Analysing the importance of online trust on intention to use Airbnb by consumer groups differentiated by risk propensity and prior experience

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List of Abbreviations

AMOS: analysis of moment structures

ANOVA: analysis of variance

AVE: average variance extracted

B2B: business-to-business

B2C: business-to-customer

B&B: bed and breakfast

C2C: customer-to-customer

CFA: confirmatory factor analysis

CR: composite reliability

EFA: explanatory factor analysis

P2P: peer-to-peer

SPSS: statistical package for the social sciences

SSM: snowball sampling method

VC: virtual community

Attestation of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning."

Signature   *Siyu Chen*

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Abstract

Airbnb is a peer-to-peer platform that enables hosts to provide private accommodation to travellers. The development of Airbnb attracted this study to investigate the usage intention of potential consumers, especially individuals who reside in New Zealand. Moreover, given the particularities of the peer-to-peer economy, online trust has been seen as a high potential driver – or barrier – of Airbnb use. Previous studies on online trust have found that the construct consists of different dimensions, particularly the ability belief, benevolence belief, and integrity belief. Adopting a three-dimension online trust construct, it could further be hypothesised that prior Airbnb experience and personal risk propensity could have an effect on the entire online-trust-belief construct.

The purpose of this research was thus to observe how multidimensional online trust influences consumer intention to use Airbnb under individual risk propensities and prior Airbnb experiences. By adopting a model tested in the business-to-customer environment for many times, this dissertation attempted to fill a gap in the existing literature on P2P peer-to-peer market.

A quantitative methodology was adopted, delivering an online questionnaire through the snowball sampling method with the direct environment of the research and the supervisors as a starting point. A total of 184 responses were collected from people over 16 years old who reside in New Zealand. Since 32 respondents specified they had not previously heard of Airbnb, 152 responses were ultimately used to test the constructed model. SPSS 22.0 and AMOS were used for data analysis and hypotheses tests, using frequency tables, descriptive statistics, ANOVA-tests, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and linear regression.

The research findings firstly revealed the potential for Airbnb to further develop the New Zealand travel market. Close to half of the 152 respondents in this study had already used Airbnb and an additional number of people showed interest in using Airbnb for future travels. The conceptual model, which was originally established in a business-to-customer environment, was validated in the Airbnb context as well, with

results revealing that ability, benevolence and integrity beliefs of online trust all significantly impact the intention to use Airbnb, with benevolence being the strongest predictor. These relationships between online trust beliefs and intention to use Airbnb were influenced by prior experience and individual risk propensity, as was hypothesised. Risk avoiders' intention to use Airbnb was affected by benevolence and integrity belief, and this was true for both prior Airbnb users as respondents without Airbnb experience. However, the situation was different for risk takers. Risk takers without prior experience were only influenced by the ability belief, indicating that risk-taking individuals value Airbnb accommodation's functionalities instead of intangible trust aspects when intending to use Airbnb. For risk takers with prior Airbnb experience, no trust-aspects affected their usage intentions.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Commercial homes as tourism accommodations

Over the past decades, staying in local people's private residence, instead of commercial hotels, as an accommodation alternative has become tremendously popular among tourists (Lynch, McIntosh, & Tucker, 2009). Hedonistic demands such as the pursuit of multisensory experiences partially work as their motives (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016; Satama, 2016). Therefore, the aspiring and rising consumer demands of 'homeliness' (Lynch et al., 2009), with an 'authentic' (Guttentag, 2015) and unique accommodation (Nguyen, 2014) have created an alternative form of tourism accommodation – the commercial home. Represented as Bed & Breakfasts and farm-stays, accommodation operated by local home units meets guests' physical demands towards distinctive accommodation and their emotional demands towards personal service (Hall, 2009; Gössling, Hall, & Andersson, 2016).

On the other hand, local accommodation suppliers that refer to the 'host' as an individual entrepreneur, are more likely to consider lifestyle as a motive to promote individual accommodation and personal services to strangers (Lynch et al., 2009). Different from traditional hotels which rely on local tourism resources, individualised accommodating activities stress the host-guest relationship (Kastenholz & Sparrer, 2009) since there exists a closer interaction among the accommodation suppliers and clients. Therefore, the interaction between the host and guest, such as their perceptions of 'home' establishes their attitudes towards each other, while their trade-offs, and their face-to-face communications, tend to establish a recreation of a host-guest relationship contributing to the success of a commercial home (Lynch et al., 2009). These kinds of entrepreneurial businesses that provide guest accommodation and services have boosted the development of tourism for rural regions and local self-employment. Moreover, the development of the Internet has substantially motivated personal accommodation rentals, especially short-terms rentals, through mirroring online larger scale accommodation to

meet the demand of low-end markets (Guttentag, 2015).

1.1.2 New online transaction economies

The online market has supported the growth of online-transaction modes, ranging from business-to-business (B2B), business-to-customer (B2C), customer-to-customer (C2C), and now, a peer-to-peer (P2P) mode. The latter is also referred to as 'collaborative consumption', and another more well-known phrase – 'sharing economy' (Albinsson & Perera, 2012; Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Hamari, Sjöklint, & Ukkonen, 2015). Differentiating from the previously mentioned transaction modes like the C2C mode, sharing economy emphasises purchasing behaviour by having access to assets, instead of traditionally owning the assets (Botsman & Rogers, 2010). Specifically, this behaviour usually occurs in the form of lending and borrowing assets or sharing goods or services that were emphasised by the terms of a "sharing economy" (Hamari et al., 2015).

At present, many platforms have been established to serve people as 'sharing economy' platforms, such as taxi services (e.g., Uber, Lyft), and bikes or cars (e.g., Relay Rides, Wheelz) (Malhotra & Van Alstyne, 2014). Nevertheless, this situation causes individuals to consider if some participants involved in such collaborative transactions mainly do it for the sake of generating a profit, instead of purely 'sharing' their property (Eckhardt & Bardhi, 2015). In this regard, the term 'peer-to-peer /P2P consumption' (also referred to as 'collaborative consumption') seems more suitable than 'sharing economy' to describe the recent set of circumstances, especially since the sharing economy is not 100% 'sharing' and still involves consuming. Similarly, Guttentag (2016) also defined collaborative consumption as being different from a sharing economy. Accordingly, this study highlights the term 'peer-to-peer (P2P)' to avoid any possible misunderstandings and simultaneously highlight the focus on individual consuming behaviours. Moreover, this focus is consistent with the discussion of C2C consumption, because certain transaction vendors such as eBay and Yahoo, which are generally

considered to be C2C platforms, can also be described as P2P consumption, due to auction behaviour between two individuals (Yen & Lu, 2008). Han, Koo and Chung (2016) also proffered that this type of transaction belongs to earlier types of P2P platforms that concentrate on selling products, while they argued that P2P platforms have lately developed to be highly engaged in both products and services. By this light, there indeed exist differences between a 'sharing economy' and a 'P2P economy'. Thus, for the balance on products and services, this study highlights Airbnb as a P2P platform and its research domain. However, given that in both markets the supplier and purchaser assume essential roles, the researcher will review not only P2P studies but also specific C2C studies in the following chapter.

1.1.3 Airbnb: supply and demand perspectives

1.1.3.1 Supply perspective

Airbnb is an emerging P2P platform through which individuals ('hosts') rent a living space they own to other persons ('guests'), who seek accommodation on a short-term basis. Airbnb describes itself as "a trusted community marketplace for people to list, discover, and book unique accommodations around the world" (Airbnb, 2017). Therefore, it is essentially an online platform through which ordinary individuals and smaller providers like B&B operators rent out their spaces as accommodation that varies from shared rooms, private rooms to entire places for travellers (Nguyen, 2014). Airbnb has been growing exponentially since its establishment in 2008. Listing accommodations located in 65,000+ cities around the world, it has attracted over 20 million guests by September 2017 (Airbnb, 2017).

Therefore, Airbnb is becoming a force to be reckoned with in the accommodation market. Guttentag (2015) studied Airbnb's potential to disrupt the traditional accommodation market. Zervas Proserpio and Byers (2015) ascertained that the revenue of Texas hotels was affected by the booming local Airbnb accommodation, after which the hotels responded with a price reduction. Fang, Qiang, and Law (2016), analysed

Idaho data and concluded that while tourism employment can garner benefits from Airbnb within the growth of the tourism economy, this effect will be mitigated if hotel employment is reduced due to the rising Airbnb use. Other scholars such as Gutiérrez, García-Palomares, Romanillos, and Salas-Olmedo (2017) have linked the growth of Airbnb with potential social externalities in the form of increased residential pressures because it expands the tourism footprint within city centres.

By comparison, the situation in New Zealand still seems prospective. Auckland city for example, the most active Airbnb city, cumulatively held 1,900+ listed properties in 2015, 5,100+ in 2016, and has already overtaken 9,300 listings by the time this research was conducted (AirDNA, 2017a). Compared to New York (over 51,000) and Tokyo's figures (over 19,000), which have respectively occupied the highest proportion of the demand market in the US and Japan by June 2017 (AirDNA, 2017b, 2017c), New Zealand's market is still less active and has room for favourable development.

Hence, this leads to an opportunity to investigate New Zealander's knowledge and attitude towards Airbnb, as an insufficient amount of literature has drawn attention to the state and presence of Airbnb on the local market. Reviewing the limited previous investigations relative to Airbnb in New Zealand, most researchers examined Airbnb's circumstances and contributions in New Zealand (e.g., Roy, Cranefield & Toland, 2015) or related Airbnb to New Zealand's tourism when considering that entrepreneurs (Airbnb hosts) are taking part in the tourism industry (e.g., Yuan, 2015). Those studies naturally included some discussion relative to collaborative consumption. Airbnb, in this regard, can serve as a sort of democratisation process, whereby locals can gain a share in tourism development. However, there appears to be no detailed local investigation regarding the state of travellers as Airbnb consumers. According to Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016), the use of P2P accommodations might affect not only the accommodation market, but also consumers' travel behaviour. Therefore, while the rise in supply can be noted, additional insights are required in order to better comprehend the market and tourists' behavioural patterns that reflect the demand growth of Airbnb (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Previous literature also noted that

Airbnb's potential contribution to hotels and online travel agencies can be observed through the factors motivating consumers to use Airbnb (Nowak et al., 2015). Such research stimulates and calls for other studies to address the targeted research population that is limited to New Zealand residents, in order to establish an understanding from a demand perspective.

1.1.3.2. Demand perspective

Due to the brief history of Airbnb, which was founded in 2008, prior research has frequently overlooked Airbnb's history and merely viewed it as a generic example of a P2P consumption economy, thereby neglecting its specific characteristics, such as its lower-cost advantage (Zervas et al., 2015) and host-management (Nguyen, 2014). To explore the motivation contributing to travellers' participation in such a 'sharing economy', numerous studies list and expound on extrinsic motives: Airbnb's beneficial offerings such as economical pricing and amenities (Hamari et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2015). Simultaneously, an increasing number of studies concentrate on intrinsic drivers, such as trust in Airbnb (Ert, Fleischer, & Magen, 2016; Ma, Hancock, Mingjie, & Naaman, 2017) and the risk perception towards Airbnb (Andersson & Kobaslic, 2016; Liang, 2015). In particular, those intrinsic motives can partially be treated as the personal evaluative judgement towards extrinsic motives, and can complement consumer's behavioural intention (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). By this taken, trust and risk perception can serve as crucial mediators or moderators between the extrinsic motives and guests' intentions. Yet, perceived risk (Nowak et al., 2015) and lack of trust (Tussyadiah, 2015) have been studied as barriers for using the Airbnb platform. Moreover, much literature relates trust to regulatory issues of broader P2P consumption platforms and/ or treats it as a boundary for using Airbnb (Guttentag, 2015; Jefferson-Jones, 2015; Kaplan & Nadler, 2015; Rauch & Schleicher, 2015). Not only people who are unfamiliar with Airbnb, as mentioned above, but also Airbnb users will generate risk perceptions based on their prior usage experiences (Liang, 2015). Furthermore, there exist unfortunate issues that are derived from the Airbnb host side,

such as violent incidents and sexual assaults, that actively expose consumers to risk and dissuade them from trusting and using Airbnb (Han et al., 2016) and offer garner much media attention. Therefore, considering the importance of trust within risk issues, this investigation attempts to observe the trust of Airbnb users and potential consumers towards Airbnb, under an aspect of perceived risk.

Reviewing previous Airbnb research, consumer behavioural intentions seemed less investigated by trust studies related to risk perception, whereas research concerning other e-commerce domains, such as the B2C (business-to-customer) field (e.g., Gefen & Straub, 2004) and C2C (customer-to-customer) market (e.g., Lu, Zhao & Wang, 2010), have frequently been drawn. The current work, thus, targets online trust and risk differentiating it from other P2P (peer-to-peer) studies that measure trust by observing consumers' risk propensity, in other words, their risk-taking or risk-avoidance attitude.

