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Participating in the sharing economy: The role of individual characteristics

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The sharing economy is attracting increasing research attention. However, scholarly knowledge lacks understanding about the individuals who are the key players in this emerging phenomenon. This study uses an explorative approach to investigate the individual-level characteristics of sharing economy users and providers. We analyze a sample of 1170 respondents and reveal that socio-demographics (gender, age, and education), personality traits (Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Conscientiousness), and attitudes (interdependent self, materialism, sharing economy support, and perceived public value contributions) are significantly associated with people's activities in the sharing economy. Our results shed new lights into the academic debate about individual drivers of the sharing economy.

1 | INTRODUCTION

The sharing economy, which is based on sharing resources and providing users with access to goods and services they do not own, is receiving increased attention from theorists and practitioners alike (e.g., Belk, 2007; Martin, 2016). However, a common definition and understanding of the concept between researchers are missing,[1] resulting in ambivalent and contested scholarly conversations (Acquier et al., 2017; Cheng, 2016; Martin, 2016). Acquier et al. (2017) position the sharing economy concept on three fundamental pillars: (1) access economy, (2) platform economy, (3) community-based economy. Due to the sharing economy's theoretical infancy, we believe that a clear definition of the investigated sharing economy dimension is necessary. This paper follows the platform-based dimension of the sharing economy. Our investigation focuses on platform-based solutions that enable the sharing of goods and services. In that sense, the sharing economy is composed of online platforms that enable people to generate income from their unproductive assets (Munger, 2018). In the past, the possession of personal belongings such as houses, cars, bicycles, clothes, tools, storage spaces, or other consumer items was inherently linked with their solitary use (used only by the people—or a small circle around them—who possessed them). The sharing economy now allows people to rent what they need on a short-term or long-term basis. New software platforms connect users and providers in a time- and cost-efficient manner. From a user's perspective, using platforms to engage in the sharing economy can lead to faster decisions and lower planning costs regarding consumption. However, engaging in the sharing economy can also be associated with higher transaction costs as the provision of a shared product or service is always attributed to some sort of communicational effort. Various considerations like time of planning or price come into play for evaluating whether it is a reduction or an increase in transaction costs. It is not only the sharing economy's potential time- and cost-effectiveness that makes it attractive to users; it also has a sustainable dimension that draws attention. Many sharing economy organizations adopt sustainable strategies, emphasizing ecological and altruistic ambitions such as curing resource depletion and increasing sustainable consumption (e.g., Bellotti et al., 2015). However, this sustainability ideal is being questioned. The sharing economy's impact is controversial, seen as either "a pathway to sustainability or a nightmarish form of neoliberal capitalism" (Martin, 2016, p. 149). Thus, as Fleming (2018), p. 8) summarizes, the "individualization of work, spread of freelancing, on-demand part-time work and insecure jobs in the sharing economy" are challenges to be taken seriously.

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Although the research on the sharing economy is expanding, knowledge about the individuals who are the key players in this emerging trend is remarkably sparse (Bucher et al., 2016). Previous research has identified a multitude of motives for participating in the sharing economy, such as financial benefits (e.g., Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2015), environmental concerns (Möhlmann, 2015), prosocial values (e.g., Albinsson & Yasanthi Perera, 2012), hedonic motives (e.g., Hamari et al., 2016), and utility (e.g., Hellwig et al., 2015; Lamberton & Rose, 2012). Still, the results remain equivocal and reveal some shortcomings (Davidson et al., 2018; Möhlmann, 2015). First, extant research on the determinants of sharing has been either purely conceptual (e.g., Belk, 2007, 2010; Benoit et al., 2017), or it has focused explicitly on one single sector, such as mobility or accommodation (e.g., Barnes & Mattsson, 2017; Möhlmann, 2015). Second, prior research largely neglects to differentiate between users as recipients and users as providers of goods and services; this may have produced ambiguous results (Davidson et al., 2018). This ambiguity is shown in an unclear relatedness between single determinants like trust, cost savings, and familiarity and the engagement in the sharing economy as a recipient, respectively, a provider. Furthermore, for the determinant of materialism, Davidson et al. (2018) stress that the cultural context plays an essential role in determining its effect.

One of the rare studies to distinguish between the user/provider perspectives reported a mismatch between users' and providers' motivations for using sharing economy services (Bellotti et al., 2015). Consequently, personal motives on the supply side remain somewhat uncharted territory (Bucher et al., 2016). Third, previous research contributions have focused primarily on single determinants instead of a holistic approach (Möhlmann, 2015). While prior work has mainly concentrated on individual attitudes and motives determining collaborative consumption, the roles played by socio-demographic variables and personality factors remain underexplored, particularly in empirical studies. Earlier studies in psychology provide evidence for the interrelation between psychographic and socio-demographic variables regarding consumer behavior (e.g., Egea & Frutos, 2013). In particular, Mondak et al. (2010) emphasize that for identifying and understanding the fundamental mechanisms that underpin human behavior, situational and dispositional factors must be considered. Behavior and thus participation are shaped mainly by individuals' attitudes, but their interactions also play a part. Prior research on participation in the sharing economy has focused solely on attitudes and motivations (e.g., Barnes & Mattsson, 2017; Bellotti et al., 2015; Benoit et al., 2017; Bucher et al., 2016). In general, attitudes are context-sensitive and, therefore, subject to change (Athayde, 2009). Attitudes and motivations influence participative behavior; how they do so and to what extent depends on individuals' characteristics (Mondak et al., 2010).

To recapitulate, current scholarly understanding concentrates on conceptual investigations, neglects to differentiate between providers and recipients, and lacks a holistic approach. The latter is manifested in the focus on attitudes and motives as the only determinants for participating in the sharing economy, excluding socio-demographics and personality traits. We seek to close these research gaps by providing a more comprehensive insight into the driving forces for participating in the sharing economy, thus offering a more nuanced look at how users' and providers' intentions are shaped when engaging in the sharing economy. As our holistic research design has not been previously applied, we adopt an exploratory approach. Specifically, we address the following research question: *What role do individual characteristics play in shaping an individual's intention to participate in the sharing economy as a user and as a provider?*

We use a sample size of more than 1100 participants and make three key contributions. First, we move beyond the theoretical discourse currently driving the academic debate about the sharing economy and answer the call for reliable data (Barnes & Mattsson, 2017; Bellotti et al., 2015). Building on empirical findings, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of why individuals engage in collaborative consumption and the possible implications of so doing. Second, this study advances and extends current knowledge on the sharing economy by considering different sharing contexts, including non-profit and for-profit sharing ventures within various industries. Moreover, this study encompasses a more extensive and diverse set of sharing economy organizations than most studies. It also refers to calls to investigate sharing behavior from a provider point of view (e.g., Davidson et al., 2018). Third, by proposing a model that regards personality as one of the antecedents of sharing behavior, we show that specific personality traits play a role in predicting individual participation that is on a par with that played by socio-demographic variables.

Our paper is structured as follows: First, we lay the conceptual foundation by exemplarily explaining the sharing economy concept, the Five Factor Model, and the theory of planned behavior. Next, we review extant research on how individual characteristics such as socio-demographics, personality traits, and attitudes can motivate participation in the sharing economy. We then introduce our theoretical framework and develop the hypotheses. Following this, we discuss the methods used in this paper and describe our empirical analysis and the main findings. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of the results, limitations, and directions for future research.

2 | THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 | The rise of the sharing economy

In recent years, the sharing economy has thrown off its origins as a fringe phenomenon of communities following an alternative way of living to become a new consumption paradigm for modern society. The central vision behind the sharing economy is a shift from owning possessions and resources to sharing them (Belk, 2010). As a result, sharing can enable more conscious resource utilization, reallocation of power, and the emergence of innovative business models (Cherry & Pidgeon, 2018; Grinevich et al., 2017; Heylighen, 2017). Whereas scholars mostly agree on the sharing economy's fundamental principle of addressing the three pillars of sustainability (Botsman &

Rogers, 2011; Hamari et al., 2016; Parguel et al., 2017), the term itself, its related elements, and the implications of sharing encourage a broad range of dissenting views (Dreyer et al., 2017; Ertz & Leblanc-Proulx, 2018; Parguel et al., 2017). The credibility of sustainability in the sharing economy was particularly questioned in the wake of actions by sharing organizations such as Uber and Airbnb (Murillo et al., 2017). The *Uberalization* of work treats workers as independent and external enterprises that work on-demand in flexible employment systems characterized by zero-hours contracts and unregulated competitive environments where the usual insurances and protections are absent. This new form of de-organization of work contradicts the hope that the sharing economy will enable a transition toward a more sustainable society (Friedman, 2014; Martin, 2016).

