604	.231
CCii: CC is a positive thing	445	3.4899	1.24228-.547	.116 -.693	.231
CCiii: sharing and promoting CC in community is a good act	445	3.0966	1.42914-.115	.116 -1.297	.231
CCiv: consistent working on CC can provide the companies with more loyal customers	445	2.9326	1.22656-.018	.116 -.987	.231
CCv: continue to use the products/service of the companies with CC in future	445	3.2494	1.18484-.313	.116 -.798	.231
CCvi: supporting CC makes the companies more responsiveness	445	3.2854	1.17668-.252	.116 -.873	.231

CCvii: CC pushes the companies to provide valuable products/service.	445	3.0742	1.28097-.062	.116 -1.104	.231
cat1: using ridesharing is desirable	445	3.1506	1.23838-.088	.116 -1.022	.231
cat2: using ridesharing is useful	445	2.9865	1.30308-.024	.116 -1.228	.231
cat3: using ridesharing is wise behaviour	445	2.7910	1.31310.205	.116 -1.086	.231
cat4: using ridesharing is valuable	445	2.9101	1.38232.162	.116 -1.270	.231
SEI: sharing economy like ridesharing is a good platform	445	3.6831	1.24510-.718	.116 -.542	.231
SEII: sharing economy like ridesharing is gaining customer attention day by day	445	3.5056	1.16947-.370	.116 -.939	.231
SEIII: sharing economy like ridesharing has a significant growth opportunity in future	445	3.3483	1.24210-.288	.116 -.974	.231
SEIV: sharing economy like ridesharing is comfortable	445	3.6247	1.19903-.592	.116 -.696	.231
SEV: Sharing a ride with someone is a kind of social help	445	3.4629	1.19744-.422	.116 -.842	.231

Figure 1 shows the items for both SSC and CC, along with the error terms and correlation between them. The reason for showing the structural model of factor loadings for both SSC and CC is that both are under the title of exogenous variables. For SSC 12 items, seven items for CC are presented below:

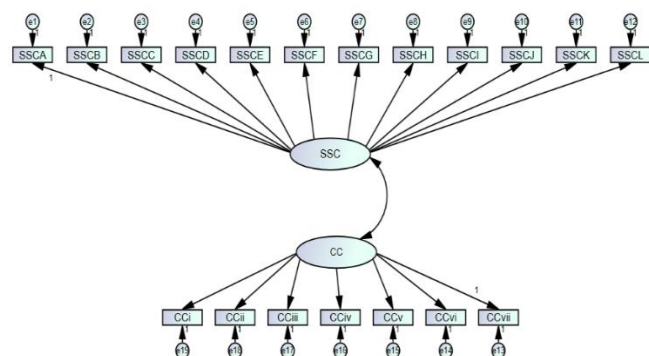


Figure 1: Structural Model for the Factor Analysis

Table 2 provides the results for the factor loadings for all the items of variables of the interest. As per the findings, it is depicted that factor loadings for the items of SSC indicate a good loading, except the lowest for SSCF which is 0.597, respectively. The highest loading is reflected by SSCL which is .875. Meanwhile, the value of CR for the selected items of SSC is .941, along with the relative value of error variance and item R-square accordingly. For CC, factor loading is observed as; 0.667 for CCI, 0.769 for CCii, 0.785 for CCiii, 0.886 for CCiv, 0.842 for CCv, 0.736 for CCvi, and 0.719 for CCvii respectively. The score in terms of CR for these items was 0.913 showing a good trend. Besides, factor loadings for CAT and SE items are also showing good trend for the factor loadings along with other presented measures of the study. All of these factor loadings and model fit indices are calculated through SPSS-AMOS 24 version. Figure 2 shows the factor loadings for two exogenous variables.