Moreover, when investigating consumer's usage intention, research determined that consumers' familiarity towards the investigated platform can exhibit a profound effect on their trust towards the platform and their intention to utilise the platform (Gefen, 2000; Gefen & Heart, 2006; Gefen & Straub, 2004). Thus, it necessitates a conclusion concerning an observation towards individuals by different extents of familiarity, since Airbnb is a relatively new platform.

1.2 Study aim

The main aim of this study is to adopt an online belief in trust model along with risk propensities that affect the actual consumer's and potential consumer's intention of using Airbnb. This investigation, therefore, primarily analyses 'consumers' by which the researcher refers to as potential guests who have heard of Airbnb and real users who have already used Airbnb (whether or not they have effectively stayed at any booked Airbnb accommodation).

In order to expand and retain the market segment of Airbnb as a relatively new travel accommodation-booking platform, it is essential to understand the consumer's

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perspective to effectively attract them to use Airbnb. To achieve this goal, the researcher identifies online trust in three dimensions and attempts to seek the potential influence of online trust in consumer usage intention: the ability belief, the benevolence belief, and the integrity belief. Such observation in terms of trustor's (the potential consumer) multidimensional trust belief towards the trustee is adopted from Hwang's (2014) study that is based on Gefen's B2C studies (Gefen, 2002; Gefen, Karahanna, & Straub, 2003). Furthermore, the study follows above research towards diverse risk propensities and Airbnb experiences, distinguishing different groups of consumers' trusting dimensions.

To conclude, the main objectives of this study are outlined below:

(1) To evaluate the potential for Airbnb utilisation among New Zealand residents, based on brand knowledge, prior use, and intention to use;

(2) To test the multidimensional constructs of online trust, affecting consumers' intention to use Airbnb;

(3) To compare the above-measured relationship for different groups: prior users versus non-users, and risk avoiders versus risk takers

These objectives will lead to further hypotheses that will be identified in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.

Besides, consumers' trust will be discussed based on not only multidimensional beliefs but also their relationships relative to e-commerce: one's trust towards a supplying peer, while another represents trust towards the platform. Since guests' travel experiences engaging in Airbnb involves products of accommodation and services from the host (Guttentag, 2016), the trust in the peer has drawn researchers' attention apart from the Airbnb platform itself. Therefore, the researcher sets out to observe online trust in the ability, benevolence and integrity of both the platform and host side.

1.3 Structure of research

The introductory chapter expounds on the background of the study and research objectives. In Chapter 2, a literature review of the research question related to online-trust studies is provided, with the aim of establishing a conceptual model around trust beliefs and an intention to use Airbnb. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology adopted for collecting and analysing data for meeting the objectives of this study, while Chapter 4 concentrates on analysing the quantitative data collected in the research survey, through the application of factors analysis, ANOVA, and multivariate linear regression. In Chapter 5, the findings of the study are discussed in relation to the research hypotheses and past empirical evidence. Finally, Chapter 6 presents the conclusion and implications of the entire study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter presents the literature review with regard to the research questions. Beginning with a literature review based on the intention to use, online trust, consumer risk perception and prior Airbnb experience will be highlighted to introduce the research variables: ability belief of online trust, benevolence belief of online trust, integrity belief of online trust, and intention of use. The hypotheses will be presented with two overlaying dimensions that observe the opposite risk propensity (risk takers and risk avoiders) and prior Airbnb experience towards Airbnb (Airbnb users and non-users that have heard of the platform), which have respectively been adopted from Hwang's (2014) study and Hawlitschek, Teubner, and Weinhardt's (2016) research. Moreover, due to the gap between the customer-to-customer /peer-to-peer market and business-to-customer market concerning whether the 'peer' is emphasised, previous research findings relevant to trust on the peer and platform side will be also discussed. This study, therefore, aims to address the main thoughts from Gefen and Heart (2006), Gefen and Straub (2004), Hwang (2014), Lu et al. (2010), and Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) studies and replicate the main model that was used in a different environment.

2.1 Intention to use

Given that companies always aim at gaining more customers and, therefore, need to thoroughly understand the market, consumer behaviour warrants an investigation. In numerous research studies related to consumer behaviour, scholars often utilise intention to represent the actual behaviour (e.g., Lin, 2006; Lu & Zhou, 2007), even though there is no precise relationship between the two concepts. As pertaining to online markets, a significant amount of literature has claimed a strong correlation between customer behaviour and customer behavioural intention (Sheppard, Hartwick, J & Warshaw, 1988; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Furthermore, according to the theory of planned behaviour, behavioural intention is the most influential predictor of behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Meanwhile, a substantial amount of literature ascertained that the

motivating factors exhibit an indirect effect on consumers' actual behaviour under the mediator – behavioural intention (Kim, Cho, & Rao, 2000; Ajzen, 2015).

It has been determined that a rational consumer's purchasing decision-making process will follow the stages of cognition requirement, information gathering, and purchase behaviour (Ives & Learmonth, 1984). McKnight, Choudhury and Kacmar (2002) defined consumer behavioural intention towards using a vendor in three aspects: to share individual information with the vendor (e.g., sign up to the website, join an in-vendor community); to receive a recommendation or advice from the vendor; and to purchase vendor products or services. Furthermore, much researchers such as Hwang, (2014) and Lu et al. (2010) cited Gefen and Straub's (2004) measurement and added 'getting the information from the website' into the measured items towards the intention to use the website.

Behavioural intention towards new technology has been examined in e-commerce studies over the past decades. For instance, during the initial stage of B2C (business-to-customer) information technology development, certain literature focused on the significant determinants that stimulate the consumer's intention to accept and utilise electronic banking service (Kim & Prabhakar, 2004; Yousafzai, Pallister, & Foxall, 2005). Then, the focus on B2C businesses transitioned toward mostly investigating websites like Amazon (Gefen, 2002; Serva, Benamati, & Fuller, 2005). In the case of P2P platforms, Uber, the taxi service platform, is frequently investigated (e.g., Rauch & Schleicher, 2015). However, Airbnb qualifies as another domain that has attracted numerous scholars in their quest to evaluate accommodation guests' usage intention (Jefferson-Jones, 2015). However, while much e-commerce research is likely to dwell on consumer purchasing intention and the intention to garner information (e.g., Hawlitschek et al., 2016; Pavlou & Fygenson, 2006), other intentions such as the intention to register on the platform and receiving product recommendations from the platform system, are less prevalent. Since P2P consumption activities involve and consider non-consuming behaviours as important as transactions, the researcher attempts to observe usage intention towards Airbnb for both consumptive and

non-consumptive transactions; in other words, the 'intention to use Airbnb platform', under the consideration of engaging the four aspects mentioned above.

2.2 Online trust research

2.2.1 Trust conceptualisation and multidimensional trust

The act or process of prompting the consumer to engage in a purchase is essential; thus, the relationship between the buyer and seller will be analysed. As far as relationship research is concerned, it is evident that trust studies have historically focused on marketing literature (Young & Wilkinson, 1989; Guenzi, 2002; Wilson, Kingshott & Pecotich, 2007) where the researchers perceived trust as the most fundamental base for building a firm relationship (e.g., Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Thus, trust has been conceptualised based on interacting circumstances. There also exist many previous studies examining trust by means of a two-dimensional conceptualisation: cognitive-based trust and affect-based trust (e.g., Lewis & Weigert, 1985; McKnight, Cummings, & Chervany, 1998). McKnight et al. (2002) posited that trust-related behaviours – i.e., actions that make a customer vulnerable to the vendor – are the outcome of a model that included the following: a person's individual disposition towards a general willingness to depend upon others; trusting beliefs (or perceptions) about whether the attributes of the trustee can provide personal benefits; and the intention to engage in trust-related behaviours (see Figure 2.1). In their model, McKnight et al. (2002) related these trusting beliefs to a cognitive-based trust, which involved competence, benevolence, and integrity, while affect-based trust took place during the intention to engage in trust-related behaviours.
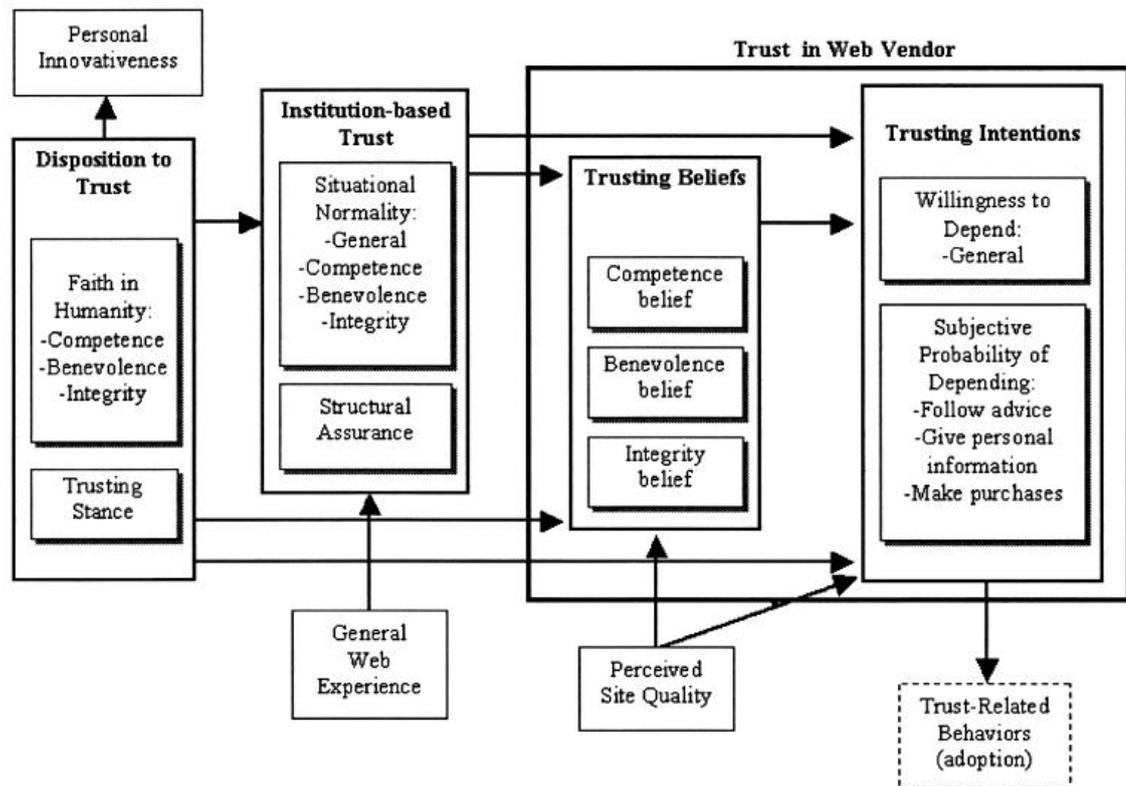
Figure 2.1. Web trust model (McKnight et al., 2002, p.341)

Mayer, Davis and Schoorman (1995) proposed a similar hypothesis, but the main difference was that they referred to the trusting perceptions of the trustee's attributes as the trustworthiness of the other party in the transaction. Contrary to McKnight et al. (2002), Mayer et al. (1995) determined that trust, as a single dimension concept, links the trustworthiness of the vendor with trusting intentions. Therefore, McKnight et al. (2002) adopted dimensions from what Mayer et al. (1995) considered trustworthiness into a multidimensional concept of trusting beliefs (i.e., ability, benevolence, and integrity), thereby simplifying the analysis by positing that trust and trustworthiness develop simultaneously. Subsequent B2C research began to measure online trust in similar multiple dimensions (e.g., Gefen et al., 2003; Gefen & Straub, 2004), broadly characterising 'ability' belief as the perception towards skills and competencies, 'benevolence' belief as the perceived desire of the organisation to treat the consumer fairly, and 'integrity' belief as the expectation in the transaction partner's honesty.

In C2C and P2P domains, however, the trust-concept has proven to be more complex, because both the individual supplier and the online transaction environment play an important role. Hence, P2P studies involving cognitive-based trust or e-online trust beliefs in the conceptualisation of McKnight et al. (2002) are rarely found. Contrariwise, most studies seem to measure affect-based trust, i.e., trusting intentions, as an outcome of trustworthiness's performance and an intrinsic motive of consumer behaviour (e.g., Heyns & Rothmann, 2015; Kim, Yoon, & Zo, 2015).

Although Yang, Lee, Lee, Chung, and Koo (2016) suggested that trust could be categorised as being cognitive-based and affect-based, they discussed trust as a single-dimension concept that was influenced by trustworthiness, similar to Mayer et al. (1995). According to Yang et al. (2016), trust in the Airbnb platform depends on a cognitive calculation or information; cognitive-based factors, such as information technology quality and platform traits are, thus, likely to impact trust in Airbnb (Hsu, Chuang, & Hsu, 2014). Moreover, having trust in the hosts relies more on individuals, emotional perceptions, and relationships among these persons (Kanawattanachai & Yoo, 2002); therefore, affect-based factors, such as familiarity and reputation, can impact the trust in hosts (Hsu et al., 2014). To summarise, Yang et al. (2016) perceived trust in the Airbnb platform as a consumer's cognitive-based trust and considered trust in the hosts as an affect-based trust. Other Airbnb studies (e.g., Han et al., 2016; Hawlitschek et al., 2016), however, ascertained that: The host is also involved in cognitive-based factors such as quality service as well; The platform is also involved in affect-based factors such as a familiarity towards the platform. Therefore, this study proposes that both affect-based trust and cognitive-based trust can be embodied in the trust towards Airbnb platform and trust towards Airbnb hosts, while basing the multidimensional trust on McKnight et al.'s (2002) study and treating trust and trustworthiness as occurring simultaneously.