Within the dissenting views, scholars frequently strive to explain users' aspirations for taking part in the sharing economy by investigating the motivation behind sharing (Benoit et al., 2017; Milanova & Maas, 2017), the role of materialism (Akbar et al., 2016; Davidson et al., 2018), consumer segments (Lutz & Newlands, 2018), or public acceptability (Cherry & Pidgeon, 2018). For instance, concerning motives, Milanova and Maas (2017) found that monetary incentives, declining societal values, and platform anonymity are the main drivers of participating in sharing services. Akbar et al. (2016) investigated the interrelation between sharing practices and the materialistic value orientations of consumers. Their findings show that the collaborative consumption offered by sharing ventures increasingly attracts anti-materialistic consumers who would traditionally oppose the notion of consuming more products and services. By contrast, Davidson et al. (2018) find evidence that materialism may positively relate to participating in the sharing economy. Cherry and Pidgeon (2018) explored how the public perceives the sharing economy and found that it is endowed with positive attributes such as efficient resource utilization and an idea of community; however, customers criticized its inadequate consideration of social needs and inequalities.

Escobedo et al. (2021) pick up the criticism of social needs and inequality in the light of a platform-based sharing economy model. They divide the platform model of the sharing economy into two strings: (1) platform capitalism and (2) platform cooperativism. The first one stands for the professionalization of sharing economy ventures in the light of profit maximization and commercialization (Dogru et al., 2020; Escobedo et al., 2021). The second one represents fair, genuine sharing and usually is democratically governed and cooperatively owned (Bhatt et al., 2021; Escobedo et al., 2021). The two strings represent the ongoing scholarly conversation about sustainability within the concept while highlighting the sharing economy's underlying functioning: A peer-to-peer model where users of the same community (as widespread and loose as a community can be) share goods and services, either for money or for the sake of resource conservation. Such a model often works on a reputation system where peers govern the legitimacy of their fellow peers. Explanatory studies for (digital) reputations primarily focus on individual motives (Jøsang et al., 2007; Tussyadiah, 2016) but also include cultural contexts and organizational mechanisms (Mikołajewska-Zając, 2018).

Individual motives and attitudes are still the academic focus for explaining behavior and participation in the sharing economy. However, despite the stated initial insights about consumers' motives, values, and acceptability, we still know little about the role individual characteristics play in driving engagement in the sharing economy.

2.2 | Individual characteristics as behavioral drivers

This study takes an explorative approach to examining the role individual characteristics play in motivating participation in the sharing economy. Individual characteristics can be defined as the distinguishing traits and attributes of an individual that are capable of establishing uniqueness. This includes the objective (descriptive) identifiers of an individual, such as gender, age, income, and formal education, as well as the subjective characteristics that are the enduring psychological tendencies reflected in personality traits or individual attitudes (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006). Research in psychology shows that individual characteristics are significant predictors for individual behavior (Eysenck, 1947; Holland, 1997; McCrae & Costa, 1987, 2003). In particular, the Five Factor Model of Costa and McCrae (1992) and the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1991) form the basis of our investigation of three essential domains of individual characteristics that influence people's participation in the sharing economy: socio-demographics, personality traits, and attitudes.

The Five Factor Model (also called Big Five) comprehensively organizes various personality traits into five domains: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Its simplified segmentation means that the Five Factor Model cannot adequately account for the manifold variety of personality traits (Mershon & Gorsuch, 1988). However, its comprehensiveness enables it to function as the "basic dimensions of personality" (Costa & McCrae, 1992), and as such, it is a framework that is widely accepted by its scholarly field. Considerable evidence supports the Five Factor Model (John, 1990) and shows that the identified personality traits predict various behavioral and response patterns (Gosling, 2008). They are largely genetically inherited (e.g., Bouchard, 1997; Van Gestel & Van Broeckhoven, 2003), highly stable across the lifespan (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992; McCrae & Costa, 2006), and are thought to be universal across languages and cultures (e.g., John & Srivastava, 1999).

Prior research finds that the Five Factor model predicts a broad range of behaviors, including political participation (e.g., Gerber et al., 2011; Mondak et al., 2010; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009), sustainable consumer behavior (e.g., Luchs & Mooradian, 2012), ethical consumption (e.g., Hirsh, 2010; Hirsh & Dolderman, 2007), and environmentally conscious behavior (e.g., Milfont & Sibley, 2012). These findings suggest that personality may, to varying degrees, also account for sharing and associated acts of social engagement.

The theory of planned behavior was "designed to predict and explain human behavior in specific contexts" (Ajzen, 1991). For this, the theory focuses on an individual's intention to perform specific

behaviors. Intentions result from an individual's attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control and are, therefore, "assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior" (Ajzen, 1991). In an extended theory of planned behavior, Roos and Hahn (2019) found a strong link between consumers' collaborative consumption behavior and their attitudes, such as cost savings, efficient use of resources, and community with others. The authors conclude that collaborative consumption is determined by economic/egoistic as well as normative motives. This dualism of attitudinal antecedents for intentions is reflected in a study by Styvén and Mariani (2020), who investigated consumers' motivations and attitudes to adopting sharing economy platforms. They identify *economic motivations* as antecedents of consumers' attitudes toward collaborative consumption, and *perceived sustainability* and *taking a distance from the consumption system* as normative motives.

Several scholars point out that attitudes and motives are not always causally linked to expressed behavior. For example in the context of consumer decisions, many people state that they care about the working conditions of the workers producing the products they are buying (Chatzidakis et al., 2007), but few people actually base their decision regarding which product to buy on these factors (Boulstridge & Carrigan, 2000; Dickson, 2001), especially if doing so carries drawbacks, such as a slightly higher price. Same goes for the (Flynn et al., 2009) environmental context. While a huge number of people declare that they care about the environment, only a minor portion acts according to their stated values and solely use green energy sources or actively reduce their carbon emissions. This so-called "value-action gap" (e.g., Blake, 1999) has prompted academia's increasingly insistent call for theoretical perspectives that are more holistic in nature (Piscicelli et al., 2014). Our model responds to this need for holism by adopting a threefold approach that includes both personality traits and attitudes as individual characteristics, while also incorporating socio-demographics such as age and gender.

We next describe the individual characteristics that we have taken from the three essential domains and present the underlying hypotheses for each characteristic. To nuance our account of the consumers *and* providers of the sharing economy, we differentiate our hypotheses into sharing economy supply and sharing economy demand.

2.2.1 | The role of socio-demographics

Gender. Previous research shows that women are more engaged in the sharing economy than men. Hellwig et al. (2015) point out that "women score significantly higher on the amount of actual sharing behavior than men both in terms of the number of objects shared and frequency of sharing. Women are significantly more willing to share." Given the link between sustainability and the sharing economy, women's generally more significant activities in the sharing economy might be linked to their stronger predisposed prosocial behavior (Jaffee & Hyde, 2000; Schwartz & Rubel, 2005; Schwartz & Rubel-Lifschitz, 2009). The activity of sharing is more prevalent in women's occupational and family roles, which are typically characterized as supportive, unselfish, and concerned with others' welfare. Against this background, we suggest that women have a stronger appreciation of the sharing economy and are thus more active in it. We therefore hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 1.** Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to the female gender.