Table 2: Factor Loadings and Related Findings

Items with Descriptions	Factor Loadings	CR	Error variance	Item R-square
SSCA: experience of eco-friendly products	0.722	0.941	0.479	0.521
SSCB: experience those products with low use of hazardous materials	0.836		0.301	0.699
SSCC: experience those products that design to use recyclable materials	0.693		0.520	0.480
SSCD: use eco-friendly products	0.719		0.483	0.517

SSCE: use products for company having environmental management system	0.816	0.913	0.334	0.666
SSCF: use products for company having major suppliers with ISO certification	0.597		0.644	0.356
SSCG: use products for company who evaluates supplier practices forenvironment.	0.725		0.474	0.526
SSCH: participate in reducing greenhouse gas	0.801		0.358	0.642
SSCI: Participation in cleaner production	0.752		0.434	0.566
SSCJ: participation in reducing the utilization of N.R	0.763		0.418	0.582
SSCK: participation in promoting eco-friendly product/service	0.736		0.458	0.542
SSCL: participation in clear environmental objective of the society	0.875		0.234	0.766
CCI: CC is wise enough decision by the companies	0.667		0.555	0.445
CCii: CC is a positive thing	0.769		0.409	0.591
CCiii: sharing and promoting CC in community is a good act	0.785		0.384	0.616
CCiv: consistent working on CC can provide the companies with more loyal customers	0.886		0.215	0.785
CCv: continue to use the products/service of the companies with CC in future	0.842	0.829	0.291	0.709
CCvi: supporting CC makes the companies more responsiveness	0.736		0.458	0.542
CCvii: CC pushes the companies to provide valuable products/service.	0.719		0.483	0.517
cat1: using ridesharing is desirable	0.703		0.506	0.494
cat2: using ridesharing is useful	0.761		0.421	0.579
cat3: using ridesharing is wise behaviour	0.752		0.434	0.566
cat4: using ridesharing is valuable	0.743		0.448	0.552
SEI: sharing economy like ridesharing is a good platform	0.766		0.413	0.587
SEII: sharing economy like ridesharing is gaining customer attention day by day	0.726		0.473	0.527
SEIII: sharing economy like ridesharing has a significant growth opportunity in future	0.739		0.454	0.546
SEIV: sharing economy like ridesharing is comfortable	0.698		0.513	0.487
SEV: Sharing a ride with someone is a kind of social help	0.657		0.568	0.432

Table 3 providing the results for the model fit of the study. It shows that measurement model indicates the good fit of the data (GFI=0.910, AGFI=0.887, IFI= 0.942, CFI= 0.943, PNFI= 0.784, and

RMSEA= 0.0378). These model fit indices explains that most of them are covering the criteria of threshold.

Table 3: Model fit Titles

Model fit titles	Values	Threshold Point
GFI	0.910	≥ 0.90
AGFI	0.887	≥ 0.80
IFI	0.942	≥ 0.90
CFI	0.943	≥ 0.90
PNFI	0.784	≥ 0.70
RMSEA	0.0378	≥ 0.05

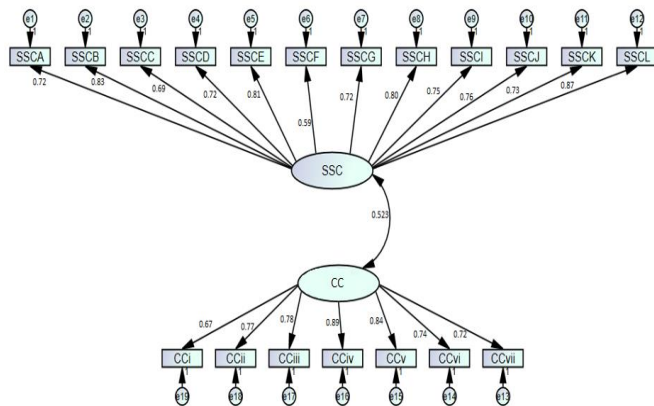


Figure 2: Factor Loadings for Exogenous Variables

For hypotheses testing, findings are presented under the title of Table 4 along with model fit. The evaluation of stated model fits indicate the goodness and consistency of the findings. The model fit indices like GFI, AGFI, CFI, and PNFI along with RMSEA are showing the evidence that there is no issue for the model goodness and relationship between stated variables is reasonably acceptable under the collected sample of the study. For the purpose of hypotheses testing, overall four hypotheses are developed covering the title of H1 to H4 respectively. More specifically, the first two hypotheses (H1-H2) are showing the direction relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables of the study. While moderating effect of CAT is observed and tested through H3 and H4 respectively. The result of these estimated