2.2.2 Multidimensional trust in different markets

Despite following with McKnight et al.'s (2002) path of multidimensional trust dimensions, the researcher finds it inappropriate to directly draw from their model in the current stage. As mentioned previously, the presence of peers adds an additional layer of complexity to the multidimensional trust model that has been barely presented in B2C studies, like McKnight et al.'s (2002) research, that constitute the basis of the conceptual model. C2C and then P2P studies have focused much attention on the peer's perspective. Therefore, there exists a need to review the research engaging multidimensional trust in different domains.

Lu et al.'s (2010) study explored C2C online trust beliefs in peer and platform side, based on Gefen's relevant trust studies (e.g., Gefen, 2002; Gefen & Straub, 2004). While retaining the three dimensions of trust beliefs in the website or vendor: ability, integrity, and benevolence, they combined integrity with benevolence as one online trust belief towards community members by adopting findings from Ridings, Gefen, and Arinze's (2002) study, who investigated online trust beliefs in members within a virtual community (VC). This study thus finds it interesting to observe multidimensional trust in peer and platform with regard to the comparisons happening in B2C, C2C, VC, and P2P context.

As for trust in websites or vendors, Lu et al. (2010) discovered that the trust in e-vendor's ability impacts the consumer's intention to inquire about or purchase the product, which supports Gefen's studies (Gefen & Heart, 2006; Gefen & Straub, 2004) towards the B2C market. Nevertheless, their result is inconsistent with Gefen and Heart's (2006) B2C research (see Table 2.1) that indicated no effect of the trust in integrity on the purchase intention. This might be because in the C2C market, compared with B2C market, the vendor or website mainly provides a platform for transactions rather than sell its' own products, and thus tend to play a less important role in terms of integrity. While Lu et al. (2010) demonstrated the only significance of the ability dimension, Hawlitschek et al. (2016), focusing on a P2P economy in the case of Airbnb, proffered that the platform's benevolence constitutes the only factor to cause an

intention to consume (see Table 2.1). Although Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) results might be comparatively biased, due to the small data set, it still demonstrated that the platform's role as a mediator in consumptions among peers in P2P economy seems less important than that among customers in C2C economy. Overall, the character of platform has seemed persistently weak with the transformations from B2C market to C2C market, to P2P domain. This perspective tends to partially explain Kim et al.'s (2015) hesitation concerning why investigation in trust towards P2P platform is far less than that towards P2P suppliers (peer).

The trust in the peer, as well as the role of the 'peer', varies according to various market domains. Lu et al. (2010) focused on the C2C market and determined that the ability belief of trust in virtual community (VC) members can indirectly impact consumer's purchase intention, thereby mediating the ability belief in the e-vendor. This was validated by Tung, Tan, Chia, Koh, and Yeo's (2001) study where they hypothesised that the establishment of trust between community members can positively influence their trust in the e-vendor. Lu et al.'s (2010) findings demonstrated non-causality relationships between the three beliefs of trust in the peer and the intention to garner information, which were completely inconsistent with Ridings et al.'s VC study (2002) (see Table 2.1). The discrepancy might be because Ridings et al. (2001) posited that "get the information from virtual community member" is not the same as Lu et al.'s (2010) study that focused on inquiring about products in a C2C market. Despite that, Menon and Smith (2002) emphasised that VC members' trust may contribute to their intention to inquire about a product.

Trust in peer also performs a crucial role affecting intention to consume, in both C2C and P2P fields. A direct relationship between the benevolence-integrity belief combination and purchase intention was discovered by Lu et al. (2010) (see Table 2.1). Reviewing Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) research, direct relationships were found towards all of three beliefs of trust in the peer, respectively. The focus on a P2P economy versus a C2C economy might contribute to this difference, as was discussed previously. Although Lu et al.'s (2010) study rejected the significance of the peer's ability,

Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) study substantiated this claim as they showed the contribution of consumer's trust in the supplier in an individual transaction to affect the intention to consume.

Table 2.1 Comparison of trust in the vendor and peer under different fields

Trust in	Study	Domain	Online trust beliefs → Direct effect				
			ABI	BEN	INT	Intention	
E-Vendor	Gefen and Heart (2006)	B2C	√	×	×	IGI	
			×	×	√		IC
	Lu et al. (2010)	C2C	√	×	×	IGI	IC
	Hawlitschek et al. (2016)	P2P	×	√	×		IC
Peer	Ridings et al. (2002)	VC	√	√	√	IGI	
	Lu et al. (2010)	VC	×	×	×	IGI	
	Lu et al. (2010)	C2C	×	√	√		IC
	Hawlitschek et al. (2016)	P2P	√	√	√		IC

Note: ABI = Ability. BEN = benevolence. INT = Integrity. IGI = Intention to Get Information. IC = Intention to Consume. √ = have direct effect. × = have no direct effect.

In addition, all of above mentions have provided a draw to the researcher for investigating diverse behavioural intentions. Therefore, this study addresses the usage intention in multiple aspects, beyond the intention to consume and get the information into research, as presented before, so as to fill the gap presently lacking regarding investigations in previous P2P studies.

2.2.3 Multidimensional trust in Airbnb platform and Airbnb hosts

Based on the last section, and given that prior studies (e.g., Han et al., 2016; Hawlitschek et al., 2016) measuring Airbnb characteristics and host characteristics found a significant relationship related to consumer trust, it is imperative to discuss online trust beliefs in both the platform and host side in this study. For the P2P environment, while several sources determined that peer trust is the central driver affecting behavioural intention (e.g., Botsman & Rogers, 2010; Lamberton & Rose, 2012), limited research towards trust in platforms has been performed (Kim et al., 2016). This study would, therefore, like to review trusting model outcomes in terms of

platforms – as being central in B2C studies introduced in Section 2.2.1 – and peers – being the focus of C2C and P2P studies introduced in Section 2.2.2 – simultaneously by adopting the ability-belief, benevolence-belief, and integrity-belief concepts to both a platform and a peer-context.

2.2.3.1 Ability belief of online trust

According to previous studies (e.g., Gefen & Straub, 2004), the ability-component belief on online trust can be stated as the perception and expectation of trustor (i.e., e-vendor users or/ and online consumers) towards the characteristics like skills and competencies of trustee (i.e., e-vendor and online product suppliers) being able to exercise an influence on trustor by some specific domains, such as the behavioural intention. This ability relates both to the Airbnb operational system and its procedures and to the ability of the accommodation offers (i.e., hosts) to satisfy the guest's needs.

In terms of the accommodations presented on the Airbnb website, guests are offered a complex set of product attributes for consideration such as price, location and amenities, so as to select their preferential accommodation for their stay (Nowak et al., 2015). Catering to consumer's preferences in terms of accommodation attributes, a specific accommodation that meets the consumer's needs will most likely be selected. Hawlitschek et al. (2016) described those attributes that are perceived by consumers as beneficial to them. The greatest benefit may belong to localised characteristic that provides guests with perceived authenticity, something which is more difficult to offer in a traditional hotel setting (Guttentag, 2015; Oskam & Boswijk, 2016). Generally, the ability of platform and hosts to provide products is specially embodied in meeting the consumer's authentic needs.

Apart from products, services, including platform services and supplier services, can also be considered as a dimension of ability. They are even perceived as the most influential element affecting the consumer's intention in terms of quality (Yen & Lu, 2008). Investigating the service quality, Chiou and Sung (2009) included contact,

efficiency, system availability, privacy protection and compensation as sub dimensions for website quality and explained that contact, fulfilment, responsiveness and compensation were four dimensions necessary for seller quality. In this study, as Airbnb facilitates hosts to advertise their accommodations and to serve customers well, services are perceived as being offered by Airbnb website services and that Airbnb hosts' services fall under Airbnb's guidance. Moreover, such services provide opportunities for the hosts and guests to co-create experiences and thus contribute to guest's perceived authenticity greatly (Guttentag, 2016). To conclude, an ability belief of online trust will be observed through consumer's trust in Airbnb and its hosts' ability of providing an array of products (accommodation) and services with good quality.

2.2.3.2 Benevolence belief of online trust

Benevolence belief in this study can describe the belief towards the extent to which a trustee is believed to desire to treat the trustor well and fairly, with reference to interpersonal relationships (Mayer et al., 1995). However, when relating this definition to the business marketing domain, such belief could seemingly not be equally transferred into the seller-buyer relationship, according to Mayer et al. that suggest the 'good' intention is "aside from an egocentric profit motive" (1995, p718). Since the seller, such as a company, is always profit-oriented and aims to acquire certain benefits from its customers, an alternative 'putting interest of customers before their own' of a company was employed to describe the benevolence of a trustee in an e-commerce relationship (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Thus, such a show of 'benevolence' of a company to their customers relied more on the intention to fulfil the customer's requirement, while achieving their own profit goal. Similarly, in P2P consumption activities, the intention and behaviour of a person renting out their accommodation on the Airbnb platform for sharing their non-using spaces (Liang, 2015) is expected to meet the guests' needs. Therefore, consumer's benevolence-belief in the Airbnb context refers to the trust in the good intentions and benevolent behaviour of both Airbnb and the host.

2.2.3.3 Integrity belief of online trust

Previous studies discussed that trust in the trustee's integrity is specifically related to the trustee's honesty and their reliability at keeping their promises (e.g., Giffin, 1967; Luhmann, 1979). Hwang's (2014) e-transaction study, citing Gefen's trust studies (e.g., Gefen, 2002; Gefen et al., 2003;) that discussed integrity based on the above literature, has thus been reviewed and followed by the current research. Moreover, according to Mayer et al. (1995), trustor's perception towards trustee's integrity is also relevant to that the trustee has to adhere to a collection of acceptable principles. Thus, the perceived acceptability as they suggested, is supposed to be measured in terms of some personality characteristics of the trustee, such as openness (Lee, Ashton, Ogunfowora, Bourdage, & Shin, 2010). The openness being treated as an element representing trustworthiness is in practice supported by previous literature that discussed multidimensional trust (Hosmer, 1995). Considering the Airbnb hosts, openness itself is even credited with influencing the consumer's participation in Airbnb (Pezenka, Weismayer, & Lalicic, 2017). Therefore, the current study attempts to observe integrity belief of online trust as based on trust in the hosts' honesty and reliability when adding belief towards hosts' openness into the equation.

2.2.4 Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3

As per the above discussion, ability belief of online trust, benevolence belief of online trust, and integrity belief of online trust were selected as measurable variables that exhibit a positive significance on usage intention. This is consistent with Hwang's (2014) e-commerce study.

Accordingly, the first three, out of five, hypotheses of the current research are presented in the following part, while Hypotheses 4 and 5 will be discussed shortly:

Hypothesis 1:   Ability belief of online trust towards Airbnb positively influences the consumer's intention to use the platform.

Hypothesis 2:   Benevolence belief of online trust towards Airbnb positively affects the consumer's intention to utilise the platform.

Hypothesis 3:   Integrity belief of online trust towards Airbnb positively influences the consumer's intention to use the platform.

2.3 Prior Airbnb experience

2.3.1 Familiarity-predictability within trust process

Besides ability, benevolence and integrity, Mayer et al. (1995) also emphasised situational predictability as a potential trustworthiness dimension that is primarily dependent upon the trustor's familiarity with the trustee. In other words, it refers to the initial or existing trust process. Unlike the initial trust towards the consumer who has no prior experience with an e-vendor, ongoing trust cannot exist without some aspect of vendor familiarity or prior experience (McKnight & Chervany, 2002; McKnight et al., 1998). Therefore, numerous studies have examined predictability as an online trust belief within the consideration of the trust process. McKnight et al., (1998) directly adopted a trust scale consisting of four online trust beliefs in their study towards initial trust, while Gefen and Straub (2004) even added conditional predictability into the mix of online trust beliefs as part of the process of familiarity with the website.