Age. Another important determinant is age. Young people are digital natives. They have grown up with technology and are thus familiar with sharing economy services, such as Airbnb and Uber. They are therefore very inclined to engage in the sharing economy. Research shows that young individuals prefer shared or public transportation over owning their own car (Konrad & Wittowsky, 2018). According to Ranzini et al. (2017), millennials are the driving force behind the development of the sharing economy because their consumption habits are more complex and diverse than those of older generations. Therefore, we hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 2.** Sharing economy supply and demand are negatively related to an older age.

Education. The sharing economy is linked to sustainable consumption in the public domain. People who are more educated tend to be more socially oriented in their behaviors. They might perceive the sharing economy as more beneficial and may, therefore, show more significant commitment to sharing economy organizations (Brieger et al., 2018). Previous research finds that education correlates with an individual's participation in the sharing economy. As such, high-educated individuals are more likely to be listed on Airbnb (Cansoy & Schor, 2016) or to use ride-sharing services (Smith, 2016). That being said, the precarious jobs offered by the sharing economy will be less attractive to more educated individuals. Thus, we hypothesize that education is primarily related to sharing economy demand but not to supply. We therefore hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 3A.** Sharing economy supply is negatively related to higher education.

> **Hypothesis 3B.** Sharing economy demand is positively related to higher education.

Income. Economic motives are among the most intensively researched motives for sharing and collaborative consumption. Research provides evidence that economic benefits are a crucial determinant of engaging in sharing services (e.g., Barnes & Mattsson, 2016; Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2015; Lamberton & Rose, 2012; Moeller & Wittkowski, 2010). Similarly, Bucher et al. (2016) found that users' monetary motives are positively related to their sharing attitudes. Further, people with higher income levels presumably own more goods that can be offered through online platforms. They should also be more able than lower earners to buy products and services via the

sharing economy. Moreover, a certain level of financial resources allows people to start up businesses in the sharing economy. Thus, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 4. Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to income.

2.2.2 | The role of personality traits

Personality traits are variations in dispositions that characterize inter-individual consistencies that predict a person's response to situational stimuli and, thus, his or her behavior (McCrae & Costa, 2003). The most common classification scheme is the Five Factor Model, which is based on the notion that the complexity of human personality can be described using five traits: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness (McCrae & Costa, 1987, 2008). Following, we will briefly introduce the five personality traits and their predicted relationship to engagement in the sharing economy based on the literature.

The personality trait that is undoubtedly linked to acts that entail social interaction is Extraversion (McCrae & Costa, 1989). Extraverts are described as sociable, active, outgoing, talkative, and assertive. In behavioral science literature, Extraversion is positively related to members' participation in team and group settings (Littlepage et al., 1995). Since extraverts are known to seek pleasurable social interactions (Barry & Stewart, 1997) and love to engage in acts that involve reaching out to other people, it can be assumed that Extraversion also appears to be a valid predictor for engaging in the sharing economy.

Openness to Experience is associated with being curious, imaginative, and broad-minded (Barry & Stewart, 1997). People who score high on the openness dimension tend to be open to new ideas and experiences; they value the cognitive stimulation resulting from new perspectives and the exchange of information offered by collaborative consumption. Previous research found that people who are open to new experience show greater concern for the environment (Hirsh, 2010; Hirsh & Dolderman, 2007) and show more environmentally friendly behavior (Milfont & Sibley, 2012). Moreover, Openness to Experience has been found to be positively related to sustainable consumption (Luchs & Mooradian, 2012). Previous research also provides evidence for the relationship between Openness to Experience and political participation as well as social engagement (Mondak et al., 2010; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009). Connecting with other people through sharing personal belongings offers the potential to encounter new and stimulating ideas and activities. Given that highly open people seek engagement of every kind (Mondak et al., 2010), we expect this personality trait to have a similar effect on engaging in the sharing economy.

Conscientiousness is associated with being organized and dutiful. People who score high on this trait are accurate, responsible, and prefer to follow a plan rather than act spontaneously. Previous research on the influence of Conscientiousness on political participation has reported mostly negative effects (Gerber et al., 2011; Mondak & Halperin, 2008; Vecchione & Caprara, 2009). Given that sharing involves confiding personal belongings to unknown strangers, high levels of Conscientiousness might inhibit engagement in collaborative consumption. Conscientious people may not be as tolerant when it comes to unknown others using their possessions, which they might fear getting back in a much worse condition or even losing completely. It is also conceivable that individuals who score high on the Conscientiousness dimension are more sensitive to the sharing economy's negative externalities. Given previous research and the nature of conscientious people, we expect people scoring high on this trait to engage less in the sharing economy.

Agreeableness is described as being altruistic, trusting, helpful, and modest (John & Srivastava, 1999). Since agreeable people want to do right by others, are concerned about the environment (Hirsh, 2010; Hirsh & Dolderman, 2007), display more environmentally-friendly behavior (Milfont & Sibley, 2012) and donate more money to charity (John & Srivastava, 1999), we argue that an agreeable personality will also translate into political consumer behavior.

Neuroticism is described as being anxious, nervous, sad and tense. Previous literature does not report significant effects between a neurotic personality and consumer behavior or similar activities. Thus, we do not expect neuroticism to be a predictor in engaging in the sharing economy.

Thus, we develop the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5A. Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to Extraversion.

Hypothesis 5B. Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to Openness to Experience.

Hypothesis 5C. Sharing economy supply and demand are negatively related to Conscientiousness.

Hypothesis 5D. Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to Agreeableness.

2.2.3 | The role of attitudes, intentions, and values

An attitude is "a latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to a psychological object" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 76). An attitude, thus, reflects the overall positive or negative evaluation of performing a behavior (Ajzen, 1991) such as engaging in collaborative consumption. Theory and research in the social sciences indicate that attitudes are multi-dimensional constructs (Hayes & Darkenwald, 1990) determining behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

A combination of personal and environmental factors determines attitudes toward behaviors that an individual perceives as being positive or negative (Ajzen, 1991). This judgment is based on the

individual's subjective valuation of the potential outcomes of behaviors. As a result, individuals typically avoid unfavorable behavior while facilitating favorable behavior (Ajzen, 1991). The more favorable the behavior is, the more likely it is to be performed (Ajzen, 1991). Literature suggests that attitudes and behavior are correlated and mutually interacting (Kelman, 1974). Kelman (1974), p. 316) defines attitudes as a "determinant, component, and consequent" of behavior. Individuals' attitudes evolve according to their values, leading to different outcomes (Herek, 1987; Katz, 1960).

The theory of planned behavior is rooted in social psychology and is an important framework for explaining and predicting how attitudes form intentions toward rational human behavior in a number of contexts (Ajzen, 1991; Barnes & Mattsson, 2017). Therein, intentions result from an individual's attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control and are, therefore, "assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior" (Ajzen, 1991). Attitudes precede behavioral intentions, or the extent to which people plan to exert effort to conduct an action, and they are the most immediate and prominent determinants of actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude toward the behavior, such as engaging in sharing economy activities, refers to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior, while subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure of significant others to perform or not to perform the behavior.

CSR attitudes

In the field of management studies in general, and particularly in studies that examine responsible, ethical, or sustainable behaviors, researchers acknowledge the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and sustainable attitudes, resulting in a large body of literature. CSR attitudes have been shown to be a significant predictor of sustainable intentions and behaviors. Despite heavy criticism of the sharing economy, sharing solutions are still considered to have a positive influence on the environment. Accordingly, consumption in the sharing economy is often linked to ecologically sustainable consumption or mindful consumption (Hamari et al., 2016; Möhlmann, 2015). As individuals often link the sharing economy to more sustainable living at the environmental and social level (Albinsson & Yasanthi Perera, 2012; Bucher et al., 2016; Parguel et al., 2017), we hypothesize that individuals with higher levels of CSR attitudes are more willing to be engaged in the sharing economy. Against this background, we hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 6.** Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to CSR attitudes.