regression coefficients are also presented under Table 4. As expected, the sustainable supply chain or SSC positively affected the sharing economy, thereby supporting the H1. The findings for the direct influence of SSC on SE are observed through standardized coefficient and standard error respectively ($\beta=0.1278, 0.025$). It shows that sharing economy and related activities are positively influenced and increased by the factor of sustainable supply chain, supporting the argument that “the relationship between SSC and SE is positively and significantly associated”. For the direct impact of CC on SE, regression coefficients and stated p-value supporting the argument that significant and positive relationship exists between the both. It indicates that on average, the influence of collaborative consumption or CC on SE is highly positive, justifying that more consumption under collaborative efforts is beneficial for sharing economy. The value of t-test signifies a good score above the threshold point of 1.96. As per the above stated findings, the direct impact between SSC, CC and SE is justified and accepted at 5 percent significance level.

After the direct impact, the moderating role of CAT between SSC-SE, and between CC-SE is examined. For test the H3 (The relationship between SSC and SE is positively moderated by CAT, such that this relationship is stronger at higher CAT), Model 2 is presented under Table 4. It is observed that with the interaction of CAT, the relationship between SSC and SE is positively significant at 5 percent. The coefficient of 0.9125 justifies that with the involvement of CAT, higher influence of SSC on SE is examined which was 0.1278 earlier under Model 1 of the study. therefore, it is accepted that higher CAT between SSC and SE is beneficial, hence accepting H3. Additionally, the moderating influence of CAT between CC and SE relationship is also empirically tested and presented under Model 2. The coefficient of 0.6258 justifying the significant moderating effect of CAT between CC and SE under full

sample of the study. The direct relationship between CC and SE was 0.6972, which is found to be 0.7358, explaining the fact that with the more involvement of CAT, relationship between CC and SE is positively moderated, hence accepting H4 of the study.

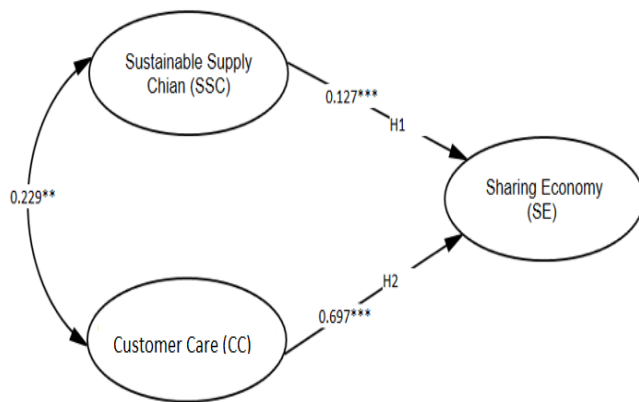


Figure 4: Direct Relationship between SSC, CC and SE

Table 4: Regression Findings for the relationship between CSS, SE, and CAT

Regression Findings	Model 1				Model 2				VI F	Final Remarks
	Hypotheses	Path coefficient	T-value	p-value	Path coefficient	T-value	p-value			
		ents, standard error			ents, standard error					
SSC > SE	H1: The relationship between SSC	0.1278 (0.025)	5.12	0.00**	0.1022 (0.024)	4.25	0.00**	2.0165	2.01	supported

and SE is positively and significantly associated.										
CC> SE	H2: The relationship between CC and SE is positively and significantly associated.	0.6972 (0.167)	4.15	0.00**	0.5973 (0.127)	4.73	0.00**	3.685	3.68	supported
SSC > CA T>S E	H3: The relationship between SSC and SE is positively and significantly associated.	0.9125 (0.08)	8.45	0.00**	1.325	1.32	0.00**	1.325	1.32	supported