In a second line of trust-research conducted by authors such as Gefen and Heart (2006) and Hwang (2014), predictability and familiarity were thought to precede the three main trust beliefs. Taking account of the initial and ongoing nature of trust, Gefen et al. (2003) concentrated on trust antecedents including knowledge-based familiarity, perception of institution-based situational normality, calculative-based beliefs, and perception of institution-based structural assurances, and discussed their overall impact on online trust beliefs. After detecting a strong correlation among familiarity, predictability and usage

intention, Gefen subsequently, along with Heart (2006), treated familiarity-predictability as a trust process that contributes to the model, and examined how each of the other three online-trust beliefs might impact on the intention to inquire about and purchase the product (see Figure 2.2). Moreover, they found that familiarity-predictability has a significant effect on the ability, belief and integrity of online trust. Except for directly establishing familiarity into the research model, as related to trust, other researchers also observed consumer trust and consumer behavioural intention according to prior experience. For instance, Hwang's study (2014) adopting "loyalty" to seek different relationships between usage intention and trust beliefs in regard to experienced platform-users and non-users. He discovered that non-users' usage intention is influenced by their ability belief, while ability belief and integrity belief together have an impact on the usage intention of experienced users. Such studies significantly influenced the current research protocols of comparing trust-intention relationship by groups based on consumers' prior Airbnb experiences. This is especially true since Airbnb is a relatively new platform; thus, observing prior experiences may contribute to a more significant and precise result.
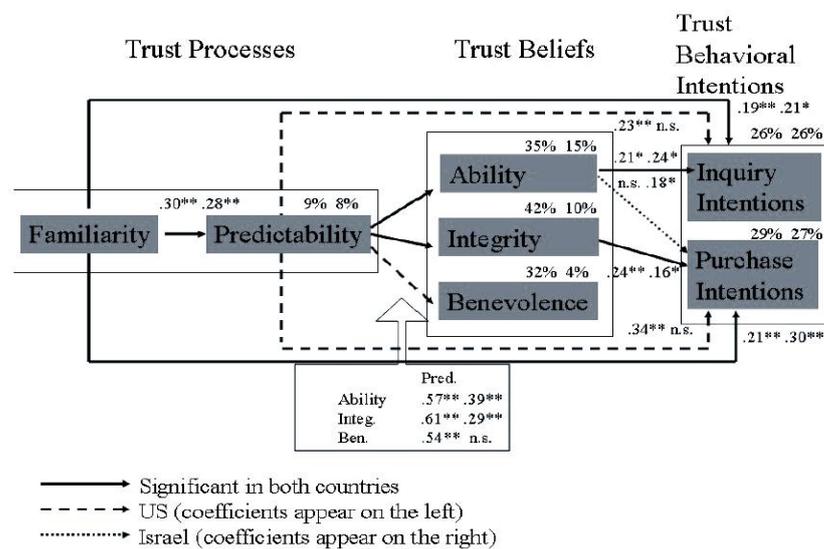
Figure 2.2. Research model with path coefficients (Gefen & Heart, 2006, p.16)

According to above discussion, the observations of potential users and real users in this study establish the prediction process related to familiarity with Airbnb. Airbnb users already exhibit an initial trust related to Airbnb, but marketers aim to establish how to

develop their ongoing trust and build loyalty (continue using Airbnb), while non-users in this study are expected to have an initial trust relating to the Airbnb industry (Hwang, 2014). However, unlike Hwang's (2014) study, which focused on Amazon that is a well-liked and frequently used online market for consumers, Airbnb is a rather new platform and is thus probably unfamiliar to many consumers. This suggests that by including non-users who have not heard of Airbnb previously, it might lead to unreliable estimates of trust and use intention. To establish accurate future intentions, at the very least, a familiarity with the Airbnb-model is required. Therefore, this study opted to observe the usage intention of potential users who have heard of Airbnb but have not used it and are supposed to have initial trust, and those who have used Airbnb (whether they have stay at any Airbnb accommodations) and are expected to have ongoing trust, thereby categorising them by their 'prior Airbnb experience'.

2.3.2 Hypothesis 4

Therefore, based on Hwang's (2014) study, this research also adopted the familiarity concept, which is based on prior Airbnb experiences in evaluating different consumers, leading to a fourth hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: There exist differences in relationships between online trust beliefs and intentions to use Airbnb, with regard to Airbnb users and non-users.

2.4 Risk propensity

2.4.1 Online trust and perceived risk

The previous section has already defined online trust by systematically discussing three dimensions of trust. When referring to practical research, marketing researchers generally define trust as a psychological state of the trustor, such as the perception relating to credibility and benevolence (Doney & Cannon, 1997), and the expectation of

reliability and willingness to rely (Moorman, Deshpandé, & Zaltman, 1993), which reflects a similar proposition by management researchers (Bhattacharya, Devinney, & Pillutla, 1998; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). This is in contrast to the managerial definition that is directed more towards being vulnerable to the trustee's behaviours based on an expectation (Mayer et al., 1995). However, while most management researchers suppose that trust exists only in the context involving risk (Bhattacharya et al., 1998; Mayer et al., 1995), marketing researchers rarely view risk as an antecedent of trust in spite of drawing risk as a crucial aspect of trust (e.g., Kumar, Scheer, & Steenkamp 1995).

However, given the focus on trust in an online market environment, the inclusion of risk seems indispensable. Considering the main characteristics of electronic platform quality - efficiency, system availability, perceived security, compensation and contact, all of these can generate a sense of risk for consumers (Bart, Shankar, Sultan, & Urban, 2005; Malhotra & Murnighan, 2002). For example, hesitation based on the web contents' presentation and web contacts (Hwang & Kim, 2007; McKnight & Chervany, 2002) and concern regarding the off-site products and services prior to consuming (Grazioli & Jarvenpaa, 2000) can have an effect on consumers' risk perception. Moreover, in terms of the P2P market, trust draws more attention compared with that in the B2C market, since consumers are unfamiliar with the products, services and suppliers (Kim et al., 2015). Staying in a booked Airbnb accommodation provides guests with experiences in the form of products and services that are produced and consumed at the same time (Guttentag, 2016); thus, an uncertainty towards the quality of the accommodation and its supplier (host) will continue from the time of using the Airbnb platform up until leaving the accommodation. More importantly, the monetary risk, compared with that of the B2C market, is even more pronounced given the direct and personal nature of financial transactions between the host and guests (Han et al., 2016). In addition, the services from the host are also closely involved in both social networks and face-to-face interaction. Therefore, consumers' risk perception, as it relates to reliability towards the Airbnb platform, can be highly affected by the host (Heinrichs, 2013).

In online market studies, numerous literature has already ascertained that risk can significantly contribute to - or detract from - trust (Bart et al.,2005; Friedman, Khan, & Howe, 2000; McKnight et al., 2002), or that trust can significantly influence perceived risk (Grayson, Johnson, & Chen, 2008). Despite the confusion derived from different explanations with regard to the causal relationship, a strong association between perceived risk and trust certainly exists. However, when it comes to Airbnb research, trust research related to risk perception is rather scarce, especially due to the limited amount of information concerning this newly investigated domain itself. Only a few Airbnb studies combined consumer's risk perception and trust together, such as Kim et al.'s (2015) study which viewed consumer's trust as an antecedent of perceived risk. Moreover, Lamberton and Rose (2012) posited that consumers' trust can reduce their perceived risk involved in peer-to-peer services. This prompted the current study to, subsequently, focus more on B2C online literature towards a trusting model that is related to risk perception and to adopt Airbnb literature in the context simultaneously.

2.4.2 Risk avoiders and risk takers

Previous scholars such as Zhou and Lu (2011) have figured out that personal traits, such as the disposition to trust /risk propensity that has been mentioned above, are able to exercise an influence on consumer's usage intention. In terms of risk, there are also studies that proffer how willing an individual is to take a risk and referred to this willingness as risk propensity (Rousseau et al., 1998). More straightforwardly, Brockhaus (1980) described risk propensity as a person's willingness to take risks. Supportive to this, Kogan and Wallach's (1964) study differentiated people into risk takers and risk averters (also referred to risk-avoiders) based on their personal attributes. Risk avoiders tend to place more importance on losses and, therefore, overestimate the probability of perceived risk; contrariwise, risk takers underestimate perceived risk (Schneider & Lopes, 1986). As the amount of trust corresponds to risk perception, and since studies have already determined a direct (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Sitkin & Pablo, 1992) or indirect relationship (Sitkin & Weingart, 1995) between risk propensity

and risk perception, the current investigation explores individuals who exhibit opposite risk propensities.

2.4.3 Hypothesis 5

As mentioned above, a general categorisation is related to the dividing of risk propensity into a risk taker group and risk avoider group (Kogan & Wallach, 1964). As relating to previous literature, risk propensity is generally measured by research in terms of acceptance to a (new) technology, yet these studies seem to only treat it as a control variable when seeking consumer intention to use an online platform (e.g., Oh, Jeong, & Baloglu, 2013; Hawlitschek, 2016). However, Hwang (2014) established a direct group study on the research model that investigated consumer's intention to utilise a B2C platform, namely, Amazon. This research discovered that, while trust influences risk taker's intention to use, it had no effect on the risk avoider's intention, which held true for respondents who had not used Amazon previously. The current study follows Hwang's group study to investigate consumer trust and its impact on their intentions to use Airbnb, based on two risk propensity groups and, therefore, create a fifth and final hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Differences exist in the relationships between online trust beliefs and the intention to use Airbnb between risk takers and risk avoiders.

Consequently, by combining all five hypotheses, and basing the study on previous trust-conceptualisations, a research model involving the five hypotheses is depicted in Figure 2.3. Ultimately, three directions will be investigated: the effect of three online trust beliefs on intention to use (Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3), the effect of online trust beliefs on intention to use for respondents with and without prior Airbnb experiences (Hypothesis 4), and the effect of online trust beliefs on the intention to use for risk avoiders and risk takers (Hypothesis 5).
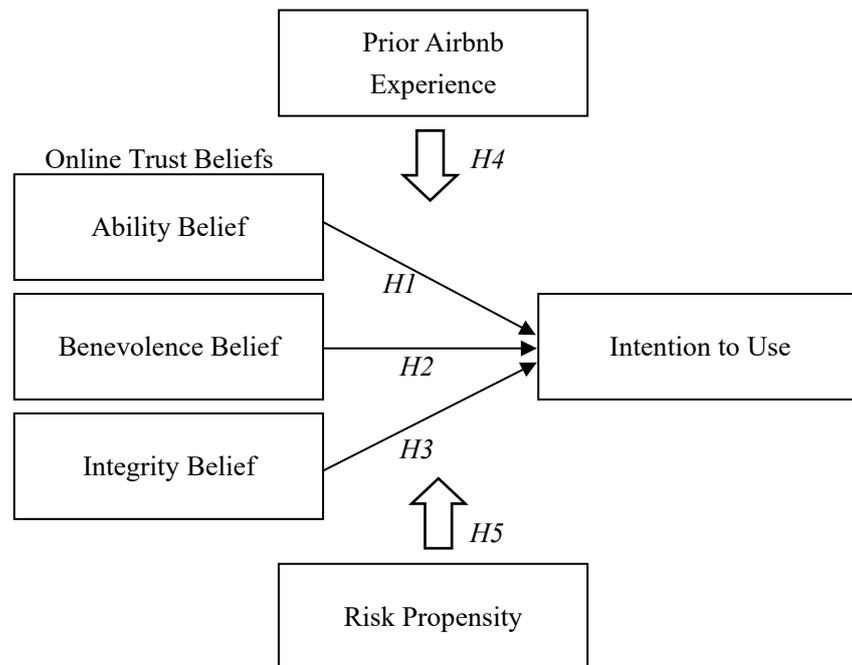
Figure 2.3. Research Proposed Model

2.5 Summary

To observe the online trust beliefs through a new research domain — Airbnb, the current study attempts to treat the trust in Airbnb by combining both the platform and its hosts into a single composite 'trustee', by combining the measurement items related to both sides. Accordingly, the 'intention to use Airbnb' was developed as a less restrictive concept, instead of purely focusing on consumer behaviour involving product inquiries or purchasing. This was adopted from Hwang's (2014) study involving the B2C online market, which presupposed the relationship between online trust beliefs and the intention to use the Amazon platform. Thus, Airbnb, as a relatively new platform, requires research into the entire platform and the potential guest's complete behavioural intention. This study followed Hwang's establishment of variables in terms of ability, benevolence, and integrity beliefs of online trust, and the intention to use the platform. This is also in consideration of certain studies that have stirred much controversy when observing online trust beliefs within a separate degree of the platform side and peer side (e.g., Lu et al., 2010; Hawlitschek et al., 2016).

Given the significance of prior Airbnb experiences and risk propensity, this study adopted the design of Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) research and Hwang's (2014) study, which placed survey respondents into two types of groups: Airbnb users and non-users that have heard of Airbnb and risk takers and risk avoiders.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter establishes the research methodology and presents the research paradigm, research instruments with development, measurement, sampling methodology, data collection, ethics issues, and data analysis, respectively.

3.1 Research Paradigm

A paradigm refers to the research beliefs and practices that affect the considered questions and selected methodologies throughout the research process (Morgan, 2007). To conduct empirical studies, the positivist paradigm is one of the traditional paradigm choices (Morgan, 2007), especially since positivism views society as an objective fact and identifies causal relations through researchers' operationalisation and measurements (Leimeister, 2010; Gray, 2014). As the literature review indicates, this investigation attempts to determine the significance of the cause and effect relationship, and where trust beliefs exhibit an impact on the consumer intention to use the Airbnb platform. Thus, positivism is the most appropriate pattern for this particular investigation.