Sharing economy support

As consumers evaluate the potential benefits and costs when considering sharing, we argue that their attitude toward the sharing economy plays a vital role in their decision to participate in it or not. Unlike traditional forms of consumption, arrangements such as peer-to-peer sharing often come with higher transaction costs in that consumption of a product or service requires personal interaction with a supplier or customer. A consumers' decision for or against sharing may, therefore, be influenced by evaluating those transaction costs and the benefits they might generate. Such benefits include a more sustainable way of consuming, cost saving, social acceptability, or amusement. In that sense, benefits may motivate providers as well as users to participate in sharing. As current studies mainly demonstrate a positive relationship between a favorable sharing attitude and its related behavior from the consumer's perspective (Bucher et al., 2016; Roos & Hahn, 2017), our study contributes to the literature by examining whether providers are similarly motivated to engage in sharing by a positive inclination toward the sharing economy. Thus, we predict that

> **Hypothesis 7.** Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to sharing economy support.

Values are another fundamental social-psychological factor when examining behavior (Roos & Hahn, 2017). Schwartz (1994, p. 21) defines values as: "… desirable transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity." Values form relatively stable beliefs about the personal or social desirability of certain behaviors and therefore form the basis of attitudes by "influencing the perception and evaluation of these" (Brunsø et al., 2004, p. 195). Thus, values motivate, explain and justify behavior (Thøgersen & Ölander, 2002). Values also play an important role in explaining consumer behavior (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2008). For example, previous research has shown that consumers are more guided by values than by consequences in ethical decision-making (Vitell et al., 2001). Otherwise put, values influence how objects are evaluated (e.g. Dreezens et al., 2005; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987), including engagement in sharing activities.

Materialism

Materialism describes a value orientation that significantly influences consumer behavior. According to Belk (1987), p. 26), materialism is defined as a "dominant consumer ideology and the most significant macro development in modern consumer behavior." Materialist consumers are expected to be motivated by the desire for possession, enabling them to build their own identity and welfare (Shrum et al., 2013). As a result, consumers often associate materialism with happiness (Flynn et al., 2013) or success (Podoshen & Andrzejewski, 2012). Clarke and Micken (2002) provide evidence that highly materialistic consumers are more anxious than less materialistic consumers about their social appearance and acceptability. Within the theoretical discourse, materialism is often criticized for attaching greater importance to social status than to other human values (Richins, 1994; Richins & Dawson, 1992). For instance, Flynn et al. (2013) argue that materialism is the overemphasis of material goods for the satisfaction of individuals. Richins (2013) underlines this notion by illustrating that highly materialistic consumers associate the purchase of products with joyful emotions. As materialistic consumers are considered to be less concerned about others and more inclined to attach importance to the possession of belongings

(Muncy & Eastman, 1998), studies show that materialistic consumers are more affected than their less materialistic counterparts by loneliness and social isolation (Bauer et al., 2012; Kasser, 2002). With materialistic consumers emphasizing products over social interactions (Kasser, 2002), we assume that sharing is a concept that appeals mainly to less materialistic consumers. While sharing enables temporal access to products, its aim of reducing possessions (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012) might run contrary to materialist consumers' desire for possession (Belk, 2007). However, research does not agree on the effect of materialism on sharing. A study by Lindblom et al. (2018) shows that while sharing possessions is considered less desirable among materialistic consumers, they nevertheless express a willingness for future usage. Davidson et al. (2018) and Parguel et al. (2017) found that materialism encourages participation in sharing economy activities, whereas Belk (2007) and Akbar et al. (2016) argue that it has a reverse effect and prevents individuals from participating in the sharing economy.

We propose that sharing can be used as a self-fulfillment strategy that does not necessitate owning possessions. More specifically, we propose that materialistic consumers are likely to engage in the sharing economy in the roles of both user and supplier as a result of their desire for social status. Acting as a sharing provider enables the commercialization of possessions, while gaining social acceptability rewards. Similarly, sharing providers receive access to various products; this enables an increase of temporary consumption, thereby improving individuals' social appearance and generating joyful emotions. This might particularly be the case for unique products, as studies show that these are favored by materialistic consumers. Although studies on materialism in the sharing economy mainly investigate consumption, we propose that the supplier role is also attractive for materialists. This assumption arises through materialists' characteristic of being more affected by loneliness, which might give them the incentive to offer their products on sharing platforms. As materialism is considered to enforce loneliness, sharing might encourage social behavior. Thus, we predict the following:

> **Hypothesis 8.** Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to materialism.

Public value

Public value theory analyzes what makes an organization or a sharing venture valuable to society (Meynhardt, 2009, 2015). This psychological approach defines value creation as a subjective emotional-motivational assessment related to a concept of the public that is anchored in individuals' perceptions (Meynhardt & Bäro, 2019). The public value theory is based on the cognitive-experiential self-theory by Epstein (2003), who recognized four basic human needs: the need for maintaining control and coherence, the need for maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain, the need for self-enhancement, and the need for relatedness. Individuals aim to satisfy their basic needs in order to assure their personal well-being (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000). Consequently, "an evaluation of any object against basic needs is called a value" (Meynhardt, 2015, p. 321). Thus, sharing ventures create value for individuals and society if they positively respond to individuals' basic needs. Hence, public value is created when organizational actions lead to a direct personal gain or when those actions positively affect the community or society in which individuals live. This contribution to both stability and progress can function as an enabler for individuals, as it allows personal development and growth and enhances the chances of having positive experiences with society (Meynhardt, 2015).

We argue that public value also plays a vital role in people's participation in the sharing economy. Since individuals are interested in engaging in sharing options that fulfill their basic needs, we assume that the extent to which an individual perceives a sharing option as contributing to the public's welfare affects the frequency of usage. Moreover, if a sharing venture responds to people's basic needs, its users should evaluate their participation as more meaningful, valuable, and satisfying (Meynhardt et al., 2018). Thus, we propose that organizational public value functions as an empowering motivator. Consequently, it can be assumed that a higher perceived public value contribution positively relates to engaging in the sharing economy. Thus, we hypothesize:

> **Hypothesis 9.** Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to public value.

Next to attitudes and values, another important determinant of individual behavior are subjective norms which refer to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform a particular behavior, whereby significant others approve or disapprove of a behavior in question—the pressure from what an individual thinks that other people thinks that they should do.

In(ter)dependent self-construal

Personal self-construal describes what individuals "believe about the relationship between the self and others and, especially, the degree to which they see themselves as separate from others or as connected with others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226). This inherent view of the self can be described through two prototypical self-concepts: independent and interdependent self-construal. The independent self is characterized as uniquely individual and fundamentally separate from others, pursuing individual targets while being open and direct when approaching others. People who score high on this self-concept emphasize their own individual abilities, thoughts, feelings, uniqueness, and they do not shy away from directly expressing these attributes (Singelis, 1994). People with an interdependent self are assumed to have a flexible self, intertwined with the social context. They emphasize belonging to a group, fitting in, and supporting others in realizing their goals. Because they prefer harmonious relationships, they try not to rub people up the wrong way, and they adjust their behavior to meet the role expectations of others (Freund et al., 2012; Singelis, 1994).

Sharing can be a prosocial activity fostering exchange, mutuality (which may culminate in group identity), and bonding (Belk, 2010; Benoit et al., 2017; Hill & Wellman, 2011). Singelis (1994), p. 581)

argues that "the concept of self is central to an individual's perceptions, evaluations, and behaviors," and this has been empirically confirmed in a large number of studies (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Previous research, for example, indicates that a sense of community and feelings of solidarity are essential determinants of sharing, and also enable collaborative consumption (e.g., Belk, 2010; Botsman & Rogers, 2011; Bucher et al., 2016; McArthur, 2015; Möhlmann, 2015). Similarly, Albinsson and Yasanthi Perera (2012) present evidence that social belonging is a driver and an effect of sharing. Hellwig et al. (2015) argue that an individual's willingness to share his or her possessions increases the more the recipient is vital to the individual's self. For people with a highly developed interdependent self-construal, interpersonal relationships are a resource for personal self-esteem (Singelis, 1994). Feeling part of a community should also be a motivating factor to engage in sharing activities (Belk, 2007). Building on these findings, it can be expected that an individual's conceptualization of the self also influences his or her level of involvement in the sharing economy. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 10A. Sharing economy supply and demand are positively related to interdependent self-construal.