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Model Fit Indices

GFI	0.91	≥0.	Accepted
AGF	0.88	≥0.	Accepted
I	7	80	
IFI	0.94	≥0.	Accepted
CFI	0.94	≥0.	Accepted
PNFI	0.78	≥0.	Accepted
RMS	0.03	≥0.	Accepted
EA	78	05	

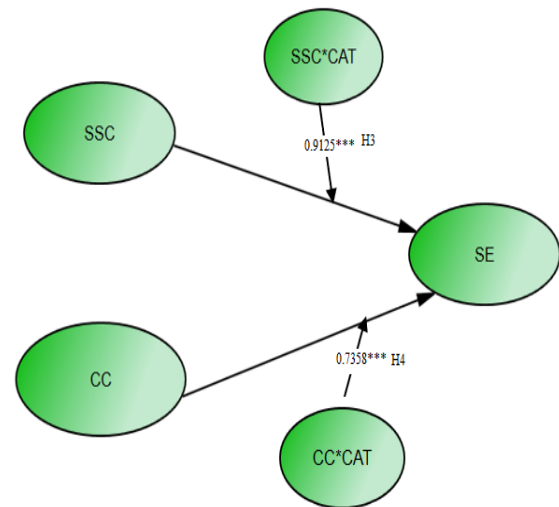


Figure 5: Moderating effect of CAT between SSC-SE, and CC-SE

Conclusion and Future Direction

By the end, this research aims to examine the impact of SSC and CC on sharing economy platforms as observed through Ridesharing and Carsharing, with the moderating effect of CAT. A questionnaire that includes the various items of SSC, CC, SE, and CAT is developed and distributed among the targeted respondents a valid response of 445 were finally collected for the data analyses and hypotheses testing. For analyzing the data, descriptive statistics have provided good layout of the data being collected, while factor loadings along with model fit indices have demonstrated the

significance of each item in the study variables. Through empirical analyses, it is found that sustainable supply chain has its positive and significant impact on the sharing economy. Providing the opportunity for more growth of SSC is leading towards more economic activities in the form of ride sharing, a good measure of sharing economy.

Additionally, the influence of CC is also found to be significant and positive on sharing economy, showing the fact that collaborative consumption is an excellent tool to enhance the inter-economic activities. Meanwhile, a significant contribution of this study is observed through moderating effect of CAT between SSC, CC, SE indicators. It is inference that a higher value of SE is observed with the more influence of CAT as a moderator between sustainable supply chain, CC and sharing economy. Based on the findings, this study has significantly contributed to the literature and implications in the industry. It is observed that this research is one of the first to analyze the moderating effect of customer attitude SSC, CC and sharing economy.

Further, it deeply links and analyze the interactive role of CAT in the literature of sharing economy like ride-sharing and car-sharing. Comparing to the existing work, this research has espoused a detailed concept of examining the relationship of sustainable supply chain, collaborative consumption and sharing economy with the presence of CAT. The current findings reasonably provide compelling evidence in the field of sustainability where economic pillar of sharing economy is a significant factor to observe. Therefore, companies and related industries should focus on activities like SSC and collaborative consumption, which are leading towards more activities of SE with the presence of CAT too. For this purpose, this study highly recommends those companies which are dealing with SE to promote sustainable activities to get more growth opportunities.

Besides, this study is also confined to some limitations. First, this research has investigated the one factor of sharing economy (car-sharing, ride-sharing) while ignoring the overall industry.

Therefore, future research is highly recommended to cover other dimensions of sharing economy sector, containing a range of characteristics and business models. Second, sample of interest is 445, who came from selected ASEAN economies. For future studies, sample size can be expanded with in-depth analyses based on the sub-grouping of the respondents as per regional economies. Third, this research has adopted a quantitative approach to examine the relationship between variables of interest, with no focus on qualitative techniques like interview. A further contribution could be justified through addressing this limitation too.

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