Previous scholars have indicated that positivist epistemology is rooted in observations focused on social phenomena and, thus, collects and measures numeric and alphanumeric data from the sample of a stated population, so as to test the designed variables and hypothesis (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991; Morgan, 2007). In this context, quantitative methodologies require more observations than qualitative methods as pertaining to positivist research, as it focuses on causal association research that can be adequately measured. The matching of the positivist paradigm with quantitative methods has been supported by a host of research (e.g., Morgan, 2007; Gray, 2014). However, compared with qualitative methods, which are capable of observing a complete range of respondents' activity and behaviour, quantitative methods that statistically categorise participants and are more restrictive in response categories might lead to biased results, after drawing non-representative samples collected by self-selection questionnaire (Leimeister, 2010). Therefore, in order to ensure valid and

reliable quantitative data, a proper method would be to establish appropriate variables by which to reduce the prejudice (Morgan, 2007). Thus, quantitative research is viewed as an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationships among several different variables (Creswell, 2015). This study concentrates on the relationships between trust (beliefs) and consumer behavioural intention, which are based on a social phenomenon and measured via numerical scales. Therefore, it was opted to utilise quantitative methodologies.

3.2 Research Instruments

3.2.1 Survey Method

The survey method represents the primary data collection technique for quantitative methods among empirical statistical studies (Neuman, 2006), which developed in social science with the positivism paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). As Creswell (2015) indicated, to describe social phenomena such as trends and behaviours, surveying offers a sufficient sample of the population that is relevant to a particular social phenomenon. To observe the characteristics, attitudes /beliefs /opinions, behaviours, expectation, knowledge, and self-classification of observant objects, a methodology such as surveying gathers self-reported items that are suitable for research (Neuman, 2006). Research questions relating to consumers' online trust and behaviours in the current study are, thus, appropriate for the survey method.

Among the quantitative survey methods, compared to structured interviews, web surveys, especially self-completion online questionnaires, generally take advantage of time efficiency, lower financial expenses, and question diversity (Neuman, 2006; Gray, 2014). In this survey, the variety of designed questions involved not only multiple-choice, open-ended and sensitive questions, but also contingency questions that enable the researcher to observe different sample groups based on their step-by-step answers. Hence, a web survey was adopted. With the aim of establishing an overview relative to trust in Airbnb, the researcher planned to utilise multiple types of questions

based on different respondents and, thus, found that the self-completion online questionnaires tend to be the most appropriate method. Online questionnaires might probably result in an oversampling of younger groups, nevertheless, given that Airbnb is also an e-platform that frequently attracts younger people (Neuman, 2006), having an above-average cover of younger populations seemed favourable for the study purposes.

3.2.2 Instrument Development

The survey developed an online questionnaire that consisted of two blocks of questions with items measuring all proposed constructs and demographic profiles (See Appendix A), and took maximum advantage of previous research conducted in the field to ensure validity and reliability.

In the first block, two initial filter questions established whether the participants resided in New Zealand and were over 16 years old and, therefore, fell within the target population. Subsequently, respondents were asked whether they were knowledgeable about Airbnb and had used it before. The respondents without relevant knowledge automatically skipped to the next part of the questionnaire; the part which focused on risk attitudes, while participants with knowledge or /and previous use experience were asked to complete the entire questionnaire that involved the following contingency questions. The question that determined whether they had used the platform before was followed by subsequent queries asking about the respondents' user experiences, including staying at accommodations and renting out spaces as a host. Next, these respondents answered questions focusing on the measured constructs relative to online characteristics or ability such as the benevolence and integrity of the Airbnb environment, and the intention to use Airbnb. Questions focusing on these four variables were addressed by the five-point Likert scale that ranged from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree), and also included an opt-out response – 'don't know'. This allows the respondents the freedom to choose the correct option, as they are not forced to select a certain Likert scale option, while also screening out those participants

who are not familiar with Airbnb. More specifically, a matrix question format (see Appendix A) was designed for these questions, which contributed to convenience for the respondents as well as clear and observant findings.

All measured items (see Table 3.1) were adopted from Gefen and Straub (2004), Hawlitschek et al. (2016), Hwang (2014), and Lu et al. (2010) and adjusted based on the researcher's consideration towards P2P and Airbnb environment. As previous discussions indicated, this study engaged ability, benevolence, and integrity of online trust and observed their contribution to the consumer's intention to use the Airbnb platform, rather than analyse how trust beliefs influence a specific consumer behaviour such as booking Airbnb accommodations. Participants in this survey were travellers who 'have heard of Airbnb' or 'have already booked Airbnb accommodations'. Accordingly, some measured items that were adopted from previous literature were deleted, edited or re-arranged to suit the purpose of this study. More particularly, it is worth mentioning that previous scholars emphasised the consumer's 'expecting' perception by using a first-person description (e.g., 'I expect' and 'I believe') to emphasise 'trusting beliefs' instead of trustworthiness, by which the current work went.

Table 3.1 Constructs measurement

Code	Constructed Item	References
Ability		
ABI1	1. I believe that Airbnb is capable of offering diverse accommodations that fulfil different requirements of travellers.	
ABI2	2. I believe that Airbnb knows how to connect the local community with travellers.	Hawlitschek et al. (2016);
ABI3	3. I believe that Airbnb is qualified to provide good services to travellers.	Hwang (2014);
*	4. I expect that Airbnb hosts offer good value for the money.	Lu et al. (2010)
ABI4	5. I expect that local Airbnb hosts are competent in dealing with travellers.	
Benevolence		
BEN1	1. I believe that Airbnb has good intentions toward travellers.	Hawlitschek et al. (2016);
BEN2	2. I believe that Airbnb's behaviour is benevolent.	
BEN3	3. I expect that Airbnb hosts have good intentions toward guests.	Hwang (2014);
*	4. I expect that Airbnb hosts' behaviours are benevolent.	Lu et al. (2010)
BEN4	5. I believe Airbnb is well-meaning.	

(Continued)

Integrity		
INT1	1. I believe that Airbnb is reliable when dealing with travellers.	Gefen and Straub
INT2	2. I expect that Airbnb hosts are honest.	(2004);
INT3	3. I expect that promises made by Airbnb hosts are reliable.	Hawlitschek et al.
*	4. I expect that Airbnb hosts are open in dealing with travellers.	(2016);
INT4	5. I believe that Airbnb is sincere.	Lu et al. (2010)
Intention To Use		
ITU1	1. I intend to create or continue with my personal Airbnb account, and share my information with Airbnb.	
ITU2	2. I intend to search for accommodations on Airbnb, saving bookmarks for my next trip.	Gefen and Straub
ITU3	3. I intend to get useful information from Airbnb regarding my future travel plans.	(2004); Hwang (2014);
*	4. I intend to permit or continue permitting the receiving of emails from Airbnb regarding recommendations.	Lu et al. (2010)
ITU4	5. I intend to book an Airbnb accommodation if I have a chance in the future.	

Note: * excluded after pre-test and pilot-study

Unlike other studies (e.g., Han et al., 2016; Hawlitschek et al., 2016) that observe both the platform and the hosts who rent out the accommodation individually, this study engaged the platform and individual as a whole or composite trustee (described as Airbnb with Airbnb hosts) to observe the three online-trust variables through a comparatively intuitive and systematic approach. Moreover, the researcher only addressed items in terms of ability belief, benevolence belief, and integrity belief involving the Airbnb platform side and Airbnb host (supplying peer) side, not including a specific product side, whereas Hawlitschek et al. (2016) addressed the development of a platform-peer-product model for observing the multidimensional trust of customers. Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) described ability of accommodation as being suitable for different guest' requirements or purposes. However, such 'ability' is more likely to present the ability or adeptness of the platform itself that enables to attract different guests by offering distinguishing properties that meet diverse guest-needs. Gefen and Straub (2004) and Hwang's (2014) study address 'Amazon knows their products' to examine the performance ability, which supports this viewpoint. Therefore, the current research treats 'capable of offering diverse accommodations that fulfil different requirements of travellers' as a sub-measurement item of ability belief to estimate Airbnb-platform' s ability.

The second block, completed by every valid respondent, included a question related to the respondents' attitude for risk taking or avoiding, based on Hwang's (2014) study, and subsequent demographic questions involving gender, ethnical background, last travel experience, and travel frequency (refer to Appendix A). Participants were asked about risk propensity by 'must you see other people using innovations before you will consider them'. Since people would act more proactively when they trust the environment and other people (Rothaermel & Sugiyama 2001), asking respondents such a question makes sense to investigate risk propensity within trust perception. The designed question was adopted from Hwang (2014) using a five-point scale (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree), instead of "Yes/No" to engage more specificity; two agreement items were used to measure risk avoiding groups and two disagreement items to describe risk taking groups. Gender identity and ethnic group(s) were also asked, as the demographic characteristics have been thought to influence consumers' travel choice (Ekinci, Prokopaki, & Cobanoglu, 2003) and acceptance towards a new technology (Alavi & Joachimsthaler, 1992). Subsequently, questions focusing on the respondents' latest travelling experiences were also asked to retrieve a specific number by month. Their travel frequency during the past two years was also engaged by multiple-choice ordinal scales (i.e., no trips, 1 trip, 2 trips, 3 trips, etc.), so as to avoid respondents' perceived uncertainty or cognitive bias by adopting a multiple-option scale. All these demographic profile questions were established after conduct measuring questions, because they are potentially sensitive and comparatively off-topic. By appealing to the participants with a willingness to participate in the questionnaire, and posing questions focused on measuring conducts at first, it is more likely to facilitate an appropriate response rate (Neuman, 2006).

3.3 Sampling method

The snowball sampling method (SSM) was utilised in the survey. Snowball sampling is undertaken when a survey participant shares an invitation with other subjects like themselves who fulfil the qualifications defined for the targeted population (Goodman,

1961). Snowball sampling as a targeted recruitment method, tends to benefit the research in gaining some hard-to-reach populations of targeted sampling (Watters & Biernacki, 1989;). Airbnb is a relatively new travel accommodation booking platform; thus, a small proportion of the random population may know about it. Therefore, due to the focus of this research, which is Airbnb, the researcher as a student of the Hospitality and Tourism Institute might find it easier to get in touch with people familiar with Airbnb. Moreover, SSM is quite suitable to use when members of a population are closely connected, especially when involving the same community groups that are relevant to the project (Morgan, 2007); thus, the data collection would be more effective, precise and efficient. However, being a non-probability sampling method, SSM might result in skewed sampling patterns as compared to the study population and thus result in less representative quantitative data. Specifically, SSM tends to collect a sample population within the researcher-oriented social network which may contribute to a biasedly distributed population, such as more respondents having an academic background or an age group similar to the researcher (Atkinson & Flint, 2001).

However, compared with the random-selection sampling method, SSM seems to raise the response rate more rapidly by garnering a higher possibility of the participant's trust owing to the invitation through a trusted personal social network (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). Due to the academic dissertation's limitations relating to time and budget, snowballing is advantageous to the researcher with acquaintances in their personal network, so as to collect more potential participants. In summary, the snowball sampling method is the most suitable for this survey, owing to the efficiency of capturing more survey respondents.

3.4 Data collection

Before introducing the online questionnaire contents, an instructional introduction about the survey was provided, such as the research questions, research purpose, respondent criteria, brief questionnaire summary, ethical principles, allotted time, and the author

and supervisor's contact details to promote further inquiry. This provides potential participants with a cursory summary, which is important for a successful outcome, and helps to inform potential respondents about what they are supposed to do and what they can expect to acquire from the study. This might subsequently attract their interest, simultaneously reducing any doubts (Cooper & Schindler, 2014) and improving the flow of the questionnaire by giving respondents an indication of questionnaire structure (De Vaus, 2002), thereby enhancing the rate of valid responses (Carroll, 1994). Therefore, to achieve an ideal response rate, before the initiation of questions, a participation information sheet was adopted and designed from AUT's research institute and provided as an instructional overview of the survey (see Appendix B). Moreover, to use the snowballing method, a brief instruction of this study with a link to the online survey at Qualtrics.com was presented in the invitation letter (see Appendix C). This letter was sent to the researcher's and supervisors' acquaintances by email and shared via the researcher's social network (e.g., Facebook, WeChat).

A pre-test and a pilot study engaging a total of 20 respondents was administered to a number of lecturers and students from Auckland University of Technology (AUT). Through subsequent discussions via email, two items of the variable 'intention to use' were re-edited. For example, 'I intend to or have already signed up to Airbnb' changed to 'I intend to create or continue with my personal Airbnb account, and share my information with Airbnb', which made the description more comprehensive to respondents regardless of whether they had prior Airbnb-stay experiences. Through the pre-test and pilot study, the items that appeared to be less relevant to the research topic or confusing to respondents, based on feedback, were deleted. On the other hand, certain interpretations were simplified. Most notably, "putting interest of customers before their own", adapted from a B2C study (Gefen & Straub, 2004), was replaced by the simple word "benevolent". According to certain pilot study participants saying an e-business intermediation went for profitable interest at first and the hosts shared the property firstly based on their own interest, it seemed inappropriate to describe the intention or behaviour of Airbnb and its hosts as "putting interest of customers before their own". On the other hand, "benevolent" could be more purely understood by

general English-speaking participants by its semantic feature closed to good ethics, and thus was changed for the final questionnaire version.