Hypothesis 10B. Sharing economy supply and demand are negatively related to independent self-construal.

3 | RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 | Sample and data collection

To test our hypotheses, we collected individual data from a German panel via e-mail. All survey participants had to be active users of sharing platforms or had to have detailed knowledge about sharing services. Data were collected over a two-week period in December 2017 by the German market research institute, respondi. Participation was voluntary. Prior to the survey, the questionnaire was pretested qualitatively ($N = 6$) and quantitatively ($N = 100$) to check the adequacy and comprehensibility of the items. Since the sharing economy is often linked to younger people living in urban areas, the study was aimed at participants between 18 and 35 years old living in cities with more than 100000 inhabitants. This selection ensured that respondents were familiar with the sharing economy. The final sample consisted of 1170 respondents between 25 and 54 years. Of the respondents, 54.6% were female and 45.4% male. The average response time per questionnaire was 20 min. As was intended, young people living in urban areas are overrepresented. Furthermore, the vast majority (96.3%) of respondents hold middle or higher education.

Based on qualitative interviews before the online survey, this study distinguishes four sharing sectors: accommodation, mobility, goods, and food sharing. In the final survey, 11 sharing ventures were included: Airbnb, Couchsurfing (accommodation), UBER, DriveNow, BlaBlaCar, callabike, nextbike (mobility), Spielzeugkiste, alleNachbarn (goods), foodsharing, and TooGoodToGo (food). These sharing ventures were selected for three reasons. First, they align with our definition of the sharing economy as enabling the temporary utilization of services and goods through digital platforms. Second, the selected sectors all involve sharing the overcapacity of underutilized assets and represent the most common objects for sharing. Third, our preliminary pilot study showed that our target group sufficiently knows these 11 sharing ventures. Since the mobility sector is the "most active market for collaborative consumption" (Barnes & Mattsson, 2017, p. 282), we reflect this in its greater representation in our sample. Since we are interested in why people engage in the sharing economy in both commercialized and non-commercialized settings, we aimed to contrast every venture that is predominantly perceived as profit-oriented with one predominantly perceived as non-profit-oriented. We avoided respondent fatigue by asking each respondent to evaluate the public value contribution of up to five randomly selected sharing ventures. Even with this restriction, all sharing ventures are sufficiently covered.

3.2 | Measures

3.2.1 | Sharing economy supply and demand

The dependent variables, sharing economy supply and sharing economy demand, were measured by a 1-item measure differentiating between engagement as a user and as a provider. The item was: *How often did you use a product or service from one or more sharing economy ventures during the last year* [(1) demand: *as a user*, (2) supply: *as a provider*]*?* Answers were given on a 5-point scale (1 = *daily*, 2 = *weekly*, 3 = *monthly*, 4 = *yearly*, 5 = *never*). The answers to both questions are rescaled according to the individual's frequency of participation (1 = *never*, 2 = *yearly*, 3 = *monthly*, 4 = *weekly*, 5 = *daily*). We labeled the two variables "sharing economy supply" (for provision) and "sharing economy demand" (for usage).

3.2.2 | Socio-demographics

*Gender*was measured by respondents indicating whether they are male (=0) or female (=1). *Age* is a categorical variable with three age groups (1 = *younger than 25 years*, 2 = *25–34 years*, and 3 = *older than 35*). *Education* is measured by the highest grade completed (nine categories, ranging from *unqualified* = 1 to *university degree* = 9). *Income* is measured by the respondent's income after taxes (seven categories, ranging from a gross monthly income of less than EUR 500 to EUR 4000 and above).

3.2.3 | Personality traits

*Five Factor personality traits*were measured by the Big-Five-Inventory-10 (BFI-10; Rammstedt & John, 2007), which is comprised of 10 items, each utilizing a five-point scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to

5 (*agree strongly*). A sample item includes "I see myself as someone who is outgoing, sociable" (Rammstedt & John, 2007, p. 209). Two items represent each Big Five dimension with satisfactory levels of coefficient alpha (ranging from .58 for Agreeableness to .84 for Extraversion) (cf. Rammstedt & John, 2007).

*In (ter)dependent self-construal*was measured by a 10-item version of Singelis' self-construal scale. Answers were given on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *completely agree*). Sample items include *I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in* and *I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments*. We also modified the scale in terms of eliminating items that do not reflect the unit of analysis. The scale's coefficient alpha reliability is satisfactory at .87.

3.2.4 | Attitudes

*Materialism*was measured by a German translation (Solomon et al., 2001) of the 3-item short version of the material values scale (Richins, 2004, Cronbach's $\alpha = .74$). The items were: *I admire people who own expensive houses, cars, and clothes*, *I enjoy a lot of luxury as part of my life*, and *I would be happier if I could afford to buy more things*. Answers were given on a six-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 6 = *completely agree*).

*CSR attitudes*was measured by Turker's (2009) importance of CSR scale to assess individuals' orientation toward corporate social responsibility. The items were: *Being socially responsible is the most important thing a firm can do*, *Social responsibility of a firm is essential to its long-term profitability*, *The overall effectiveness of a business can be determined to a great extent by the degree to which it is socially responsible*, *Social responsibility is critical to the survival of a business enterprise*, and *business has a social responsibility beyond making profit*. Answers were given on a six-point scale (1 = *disagree* to 6 = *agree*). The scale's coefficient alpha reliability is satisfactory at .82.

*Sharing economy support*was measured with five items. Participants used a 6-point scale (1 = *disagree* to 6 = *agree*) to evaluate the items. The items were: [Sharing ventures] *positively influence societal cohabitation*, *take society forward*, *are an enrichment for living together in society*, *harm societal cohabitation because they undermine policies and regulations (e.g., occupational safety and hygiene standards, legal provisions, tax regulations)*, and *should be regulated more strictly*. The items were derived from the sharing economy literature.

*Public value*of a sharing venture was assessed by a 12-item scale based on the four public value dimensions: task fulfillment, social cohesion, quality of life, and morality (three items per dimension) (Meynhardt & Jasinenko, 2020; Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$). Example items include: [This particular sharing venture] *performs well in its core business* (task fulfillment), *contributes to social cohesion in Germany* (social cohesion), *contributes to the quality of life in Germany* (quality of life), and *complies with accepted standards of morality* (morality). Answers were given on a 6-point scale (1 = *disagree* to 6 = *agree*). The final public value score was calculated by averaging the unweighted mean across the four public value dimensions.

3.3 | Data analysis

To test our hypotheses, we executed several analyses. We employed ordered logit regression due to the ordinal nature of the dependent variables. Models 1 and 2 are the regressions to explain sharing economy supply. Models 3 and 4 examine the determinants of sharing economy demand. We also performed a post hoc analysis using interaction effects to explore if the socio-demographic variables gender, age, education, and income moderate the effects of personality traits and individual attitudes on sharing economy supply and demand.

Finally, we ran three robustness checks to verify our results. The results of these are available from the authors upon request. First, we log-transformed our dependent variable sharing economy supply, which has a right-skewed distribution. We could replicate all significant directions as well as the moderating relationships. Second, we re-ran our analysis using robust standard errors. We found utterly identical results, thus showing the robustness of our findings. Third, we split our sample into two random groups and re-ran our analysis with each sample. Again, the results remained stable.

4 | EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1 | Main results

Table 1 together with Figure 1 and Figure 2 provide descriptive statistics. Most respondents report not being frequently engaged in the sharing economy. Only 30% of the respondents have previously offered a product or service as a supplier of the sharing economy.

TABLE 1 Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
1. Sharing economy supply	1.555	1.003	1	5
2. Sharing economy demand	2.288	1.104	1	5
3. Gender	1.539	0.499	1	2
4. Age	1.810	0.547	1	3
5. Education	6.955	1.806	1	9
6. Income	3.874	1.751	1	7
7. Household size	2.180	0.984	1	4
8. City size	4.313	0.881	1	5
9. Extraversion	3.212	0.929	1	5
10. Neuroticism	2.827	0.876	1	5
11. Openness	3.506	0.917	1	5
12. Conscientiousness	3.488	0.725	1	5
13. Agreeableness	3.093	0.783	1	5
14. Interdependent self	4.625	0.833	1	7
15. Independent self	4.938	0.844	1	7
16. Materialism	3.297	1.181	1	6
17. Sharing economy support	4.136	0.802	1	6
18. Public value	4.680	1.058	1	6
19. CSR attitudes	4.212	0.947	1	6

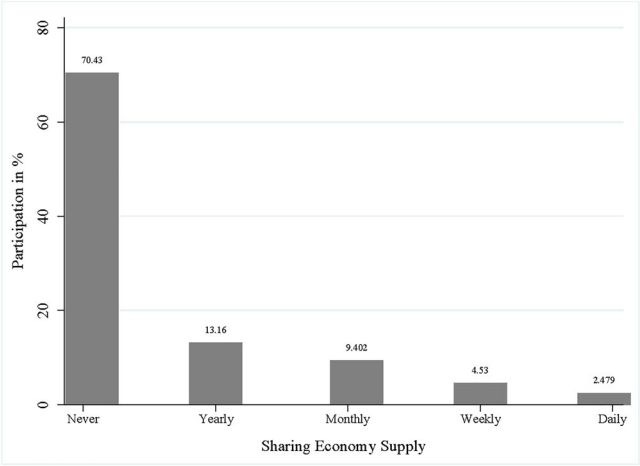


FIGURE 1 Sharing economy supply

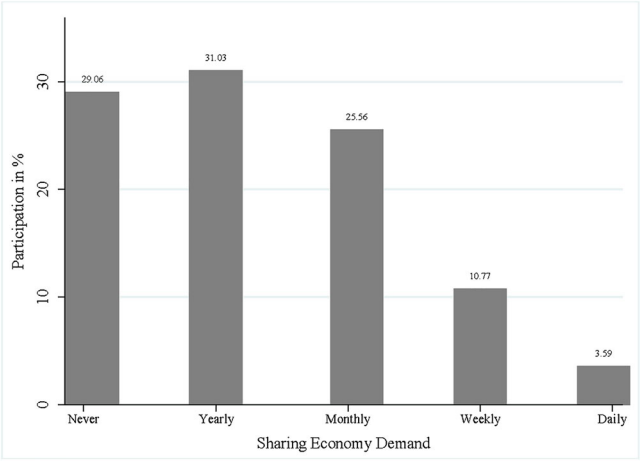


FIGURE 2 Sharing economy demand

Table 2 depicts the bivariate relationships between the study's variables. The correlations of the variables are not high. Thus, we assume that multicollinearity is not a problem. We find evidence that sharing economy supply and sharing economy demand are highly correlated to each other, indicating that respondents who are active as providers in the sharing economy also consume goods and services as users. Further, the results show that both sharing economy supply and demand are significantly negatively related to gender and Conscientiousness, and significantly positively associated with income, Extraversion, materialism, sharing economy support, public value, and CSR attitudes.

Table 3 contains the empirical results of the regression models we used to test our hypotheses. Results of Models 1 and 2 show that women are, compared to men, less engaged in the sharing economy. The findings for age are mixed. Model 1 finds a negative relationship between age and sharing economy demand, while there is no significant relationship with sharing economy supply. However, Model 4 shows a positive association between age and sharing economy supply. Further, although we find significant associations between education and sharing economy demand, education shows no significant relationship with sharing economy supply. Income is positively related to sharing economy supply and demand.

We find evidence that Extraversion, Neuroticism, and Agreeableness are positively associated with both sharing economy supply and demand. Conscientiousness shows a negative relationship with sharing economy supply and demand. Openness to Experience is unrelated to sharing economy supply and demand.

Models 2 and 4 include the results for the effects of personal attitudes on sharing economy and supply. The results show that people with an interdependent self-report higher levels of sharing economy supply and demand. We further find that materialism and public value are positively related to sharing economy supply and demand. Sharing economy support shows a positive and significant effect on sharing economy demand but no significant relationship with sharing economy supply. Finally, CSR attitudes show no significant relationship with either sharing economy demand or sharing economy supply.

4.2 | Post-hoc results

The results of the post-hoc analysis show interesting interaction effects, which are presented in Table 4. Gender interacts negatively with Extraversion and CSR attitudes, and positively with sharing economy support. Age has a negative interaction with Conscientiousness and sharing economy support for both dependent variables. At the same time, age positively interacts with materialism. No consistent interactions could be found for income. Education shows a positive moderating effect on the relationship between sharing economy support and sharing economy supply, and a positive interaction with Conscientiousness on sharing economy demand. Finally, income shows negative interactions with Conscientiousness on sharing economy supply and demand. Income also positively moderates the association between materialism and sharing economy demand, interdependent self and sharing economy demand, and public value and sharing economy demand.

5 | DISCUSSION

This paper was motivated by the need to investigate the individual determinants of participation in the sharing economy from the perspectives of users and providers. Drawing on a sample of over 1000 respondents, we identified a set of socio-demographic variables, personality traits, and attitudes, that influences supply and demand in the sharing economy. Extant studies on the segmentation of the sharing economy are primarily limited to a specific sector or merely present the consumer's perspective (Akbar et al., 2016; Hellwig et al., 2015; Lutz & Newlands, 2018), whereas the results of our study relate to and extend the existing literature by painting a comprehensive picture of the drivers of individuals' participation as both suppliers and consumers of the sharing economy.

TABLE 2 Correlation matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Sharing economy supply	1																	
2. Sharing economy demand	**0.52**	1																
3. Gender	**−0.11**	**−0.14**	1															
4. Age	**0.07**	0.00	**−0.13**	1														
5. Education	−0.02	0.06	**0.08**	**0.11**	1													
6. Income	**0.11**	**0.10**	**−0.11**	**0.29**	**0.13**	1												
7. Household size	**0.07**	0.01	0.04	**−0.09**	**−0.07**	**0.18**	1											
8. City size	−0.04	**0.08**	0.01	0.06	0.03	0.05	−0.05	1										
9. Extraversion	**0.10**	**0.08**	0.06	0.03	0.00	**0.12**	**0.08**	0.02	1									
10. Neuroticism	0.02	−0.02	**0.21**	**−0.10**	−0.03	**−0.16**	−0.03	−0.02	**−0.28**	1								
11. Openness	−0.01	0.02	**0.13**	−0.01	**0.09**	**−0.08**	0.02	0.01	**0.12**	−0.02	1							
12. Conscientiousness	**−0.06**	**−0.08**	**0.16**	**0.11**	**0.08**	**0.11**	**0.08**	−0.01	**0.17**	**−0.19**	**0.14**	1						
13. Agreeableness	0.04	0.05	0.01	−0.01	0.02	−0.03	0.00	−0.01	**0.08**	**−0.16**	0.01	**0.06**	1					
14. Interdependent self	**0.12**	0.13	0.03	−0.05	0.01	0.02	**0.10**	−0.01	**0.17**	**−0.07**	0.05	**0.06**	**0.25**	1				
15. Independent self	0.05	0.03	0.08	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.04	**0.28**	**−0.14**	**0.25**	**0.12**	**−0.07**	**0.22**	1			
16. Materialism	**0.12**	**0.12**	**−0.07**	**−0.06**	**−0.18**	0.02	−0.02	−0.03	0.00	**0.11**	**−0.08**	**−0.10**	**−0.10**	0.06	**0.08**	1		
17. Sharing economy support	**0.12**	**0.15**	**0.14**	**−0.10**	−0.04	−0.06	**0.10**	−0.03	**0.11**	−0.02	**0.11**	**0.06**	**0.12**	**0.31**	**0.26**	**0.14**	1	
18. Public value	**0.06**	**0.15**	**0.16**	**−0.11**	**0.14**	**−0.09**	0.04	0.04	**0.11**	−0.02	**0.19**	**0.07**	**0.12**	**0.28**	**0.23**	−0.03	**0.56**	1
19. CSR attitudes	**0.10**	**0.08**	**0.15**	−0.01	**−0.06**	0.00	**0.11**	0.00	**0.12**	−0.01	**0.14**	**0.12**	**0.11**	**0.35**	**0.26**	**0.10**	**0.49**	**0.40**

Note: Correlations $p < 0.05$ in bold type. Observations: 1170.