The final questionnaires were distributed from March to May 2017. A total of 227 valid responses were collected and collated, with specific sample characteristics being discussed in the next chapter.

3.5 Ethical issues

It is necessary to address ethical issues, such as informed consent, respect for anonymity and confidentiality, as well as respect for privacy (Creswell, 2015) in the research. Informed consent was collected prior to the start of the questionnaire through a Participation Information Sheet presented within one page for the respondent's convenience (see Appendix B). Moreover, it documented and presented various ethical principles such as anonymity, confidentiality, and privacy issues for the participants, and potential benefit in terms of acquiring research results from the AUT Scholarly Commons. For the respondents, the completion of the survey was perceived as consent, while the Participation Information Sheet with the ethics approval was granted and validated by AUTEC.

3.6 Data analysis

The data analysis was primarily conducted by SPSS (Statistical Packages for Social Science) version 22.0 and the AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) programme. All questionnaire items were coded through SPSS. The five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was coded on a scale from 1 to 5 points. Risk avoiders and risk takers were also re-coded, according to the respondents' agreement or disagreement with the question: 'Must you see other people using innovations before you will consider them'. In addition, latent variables were respectively coded as 'Ability', 'Benevolence' and 'Integrity', while the dependent variable was coded as

'Intention To Use', with the corresponding indicators coded as depicted in Table 3.1.

3.6.1 Preliminary data analysis

First the valid respondents were counted. Invalid respondents in this research constituted user-defined missing values, which were collected from respondents who were under sixteen years of age and held a visitor's visa. After confirming the valid data, the missing data and geographic profiles of the respondents were collected and reported by running "Frequencies" in SPSS. The missing value in the current survey refers to questions that were left blank by valid sample respondents. Generally, missing data consisting of less than 20% of the total data were treated as acceptable (Peng, Harwell, Liou, & Ehman, 2006), although a cut-off at 10% or even 5% is sometimes suggested as a conservative approach (Kline, 2004; Olinsky, Chen, & Harlow, 2007). After screening and eliminating the missing data, the geographic profiles for the valid respondents were developed. Most importantly, this study investigated both constricted data – a subsample of respondents consisting only of people who had heard of Airbnb already – and total data. Total data in this research consist of constricted data and the data from respondents who had not heard of Airbnb previously. Although only the constricted data were utilised to test the hypotheses, the remaining portion of data were also observed due to the fact that the researcher desired to have an overview of New Zealand travellers' behavioural demographics (i.e., travel experiences, travel frequency, and risk propensity) and their recognition of Airbnb.

The characteristics profile was planned to perform the results by tables of three categories: demographic characteristics (involving age, gender, eligibility, and ethnicity), behavioural characteristics (involving last traveling time, domestic and international travel frequency, and risk propensity of using a platform), and characteristics of prior Airbnb experiences. Particularly, a Chi-square test was employed after presenting demographic characteristics, to determine if the distribution of certain significant demographics in the sample could be considered representative for the study population,

based on the data of New Zealand's population estimates in 2013 collected by Statistics New Zealand [Stats NZ] (2013a). And after reporting behavioural characteristics, ANOVA with post-hoc measurement was performed to test whether significant differences exist among risk propensity groups with regard to their age, gender, and ethnicity.

Following the characteristics' presentation, descriptive statistics of the trust-constructs were developed to review normality of the data distribution (Hair, William, Barry, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006) by using two multivariate indexes: skewness statistics that analyse the data asymmetry around the mean, and the kurtosis index that indicates the central tendency of the data distribution (Field, 2009; Hair et al., 2006). Generally, if the skewness index is between -2 to +2 (Field, 2009; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2008) and kurtosis is between -7 to +7 (Hair et al., 2006; Byrne, 2001), the data could be considered as being within the normal range. Nonetheless, given the sample size (N > 150), the normality standard in this study was recommended a kurtosis index up to ± 3 (Kline, 2004) and skewness up to ±1 (Hair et al., 2006), with a figure over ±0.2 indicating a significant skew (Hilderbrand, 1986). Apart from skew and kurtosis statistics, the other descriptive statistics such as the means, standard deviation and variance were also analysed via SPSS.

3.6.2. Factor Analysis

As was previously discussed in the literature review, and further clarified in Table 3.1, the three trust-dimensions and the dependent variable were all measured via multiple measurement items. In order to assess both the multidimensionality of the trust-construct and the reliability and validity of the measurement items, a factor analysis was performed. Since the model and indicators were based on previous studies, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was deemed the most appropriate method. However, before performing CFA, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to further assess the factor structure as suggested by Hair et al. (2006), since there were

several indicators that were transformed from previous literature to suit the Airbnb background.

3.6.2.1 Exploratory factor analysis

Although the operation of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is generally limited to data with a sample size > 200 (Hair et al., 2006), samples of 100 have been found to be acceptable by prior research such as Gorsuch's study (1988). Therefore, the researcher also applied EFA to investigate stability of the factor structures and potential model shortcomings.

In the current investigation, a principal component analysis was employed for extraction, since it is more reliable in estimating variables with rare errors (Luck & Rubin, 1987). As for rotation, the orthogonal method applying the varimax rotation with the Kaiser normalization was selected since it assumes that factors are uncorrelated, which tends to simplify the analysis rather than assessing complex correlations among various factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006).

Due to the sample size that might specifically affect certain model results, such as the total variance explained, this study applied EFA focusing on whether certain items meet the cut off as a reference to 'item remaining' or 'item deletion'. The recommended criteria suitable for a good EFA model are as follows: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) > 0.6; Bartlett's test of sphericity at a significant level; all communalities over 0.4; rotated measurement items with loadings above 0.3 or 0.4 on their corresponding construct, while cross loadings among those items being lower than 0.4 or 0.3 (Hair et al., 2006).

3.6.2.2. Confirmatory factor analysis

After applying EFA, the relationships among the model constructs with respective indicators were confirmed by the appropriate measurement model - confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) that assesses the unidimensionality, reliability, and validity of measures

(Kline, 2004; Hair et al., 2006). Since CFA tests the unidimensionality, unlike EFA and Cronbach's alpha, items mainly contributing to a weak reliability and validity are to be excluded (Gefen et al., 2003). There exist respective criteria for the estimates, reliability and validity, which are summarised in Table 3.2.

Reliability - the essential determinant of measurement quality - was assessed to assist with identifying the inconsistencies and their influences on the measurement results (Sekaran, 2000). When each construct is represented by multiple measurement items, the internal reliability is deserving of attention (Bryman & Cramer, 2005). When assessing the reliability, as Hair et al. (2006) posited, the manifest variables with a standardised loading value of less than 0.5 should be dropped. However, Hulland (1999) argued that 0.4 should be an acceptable cut-off, while Henseler, Ringle and Sinkovics (2009) suggested a review for variables with factor loadings and that it should be determined at 0.4-0.7 before dropping: the variable should be dropped once other eliminated indicators raise the composite reliability (CR) or should otherwise remain. Thus, the composite reliability (CR) indicates how well a set of indicators represents a single latent construct (Hatcher, 1994). Composite reliability is calculated via the formula: $CR = (\sum \lambda_i)^2/[(\sum \lambda_i)^2+(\sum \delta_i)]$, with $\sum \lambda_i$ referring to the sum value of the standardised indicator loadings for one construct, and $\sum \delta_i$ depicting the sum value of the loading variances (Raykov, 1997). As recommended by Hair et al. (2006), CR >0.7 is viewed as good in terms of reliability.

Subsequently, validity was estimated to confirm the measures through examining the extent of the correlations between a construct and its corresponding measurement items as well as the overall extent of these indicators' reflection to the measured construct (Hair et al., 2006). The construct's validity can be examined by assessing:

(1) convergent validity: which explains the extent to which observed variables of a certain construct contribute to that construct's variance;

(2) discriminant validity: which demonstrates the extent to which latent constructs are distinct from each other;

(3) nomological validity: which is achieved when constructs relate to each other in the same way as expected (Hair et al., 2006).

The respective criteria for the three types of validity, supported by Hair et al. (2006), are presented in Table 3.2. First, convergent validity assesses the average variance extracted (AVE) alongside the consistency evaluations - standardised factor loadings and composite reliability (CR). AVE is measured by the averaged sum of squared loading values, while an AVE value greater than 0.5 infers a moderate convergent validity. Second, discriminant validity requires the AVE value to be greater than the figures corresponding to the squared inter-construct correlations (SIC). In other words, the square root of AVE is supposed to be greater than that of SIC. Therefore, to measure SIC figures and compare them with the corresponding square root of AVE, this study performed the Pearsons' bivariate correlations between constructs (Field, 2009). Third, with nomological validity, all constructs are supposed to relate in the same way, as suggested by the research framework. The current study confirmed this by performing Pearsons' bivariate correlations between constructs as well.

Table 3.2 Recommended criteria for reliability and validity

Testing	Estimates	Recommended criteria	Reference
Construct Reliability	Factor loading	Loading>0.7, good; 0.5<Loading<0.7, acceptable; Loading>0.4, acceptable; Loading at 0.4-0.7, acceptable if it's being dropped out does not rise CR	Hair et al. (2006) Hulland (1999) Henseler et al. (2009)
Construct Reliability	Composite Reliability (CR)	CR>0.7	Hair et al. (2006)
Convergent Validity	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	AVE>0.5	Hair et al. (2006)
Discriminant Validity	Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and corresponding squared inter-construct Correlations (SIC)	AVE > SIC	Hair et al. (2006)
Nomological Validity	construct correlations	All constructs are related in the same way as suggested by research framework	Hair et al. (2006)

While adopting AMOS to perform CFA, the researcher selected the maximum likelihood estimation procedure, since it was examined to offer an unbiased outcome under a moderate data normality (Byrne, 2001) in case of a medium size sample (i.e., N > 100) (Kantar & Şenoğlu, 2008). The number of measurement indicators for each construct was less than five (Hair et al., 2006), while the Likert-scale category figures were more than four (Kline, 2004).

When testing the CFA model, three types of goodness of fit indices could be considered: absolute fit indices (e.g., Chi-square), incremental fit indices (e.g., normed fit index), and parsimonious fit indices (e.g., parsimonious goodness-of-fit index) (Hair et al., 2006). However, certain fit indices, especially the Chi-square (χ^2), normed fit index (NFI), goodness-of-fit (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI), and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) are significantly sensitive to the sample size and might underestimate the fit when the sample size is not large enough (i.e., N < 200) (Jöreskog, 1978; Bollen, 1989). Therefore, indices that do not vary much relative to the sample size were given more attention in the current analysis: the normed Chi-square (χ^2/df shown as CMIN/df at AMOS); non-normed fit index (NNFI), also known as the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI); the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA); and the comparative fit index (CFI) (Bollen, 1989). The recommended criteria for each index are explained in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Recommended criteria for goodness of fit indices in SEM

Index	Abbreviation	Type of fit	Recommended criteria	References
Normed Chi-Square	χ^2/df (CMIN/df)	Absolute fit & Parsimonious fit	$1.0 < \chi^2/df < 3.0$	
Root mean square error of approximation	RMSEA	Absolute fit	RMSEA<0.05, close approximate fit 0.05 <RMSEA <0.08, reasonable approximate fit	Hair et al. (2006); Kline (2004)
Comparative fit index	CFI	Incremental Fit	0.90 <CFI <0.95, acceptable fit CFI>0.95, good fit	
Non-normed fit index	NNFI (TLI)	Incremental Fit	0.90 <NNFI <0.95, acceptable fit NNFI>0.95, good fit	

3.6.2.3 Testing the hypotheses: Multivariate linear regression

Before testing the hypotheses, an ANOVA test was adopted to ascertain the probable differences in the respondents' intention to use Airbnb regarding their characteristics, thereby seeking any potential correlations between usage intention and risk propensity or prior Airbnb experience. Subsequently, the relationships between the independent and dependent variables in the conceptual model of Figure 2.3, in other words, in regard of the five hypotheses, were carried out through a multivariate linear regression. Due to the limitations in the sample size, specifically in terms of Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5 where groups had to be compared, the results of CFA were utilised to create single scores per factor (i.e., ability, benevolence, integrity, intention to use). These compound factor scores were calculated as the mean score of the measurement items within each factor. Therefore, a linear regression was ultimately adopted through SPSS to analyse the hypotheses and relevant construct results. The results of the model testing will be presented in the next chapter by observing: the total constructed data; two separate groups - Airbnb users and non-users (that have heard of Airbnb) as well as risk avoiders and risk takers.

3.7 Summary

By utilising positivism as a paradigm, this study addressed the quantitative method through collecting data by means of a questionnaire survey. The snowball sampling method was employed to achieve a high efficiency. While it can be a concern that an online questionnaire via snowball sampling as a nonprobability sampling method could lead to a skewed sample, these choices were deemed necessary due to financial and time constraints. Furthermore, since it can be expected that Airbnb is better known among younger people, the snowball sampling method might provide a higher number of beneficial answers for the study's hypotheses and, thus, offer an interesting explorative investigation into the relationships. A Participation Information Sheet was presented prior to the questionnaire's content, so as to acquaint the respondents with this research

and its ethical principles, such as giving consent. Before the real questionnaire was distributed, a pre-test and a pilot study engaging 20 participants were carried out. The measured items were subsequently partially adjusted to better suit the respondents' requirements. The data analyses made use of SPSS and AMOS, with recommended cut-off values being used in various steps in order to construct a reliable and valid model. The results that form the outcome of the methodological approach described here, will be presented next and connect the literature review and established hypotheses with an analysis of primary, empirical data.

Chapter 4: Results

Results of this study through statistical analysis are presented in this chapter. The first section reports the profiles of the respondents' characteristics. In this section, the complete sample of 184 respondents is described by basic profile and Chi-square testing, and the subsample of 152 respondents who had heard of Airbnb is prior to this study. This respondent segmentation is necessary because the conceptual model that was established in the literature review can only be reliably tested among respondents who are aware of the P2P network. The second section presents the descriptive statistics of subsample's data items of the conceptual model (Figure 2.3); followed by the third section which presents the factor analysis and findings of the revised model. Next, the fourth section reports the results of testing the hypotheses via linear regression. Finally, a conclusion of the results is presented in the last section.

4.1 Characteristics of survey participants

A total of 227 questionnaires were initially recorded, after filtering out the blank questionnaires and the questionnaires filled by non-objected population (under 16 years old or holding visitor visas). Of these 227 questionnaires, missing data, defined as people who did not answer every single question, accounted for 18.9% (or 43 respondents). The missing data seems relatively high but still acceptable and lower than the researcher's expectation. As Airbnb is a new phenomenon in terms of both recognition by society and as an academic field of investigation, a low response rate and a high missing-data rate are understandable.

Excluding missing data, a total of 184 responses were deemed appropriate for the analysis. Out of these 184 respondents, 32 respondents (17.4%) had not heard of Airbnb, leaving a total of 152 data points (82.6%) for answering the study hypotheses. In other words, only 152 data were valid for testing consumer beliefs and their intention to use Airbnb (described alternately as subsample or constructed data in the following parts). Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 will analyse both the full and subsample, while the remainder

of this chapter focuses only on the 152-respondent dataset.

4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 4.1 shows the demographics of 184 respondents, as well as the distribution of demographic characteristics in the smaller subsample of 152 respondents who had already heard of Airbnb.

Six age groups were identified, according to the survey results. The sample showed a concentration of respondents in the younger group (16-44 years old), particularly the 25-34 group that counted for the majority in both sample (40.2%) and subsample (42.8%). The proportion of younger groups – 16 to 44 – is slightly higher in the subsample (88.9%) than in the total sample (85.8%), reflecting a higher recognition of Airbnb among younger respondents. In terms of gender, there exist variations close to 50% of female and male drawn in both total sample and subsample. A smaller percentage of males took part in this survey (47.8%), while they were overrepresented in the subsample (51.3%). This shows a slightly higher level of Airbnb recognition among males.

In terms of eligibility, respondents holding study visas occupied the highest proportion in both samples (32.6% in the full sample and 28.3% in the subsample), with participants holding work visas (22.8% in the full sample and 21.7% in the subsample) and citizenship (19.0% in the full sample and 23.0% in the subsample) completing the top three. In the regard of ethnicity, mostly Asians took this survey (33.3%). They were also the most represented category in the subsample knowledgeable about Airbnb (27.7%).

In sum, there existed slight differences in distribution of demographics between the total sample and subsample. The relatively high proportion of younger age groups, student-visa holding groups, and ethnic Asian groups, might be partially explained by the snowball sampling method (SSM) discussed before and likely does not accurately reflect the study population.

Table 4.1 demographic characteristics of total sample and constructed subsample

Characteristic	Category	Total sample (*N* = 184)		Subsample (*n* = 152)	
		Frequency (*N*)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (*n*)	Percentage (%)
Age	16 - 24	51	27.7	46	30.3
	25 - 34	74	40.2	65	42.8
	35 - 44	33	17.9	24	15.8
	45 - 54	18	9.8	14	9.2
	55 - 64	6	3.3	3	2.0
	65 - 74	2	1.1	0	0.0
Gender	Male	88	47.8	78	51.3
	Female	96	52.2	74	48.7
Eligibility	Citizenship	35	19.0	35	23.0
	Permanent residency	25	13.6	16	10.5
	Residency	22	12.0	15	9.9
	Work visa	42	22.8	33	21.7
	Study visa	60	32.6	43	28.3
Ethnicity (multiple choices applicable)	European	39[a]	19.7[a]	38[b]	22.9[b]
	Māori	17[a]	8.6[a]	26[b]	15.7[b]
	Asian	66[a]	33.3[a]	46[b]	27.7[b]
	Pacific people	45[a]	22.7[a]	40[b]	24.1[b]
	Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African (MELAA)	31[a]	15.7[a]	36[b]	21.7[b]

Note: [a]: *N* = 198. [b]: *n* = 166.

A Chi-square test was performed to check representativeness of our total sample (*N* =184) against known population frequencies in New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2013a). Since the age group in the reference data covers the range 15-24 years old, while this investigation covers the range 16-24, there might be a slight deviation in the results, but this is expected to be only a minor issue. In order to compare ethnicity, only the 170 respondents who gave a single answer choice for ethnicity were included.

The results for the gender group show statistical similarity to the population distribution (Chi-square = 0.51, df = 1, p-value =.822). However, the result for the age groups is far from the expected level (Chi-square = 138.913, df = 6, p-value < .001). From Table 4.2, it is noticeable that the younger age groups (primarily the 25-34 age range) are overrepresented in our sample. Additionally, the age groups over 45 years old are underrepresented. These deviations from the population frequencies may be caused by a higher level of young Internet users and the researcher's environment, which tends to be

occupied by younger age groups and therefore influenced the starting point of the snowball sample.

Table 4.2 Chi-square test for age group

Age group	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
16 – 24	51	32.0	19.0
25 – 34	74	28.0	46.0
35 – 44	33	31.2	1.8
45 – 54	18	32.8	-14.8
55 – 64	6	26.9	-20.9
65 – 74	2	18.9	-16.9
75 and above	0	14.2	-14.2

Note: Chi-square = 138.913, df = 6, significant at p <.001.

Regarding the result for the ethnic groups, the gap between the current distribution and the expected distribution was even larger than the gap for the age groups as presented above (Chi-square = 776.961, df = 5, p-value < .001). The amount for the European and Asian groups were much further away from expectations (see Table 4.3). Given the snowball sampling method (SSM) data was collected from the researcher's surroundings, sharing a similar background to the researcher. Therefore, the overrepresentation of Asian respondents is understandable.

Table 4.3 Chi-square test for single ethnic group ($N = 170$)

Ethnic group	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
European	33	122.6	-89.6
Māori	12	13.1	-1.1
Asian	68	9.4	58.6
Pacific people	30	20.3	9.7
(MELAA)	27	1.9	25.1
Other	0	2.7	-2.7

Note: Chi-square = 776.961, df = 5, significant at p <.001

Since the Chi-square tests revealed significant differences between the population and sample, this needs to be taken into account when analysing the model results and this may also mean that the results found might not translate directly to the target population.

4.1.2 Behavioural demographics of the respondents

Table 4.4 reviews behavioural demographics, comparing the total sample and subsample again. In both sample groups, a large proportion of respondents travelled in the last half year. For the total sample, most of the respondents (93.5%) had experienced one domestic over-night tour over the past two years, whereas the majority of respondents travelled three to four times. 129 (70.1%) respondents had travelled overseas in the last two years, and most of them travelled overseas one or two times. Similar results hold for the subsample of 152 respondents.

Table 4.4 Behavioural demographics of total sample and constructed subsample

Characteristic	Category	Total sample ($N = 184$)		Subsample ($n = 152$)	
		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Latest travelling time	<=1 month	23	12.5	22	14.5
	2-6 month	72	39.1	49	32.2
	7-12 month	38	20.7	35	23.0
	> 12 months	51	27.7	46	30.2
Travel experiences over the past two years	0	5	2.7	2	1.3
	Only domestically	50	27.2	40	26.3
	Only internationally	7	3.8	3	2.0
	Both domestically and internationally	122	66.3	107	70.4
Domestic travel frequency over the past two years	0	8	4.3	5	3.3
	1-2	54	29.3	51	33.6
	3-4	73	39.7	56	36.8
	5-6	29	15.8	27	17.8
	>=7	20	10.9	13	8.6
International travel frequency over the past two years	0	59	32.1	45	29.6
	1-2	101	54.9	87	57.2
	3-4	18	9.8	15	9.9
	5-6	3	1.63	2	1.3
	>=7	3	1.63	3	2.0
Risk propensity of using a platform	Avoiding risk	104	56.5	84	55.3
	Taking risk	80	43.5	68	44.7

Another characteristic related to participants' behaviour is risk propensity. The results showed that more risk avoiders than risk takers participated in this survey. The division between risk avoiders and risk takers was comparable between sample and subsample, indicating that risk takers do not seem more familiar with Airbnb than risk avoiders.

It might be expected that risk personality is affected by certain demographics. Therefore, an explorative one-way ANOVA adopting Games-Howell as the post-hoc pattern analysis, identifies the relationship between demographic characteristics and respondents' risk propensity, where we might expect younger age groups to more likely be risk takers. The result reveals that risk propensity exhibits significant differences concerning age groups (F = 2.336, p-value = .044) and gender (F = 4.070, p-value = .045), while ethnicity had no significant effect (F = .368, p-value = .545). Male respondents were more likely to be risk-takers. In terms of age, a post-hoc analysis indicates there exist mean differences (significant at the 0.05 level) between the 55-64 age group and the various younger age groups, which reveals the younger age groups indeed tend to take more risks.

4.1.3 Characteristics of prior Airbnb experiences (of 152 respondents)

To distinguish valid respondents for model constructs, the profile of the 152 respondents who were familiar with Airbnb is presented in Table 4.5. Table 4.5 concludes that among the subsample who had heard of Airbnb prior to the survey, four types of consumers could be distinguished: potential consumers that had heard of Airbnb but had not used it before; real users that had prior Airbnb experience without a real stay (using the website purely as a tool to search for information); real consumers that had stayed at an Airbnb accommodation; and experienced users that had rented out accommodation as a host.

87 respondents had used Airbnb – either searching information, staying at an Airbnb accommodation, or to rent out accommodation. A total of 10 respondents had used but had not stayed at any booked Airbnb accommodation, which may suggest a need to improve the Airbnb system in order to convert these consumers into actual users. 77 Airbnb users (50.7%) had experience of staying, with the proportion of domestic (36.8 %) and international (38.1%) accommodation close in numbers. The survey also seeks to discover if there were Airbnb users also performing as hosts, renting out their own accommodation through the platform. The result shows 5 among 87 Airbnb users

had hosting experience. Finally, 65 respondents (42.7%) had heard about but not used Airbnb, which reflects a promising growth potential for developing the Airbnb market in New Zealand.

Table 4.5 Prior Airbnb experience of total valid respondents ($N = 152$)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Airbnb usage	No	65	42.7
	Yes	87	57.2
Airbnb stays	No (have not used Airbnb & have used but not stayed at an Airbnb accommodation)	75	49.3
	Yes, only domestically	19	12.5
	Yes, only internationally	21	13.8
	Yes, both domestically and internationally	37	24.3
Host experience	No	147	96.7
	Yes	5	2.7

4.2 Descriptive statistics for the model constructs (of 152 respondents)

In the continuation of the results section, the data is limited to the 152 respondents who indicated that they had at least heard of Airbnb (see Table 4.5). This was deemed necessary because respondents who did not know Airbnb previously would not be able to give reliable and meaningful answers to questions about Airbnb's online-trust characteristics.

Table 4.6 provides descriptive statistics for the measured indicators of latent variables and the dependent variable (see Table 3.1). Each item was measured on a five point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (scale 1) to strongly agree (scale 5). The minimum and maximum score, mean scores, standard deviation, variance, skew and kurtosis statistics with standard error, are reported in the table.

Results reveal that the mean value of all item rates were higher than the neutral point (3), which shows a tendency towards respondents' agreement with the constructed items. BEN4 ('I believe that Airbnb is well-meaning') has the lowest mean score (Mean = 3.47), which is also relatively far away from BEN2's ('I believe that Airbnb's intention is benevolent') mean value (Mean = 4.07), while these two items have a close meaning in words. It seems people tend to believe that Airbnb's behaviour will fulfil their

requirements, rather than thinking Airbnb acts out of generosity. BEN1 (Mean = 3.86) and BEN3 (Mean = 3.80) reveals that people expected good intention from both the platform and the accommodation supplier.