TABLE 3 Regression results

	Sharing economy supply		Sharing economy demand	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Individual-level controls				
Gender	−0.269***	−0.291***	−0.285***	−0.315***
Age	0.089	0.132*	−0.117*	−0.058
Education	−0.022	0.014	0.113**	0.117**
Income	0.132*	0.134	0.131**	0.157**
Household size	0.155**	0.111	0.037	0.008
City size	−0.111*	−0.111*	0.114**	0.129**
Personality (Big5)				
Extraversion	0.297***	0.256***	0.171***	0.135**
Neuroticism	0.212***	0.184**	0.111*	0.086
Openness to experience	0.032	0.011	0.074	0.065
Conscientiousness	−0.186***	−0.200***	−0.155***	−0.144**
Agreeableness	0.124*	0.054	0.117**	0.037
Attitudes				
Interdependent self		0.206***		0.201***
Independent self		−0.034		−0.069
Materialism		0.158**		0.197***
Sharing economy support		−0.038		0.195***
Public value		0.195**		0.196***
CSR attitudes		0.101		−0.051
Pseudo R^2	0.036	0.052	0.022	0.041
χ^2	81.82***	118.64***	74.17***	137.75***

Note: Observations: 1170.
*$p < 0.1$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$.

5.1 | Theoretical and practical implications

Regarding socio-demographics, we found that women are less engaged than men in the sharing economy. This result is surprising, as previous research has found that women are more frequently engaged in the sharing economy compared to men (Hellwig et al., 2015; Smith, 2016), which might be traced back to their stronger predisposed prosocial behavior. One possible explanation might be personal safety concerns that are more prevalent with women than men when engaging with strangers. Furthermore, we found that older individuals (in our case, middle-aged) are more likely to engage in sharing economy demand. There was, however, no relationship with sharing economy supply. A possible explanation for this could be that the past experiences of middle-aged individuals have given them better knowledge of sharing economy organizations. For platform managers and hosts, this implies that marketing activities should not only be directed toward a very young demographic but also toward middle age groups. Moreover, we found that income is related to sharing economy support. The higher the income, the more likely individuals are to participate in the sharing economy. Therefore, our study does not confirm existing research that argues that lower income leads to higher participation (Böcker & Meelen, 2017; Ranzini et al., 2017). This might be especially relevant for practitioners, who will have greater success if they adjust their marketing efforts to the relevant customer groups.

As hypothesized, we found that higher educated individuals are more likely to participate in the sharing economy. Moreover, the relationship between education and sharing economy demand increases the more conscientious an individual is. This implies that well-educated individuals might be more thorough and careful when sharing resources and also that they may recognize that they can reduce the potential risks of sharing by becoming better informed. While studies emphasize the importance of trust for participating in the sharing economy (Ert et al., 2016), there is a lack of exemplification of the different personality traits for trust. Our data addresses this gap by showing that Conscientiousness is especially relevant for higher educated individuals. These findings suggest that platforms, startups, and sustainable businesses should invest in trust and transparency. When companies deliver comprehensive and trustworthy information about their businesses and their likely impacts, higher educated individuals are more willing to participate in their offerings.

While early sharing economy studies (e.g., Belk, 2014) assumed that materialism might have a negative effect on sharing, recent studies by Davidson et al. (2018) and Lindblom et al. (2018) have found that materialism leads to a greater (intended) participation in sharing. Our data also support this recent finding by showing that a higher

TABLE 4 Post-hoc regression results

	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand
	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 11
Individual-level controls								
Gender	−0.278***	−0.328***	−0.318***	−0.335***	−0.303***	−0.321***	−0.323***	−0.332***
Age	0.158**	−0.052	0.070	−0.062	0.127	−0.051	0.140*	−0.075
Education	0.022	0.124**	0.016	0.124**	0.057	0.133**	−0.015	0.113*
Income	0.152*	0.178***	0.117	0.147**	0.146*	0.161**	0.115	0.179***
Household size	0.110	0.022	0.124*	0.021	0.134*	0.018	0.084	−0.008
City size	−0.125*	0.128**	−0.104	0.131**	−0.095	0.144***	−0.117*	0.136**
Personality (Big5)								
Extraversion	0.271***	0.144**	0.279***	0.139**	0.257***	0.123**	0.281***	0.170***
Neuroticism	0.173**	0.072	0.193**	0.088	0.184**	0.083	0.170**	0.066
Openness	−0.016	0.048	0.016	0.065	−0.005	0.058	0.020	0.075
Conscientiousness	−0.211***	−0.154***	−0.193***	−0.153***	−0.205***	−0.144**	−0.178**	−0.146**
Agreeableness	0.058	0.050	0.064	0.039	0.051	0.036	0.049	0.022
Attitudes								
Interdependent self	0.232***	0.211***	0.197**	0.196***	0.227***	0.227***	0.214***	0.213***
Independent self	−0.003	−0.057	−0.032	−0.066	−0.010	−0.048	−0.054	−0.098
Materialism	0.176**	0.211***	0.147**	0.191***	0.182***	0.211***	0.124*	0.192***
Sharing economy support	0.021	0.220***	−0.043	0.198***	0.009	0.211***	−0.05	0.194***
Public value	0.187**	0.198***	0.190**	0.192***	0.193**	0.192***	0.187**	0.183**
CSR attitudes	0.071	−0.075	0.106	−0.038	0.079	−0.056	0.106	−0.055
Gender								
× extraversion	−0.237***	−0.100*						
× neuroticism	−0.128*	−0.061						
× openness	0.004	0.038						
× conscientiousness	−0.010	0.046						
× agreeableness	−0.158**	−0.087						
× interdependent self	0.138*	0.035						
× independent self	0.142*	0.109*						
× materialism	−0.082	−0.034						
× sharing economy support	0.332***	0.300***						

(Continues)

TABLE 4 (Continued)

	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand
	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 11
× public value	−0.070	−0.118						
× CSR attitudes	−0.147*	−0.149**						
Age								
× extraversion			0.091	0.013				
× neuroticism			0.108	0.016				
× openness			−0.072	0.000				
× conscientiousness			−0.135**	−0.099*				
× agreeableness			0.096	0.040				
× interdependent self			0.107	0.199***				
× independent self			−0.034	−0.022				
× materialism			0.132*	0.138**				
× sharing economy support			−0.146*	−0.154**				
× public value			0.031	0.086				
× CSR attitudes			0.054	0.019				
Education								
× extraversion					0.037	0.077		
× neuroticism					0.016	0.064		
× openness					0.000	−0.03		
× conscientiousness					0.106	0.126**		
× agreeableness					−0.031	−0.013		
× interdependent self					0.048	0.062		
× independent self					0.110	0.091		
× materialism					−0.119*	−0.025		
× sharing economy support					0.208***	0.098		
× public value					−0.129	−0.061		
× CSR attitudes					0.026	−0.043		
Income								
× extraversion							−0.102	−0.040
× neuroticism							0.016	−0.100*
× openness							0.126*	0.069

TABLE 4 (Continued)

	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand	Sharing economy supply	Sharing economy demand
	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9	Model 10	Model 11	Model 11
× conscientiousness							−0.254***	−0.159***
× agreeableness							0.094	−0.033
× interdependent self							0.080	0.165***
× independent self							0.084	−0.101*
× materialism							0.083	0.215***
× sharing economy support							−0.037	0.065
× public value							0.061	0.140**
× CSR attitudes							−0.033	−0.120*
Pseudo R^2	0.069	0.051	0.062	0.05	0.061	0.046	0.063	0.054
χ^2	156.76***	169.78***	141.23***	167.65***	138.47***	152.75***	143.55***	180.09***

Note: Observations: 1170.
*$p < 0.1$. **$p < 0.05$. ***$p < 0.01$.

materialistic attitude increases the probability of engaging in sharing economy supply and demand. Our findings also show that the relationship between age and sharing economy supply and demand increases as the individual's attitude becomes more materialistic.

Our results show that the relationship between Conscientiousness and sharing economy supply and demand increases the younger an individual is and the less income he or she has available. We assumed that Conscientiousness might inhibit engagement in collaborative consumption, as conscientious people may not be as trustful when it comes to sharing possessions. As our data shows, this assumption is especially correct for younger, economically weaker individuals, who might be more negatively impacted by damage to their possessions than their higher-earning peers would be. Therefore, our evidence suggests that conscientious individuals are more likely to ruminate on the possible adverse effects of collaborative consumption on their personal situation.

We found that extraverted individuals are more likely to engage in sharing activities. In contrast, we could not find that Openness to Experience has a significant effect on whether or not an individual participates in the sharing economy. A possible explanation for the first finding is that extraverted individuals are less risk-averse (Li & Liu, 2008; Nicholson et al., 2005). Furthermore, they favor social settings in which they can exercise their outgoing personalities. In fact, studies show that social interaction can be an essential driver for sharing resources (Lutz & Newlands, 2018; Tussyadiah, 2016).

Moreover, we found that individuals with a positive attitude toward sharing are more likely to demand collaborative consumption, whereas we could not find an effect for providers. This finding supports previous research by Hellwig et al. (2015, p. 891), who found that "sharing idealists" are an essential participation group of the sharing economy. We could not examine the underlying mechanisms of this positive attitude within the survey data. However, previous research found that, for instance, an intrinsic sustainability orientation might positively influence the attitude toward sharing (Hamari et al., 2016). We also found that individuals with an interdependent self are more likely to participate in sharing economy supply and demand. This finding is supported by Lutz and Newlands (2018), who showed that openness for social interactions plays a vital role in individuals' engagement in the sharing economy. Furthermore, we also found evidence for the prosocial argument for sharing in our data; the higher the perceived public value of the specific sharing venture, the more likely individuals are to participate. This relation stresses the significance of sharing organizations covering the aspects of sustainability and of being perceived as "true" rather than "pseudo-sharing" (Belk, 2014).

Our key theoretical implications are threefold: First, our study draws on a rich dataset that broadens our understanding of what role individual characteristics play in shaping an individual's intention to participate in the sharing economy as a user and as a provider. Second, we analyze individuals' sharing propensity in several different contexts to depict the wide array of sharing options. By examining 11 different sharing ventures in four industries and by including nonprofit and for-profit sharing ventures, we provide a more holistic view

of the motives and drivers for participating in the sharing economy. Thirdly, we deepen this holistic approach by analyzing a framework that simultaneously accounts for personality traits, socio-demographics, and individual attitudes.

Our findings provide manifold suggestions for managers and policymakers who wish to encourage individuals to engage in sharing and collaborative consumption. We draw on our study to advise such individuals to mitigate the challenges of navigating the tension between sustainability and technological development by increasing their awareness of the diverse range of sharing profiles. The better managers align their company's value proposition to the different user groups, the more people they will be able to persuade to use their offerings. Policymakers should be aware of the impact that innovative sharing solutions have on societal challenges such as inequality, poverty, and environmental pollution. By providing incentives for companies to implement collaborative solutions, policymakers can support the acceptance and usage of collaborative consumption offerings, especially if they also implement policies that strengthen the infrastructure around the sharing economy,.

5.2 | Limitations and future research

Our findings should be considered in light of several limitations that provide fertile ground for future research. First, the cross-sectional design of our study does not allow us to determine causal relationships among the variables, which may limit the external and internal validity of our findings. In order to account for the dynamic nature of individuals' attitudes and motives, a longitudinal design would be preferable to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the potential causal relationships of the proposed framework.

A second limitation refers to common method bias and the bias resulting from self-report (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In order to mitigate this limitation, we took several precautions. First, in order to decrease the risk of socially desirable responses, respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Additionally, we varied the response formats for predictor and criterion measures, and included some reverse-coded items in the survey. Prior to data collection, item comprehensibility and study length were tested quantitatively and qualitatively. Additionally, we added several objective control variables. All items were part of a large-scale survey that diminishes the risk of face validity, thereby facilitating response consistency (Mohr & Spekman, 1994). Also, our results did not disclose any response patterns. Consequently, we argue that common method bias does not significantly affect the results of our study. However, further empirical research should build on more objective behavioral data rather than relying solely on self-disclosure.

A third limitation concerns the applied measures. For example, we measure perceived public value creation rather than actual value creation. Although theory confirms that public value lies in the eyes of the beholder (Meynhardt, 2009), future research could include further multidimensional instruments, including some objective behavioral measures, to assess sharing ventures' societal value creation. Moreover, we make use of the Five Factor Model to assess respondents' personality traits. Critics argue that the model does not provide a complete theory of personality and is rather descriptive than explanatory, cannot explain the whole variation in human personality and that it is more of an empirical finding rather than developed from theory (e.g., Block, 1995; Eysenck, 1997; John et al., 2008; McAdams, 1992; Pervin, 1994). Nonetheless, the Five Factor Model is thought to be the most common classification scheme when it comes to assessing personality (Asendorpf & Neyer, 2012; John et al., 2008). Moreover, the validity of the model has been confirmed by a vast number of studies (e.g., Asendorpf & Neyer, 2012). Notably, the Five Factor Model has been used in over 3000 scientific studies over the past 20 years what makes it the universal standard model in personality research. Consequently, we believe that the utilized taxonomy provides an adequate conceptual foundation to respond to our research question. Furthermore, we only measure individuals' attitudes and, thus, we capture only intentions toward sharing behavior instead of actual sharing behavior. While this follows the psychological principle that measuring a person's intent is the best predictor for the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). attitudes are context-sensitive and are therefore subject to change (Athayde, 2009). Hence, future research should use more objective and longitudinal data to provide more accurate results of our theoretical assumptions.

Fourth, the scope of this study is limited with regard to the respondents' country of residence and age distribution. Since the dataset was collected in Germany, the findings may not be generalizable to other countries due to cross-cultural differences in individuals' attitudes toward a sharing disposition as well as their actual sharing behavior. For example, interdependency is presumed to be a more desirable behavior in collectivistic countries, such as Japan or China, than in more individualistic Western European countries, such as Germany (Belk, 2010). Additional research needs to be carried out in other countries to validate the findings. Another limitation that is linked to the study scope refers to respondents' age. Alas, the dataset is not representative concerning age. Since the sharing economy is often linked to younger people living in urban areas, the study aimed at participants between 18 and 35 years old living in cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. While this ensured that respondents are familiar with the sharing economy, it nevertheless calls for further research on sharing propensity across all age groups. Moreover, our sampling includes significantly more sharing economy users than providers. This limitation might lead to results that hold true for users but not suppliers. While we adjusted for this limitation with hypotheses directed at sharing economy supply only, further research should investigate sharing economy suppliers as the primary research objective and test whether our results hold.

6 | CONCLUSION

Overall, and despite the stated limitations, we believe our findings are sound and generally in line with prior research. Notably, we reveal that individual drivers for participation in the sharing economy are

more complex than initially expected (Botsman & Rogers, 2011). Prior research on participation in the sharing economy has focused solely on attitudes and motivations (e.g., Barnes & Mattsson, 2017; Bellotti et al., 2015; Benoit et al., 2017; Bucher et al., 2016). Our holistic approach sheds light on the complex relations between different individual drivers. Thus, our work offers a differentiated view of the drivers that lead individuals to engage in the sharing economy as users and providers. We thereby contribute to a deeper understanding of an emerging phenomenon, while stimulating further research in this domain.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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ENDNOTE

[1] Definitions of the nature of the phenomenon vary, with terms such as "collaborative consumption," "crowd-based capitalism," or "gig-economy" being commonly used (Martin, 2016; Sundararajan, 2014).

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