However, when regarding integrity belief, the situation seemed different. The mean scores for integrity belief indicate people were more concerned about whether each host (INT2, INT3) instead of the Airbnb platform (INT1, INT4) has integrity. Despite that, the mean scores for integrity-belief items ranged between 3.57 to 3.79 – this shows people value the integrity of two sides nearly equally. By comparison, the intention to use indicators had the largest range between mean scores, ranging from 3.57 to 4.20. Respondents are more likely to own an Airbnb account (ITU1) than to actually use it for looking up information (ITU3). It also seems to suggest that people would more likely consider it at some time in the future (ITU4) than actually using it in the short term for their next trip (ITU2).

Ability-belief indicators also show a distinct range in terms of mean values, with a peak at ABI1 ('I believe that Airbnb is capable of offering diverse accommodations that fulfil different requirements of travellers') with a mean score of 4.07, while other indicators' mean values are all less than 3.70. This suggests that respondents see the capability of Airbnb primarily in terms of providing an overview of interesting accommodation options, but not so much in terms of being a tool to link travellers with a host in a social context. Taken together, the mean score analysis for intention to use and the ability belief also tends to demonstrate that people are more likely to use Airbnb for searching information about that accommodation which meets their needs and preferences, rather than booking and staying in the actual accommodation.

All items except ITU3 hold the skewness limited to 1 and kurtosis limited to 3 which are at a recommended level as per the previous discussion. ITU3 had a skewness of -1.152 and kurtosis of 3.472, still within an acceptable range. The skewness of BEN2 (.081) were the closest to zero, which could be explained by a lack of variation in answers, with scores ranging from 3 to 5.

Table 4.6 Descriptive statistics for latent variables and dependent variables

Construct	Item	Min.	Max.	Mean	S.D.	Variance	Skewness [a]	Kurtosis [b]
Ability	ABI1	2	5	4.07	.642	.412	-.370	.564
	ABI2	2	5	3.65	.721	.520	-.437	.085
	ABI3	1	5	3.66	.797	.635	-.514	.738
	ABI4	2	5	3.63	.687	.473	-.610	.258
Benevolence	BEN1	2	5	3.86	.587	.345	-.563	1.315
	BEN2	3	5	4.07	.529	.279	.081	.570
	BEN3	2	5	3.80	.674	.455	-.256	.139
	BEN4	2	5	3.47	.699	.489	-.352	-.275
Integrity	INT1	2	5	3.79	.697	.485	-.403	.309
	INT2	1	5	3.66	.700	.489	-.606	1.018
	INT3	1	5	3.57	.743	.552	-.573	1.001
	INT4	2	5	3.70	.618	.382	-.223	.067
Intention to use	ITU1	2	5	4.20	.713	.508	-.764	.820
	ITU2	2	5	3.57	.678	.459	-.113	-.150
	ITU3	1	5	3.92	.705	.497	-1.152	3.472
	ITU4	1	5	4.07	.764	.584	-.755	1.155

Note: a: S.D.: Standard Deviation. Standard Error = ±0.197. b: Standard Error = ±0.391

4.3 Factor analysis

The descriptive statistics of the constructs in Table 4.6 already give a first indication of the relative level of importance of different elements of online trust in Airbnb. However, as was conceptualised, measurement items are expected to form distinct, higher level constructs (or dimensions). The extent to which the different items in Table 4.6 contribute to their hypothesised constructs, is tested via both an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Once these factors are established, they can then be used to test the relationship between factors.

4.3.1 Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

The EFA was tested through SPSS, employing principal components analysis for extraction and Varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization. The value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was .823, which is at recommended level > 0.6. Bartlett's test of sphericity showed significance with an

approximate Chi-square = 950.252, df = 120, and p-value < .001. All communalities were over 0.4. However, BEN3 (0.466) showed comparatively low value and might be dropped in order to improve reliability. BEN3 was the only item describing host's benevolence. As discussed before, Airbnb hosts tend to share the property with the guests based on individual interest, which may vary from person to person, unlike Airbnb platform itself. Therefore, the significance of host' benevolence seems not strong in the context engaging benevolence of platform and hosts together.

Rotated measurement items were supposed to have loadings on their corresponding construct over 0.3 or 0.4 and cross loadings less than 0.3 or 0.4. The result revealed that all indicators suited the criteria well without loading on multiple components, except for ABI1, which already scored the second-lowest figure in communalities (0.502). As mentioned in the previous discussion about "ability of product" (see 3.2.2) where Hawlitschek et al. (2016) modeled ABI1, as describing the abilitiy of diverse types of accommodation offerings, this might be less relevant for measuring the ability of Airbnb itself.

Table 4.7 Communalities and rotated component matrix in EFA

Item	Rotated Component Matrix				Communalities
	Ability	**Benevolence**	**Integrity**	**Intention to use**	
ABI1	*.393*	-.201	-.215	.426	.502
ABI2	*.790*	-.007	.111	.115	.661
ABI3	*.722*	.313	.117	.159	.660
ABI4	*.786*	.121	.164	.101	.682
BEN1	.203	*.741*	.106	.222	.694
BEN2	-.026	*.616*	.005	.234	.517
BEN3	.245	*.439*	.278	.160	.466
BEN4	.097	*.852*	.089	.117	.758
INT1	.140	.138	*.799*	.160	.754
INT2	.204	.204	*.796*	.131	.806
INT3	.140	.028	*.889*	.177	.859
INT4	.110	.224	*.830*	.107	.781
ITU1	.080	.230	.058	*.749*	.688
ITU2	.269	.175	-.021	*.692*	.620
ITU3	.010	.119	.307	*.783*	.726
ITU4	.164	.270	.193	*.747*	.699

Note: Values in italic type: loadings on their corresponding construct

4.3.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The results of the EFA seem to confirm the hypothesised factor structure. However, in order to test the reliability and validity of the constructs, a confirmation of the dimensions is required. Such an analysis is performed via Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). After testing the original CFA model in AMOS results reveal there were several low factor loadings that did not meet the standard requirement and failed to satisfy the discriminant validity. Also, the estimated goodness of fit indices, apart from Chi-square/df, did not reach acceptable levels for a good model fit (χ^2/df = 2.194, NNFI = 0.835, CFI = 0.866, and RMSEA = 0.89). In order to achieve higher reliability and validity and a better fit of the model, the researcher refined and re-specified the model by dropping certain problematic items (ABI1, BEN3, and INT3), showing a similarity with the findings of the EFA, through estimating the CR and AVE. It was revealed that consumers' trust in Airbnb's ability to provide diverse accommodation to fulfil the guest's requirements, the host's good intention, and reliable promises made by hosts, were too dissimilar from other measurement items within the constructs.

Interpreting the dropped items in the pre-test, pilot study and this CFA step, it seems that the trust in the host tends to be less relevant to the intention to use Airbnb than trust in the platform. Especially when regarding the benevolence-factor, trust in the host's benevolence tends to have no impact on the consumer's intention to use Airbnb.

After these refinements, the model was re-run (see Figure 4.1). The revised model met each criterion for construct reliability and convergent validity: factor loading >0.5, critical t-value>1.96, CR>0.7 and AVE>0.5. Details are shown in Table 4.8.
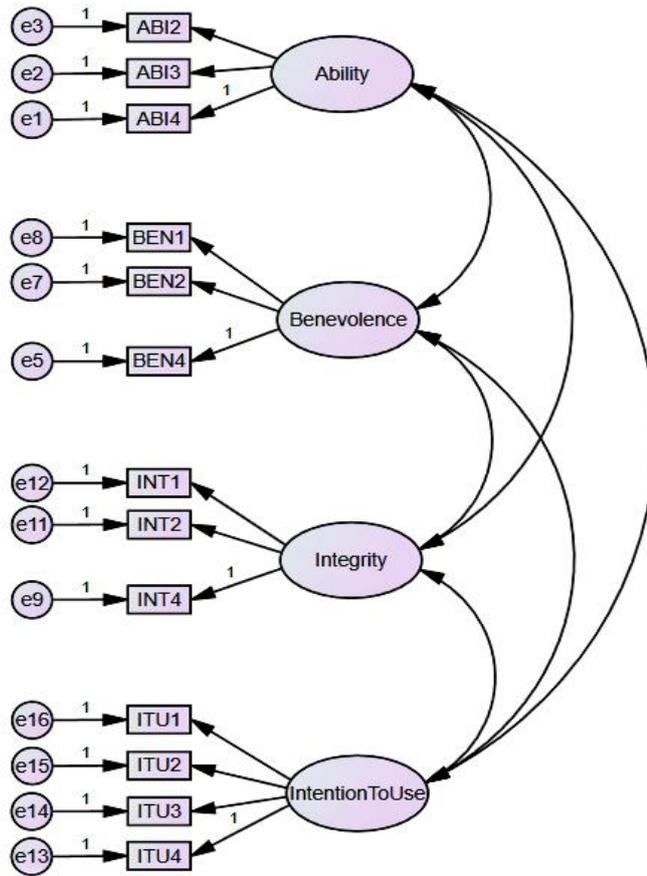
Figure 4.1 Revised CFA Model

Table 4.8 Construct reliability and convergent validity of revised CFA model

Constructs & Indicators	Standardised factor loadings	Critical ratio (t-value)	Composite reliability(CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Ability			0.850	0.505
ABI2	0.755			
ABI3	0.743	7.069		
ABI4	0.626	6.439		
Benevolence			0.900	0.520
BEN1	0.726	5.869		
BEN2	0.528	7.918		
BEN4	0.869			
Integrity			0.870	0.510
INT1	0.767	6.001		
INT2	0.55	7.71		
INT3	0.799			
Intention to use			0.903	0.541
ITU1	0.798	7.998		
ITU2	0.672	8.489		
ITU3	0.711	9.018		
ITU4	0.755			

In terms of nomological validity and discriminant validity, the result of the Bivariate Pearson's correlations shown in Table 4.9, reveals that all belief beliefs were positively related to the dependent construct – intention to use (p-value < .01) with scores of 0.393, 0.460, and 0.434 respectively. This supports the hypothesised relationships and means nomological validity has been confirmed.

Apart from all statistically significant relationships between latent variables and the dependent variables, there also exist positive correlations among all independent constructs (p-value < .01). Table 4.9 shows the correlations among constructs were less than the square root value of AVE, which means AVE > SIC; the discriminant validity was confirmed. Current inter-construct correlations were all less than 0.80 and accordingly at an acceptable level. Since the analysis did not find an inter-construct correlation over 0.80 or 0.90, which is considered as problematic towards multicollinearity (Field, 2009), the significant correlations between latent variables would not be a serious problem and would indeed be expected as all constructs to form dimensions within the concept belief.

Table 4.9 Bivariate Correlations Between Constructs and square root of AVE

Construct	Ability	Benevolence	Integrity	Intention to use
Ability	*0.711*			
Benevolence	.322**	*0.721*		
Integrity	.411**	.445**	*0.714*	
Intention to use	.393**	.460**	.434**	*0.736*

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Diagonal values (in italic type): √AVE.

The results of the revised CFA model also demonstrated a better fit with the data. Table 4.10 shows the estimated indices that met the expected level for good model fit: Chi-square = 77.215 (df = 59, p-value = .056), $1<\chi^2/df<3$, CFI>0.95; NNFI>0.95, RMSEA< 0.5. The results of the CFA therefore show that the three-dimensional trust concept is reliable and valid with internal consistency and a good fit between the proposed factor structure and the observed correlations between the variables.

Table 4.10 Goodness of fit statistics of revised CFA model

Index	Recommended criteria for Good fit	Value
Chi-square (χ^2)	$p > 0.5$	0.56
Normed Chi-square (χ^2/df)	$1<\chi^2/df<3$	1.309
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI>0.95	0.972
Non-normed fit index (NNFI)	NNFI>0.95	0.964
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	RMSEA< 0.5	0 .045

Note: χ^2 = 77.215, df = 59, p = .056. GFI = .926, NFI = .896, RMR = 0.27

4.4 Identifying the effects of belief beliefs on the intention to use: Answering Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3

After confirming the revised CFA model, compound scores were calculated for each coded construct – "Ability", "Benevolence", "Integrity", and "Intention To Use" as the mean value of the relevant measurement items (see Figure 4.1). This allows for an analysis of the hypothesised relationships via a multivariate linear regression in SPSS.

The results shown in Table 4.11 reveal that online trust beliefs explain 29.9% of variance in the intention to use, with an adjusted R-squared value at .299. The Chi-square value ($F_{(3, 148)}$ = 22.421, p-value < .001) indicates that the ability belief,

benevolence belief, and integrity belief, had all made significant contributions towards the intention to use Airbnb.

The results for Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 that examined the relationships between each online trust belief based on the sample of 152 respondents, are presented in Table 4.11. The result shows that three online-trust beliefs were all positively connected to the intention to use. Benevolence belief had the highest standardised score of .297 with a critical ratio (t-value) of 3.841. This means that, compared to trusting in the ability and integrity of Airbnb and its host, expecting Airbnb's good intention and benevolent behaviour is the strongest driver for intention to use the platform. The results also demonstrated both ability belief and integrity belief have a significant impact on the intention to use, with a close t-value and a significance of a .01 level. This shows people intend to use Airbnb by trusting the ability of Airbnb and its hosts to provide the expected services and interactions, and the reliability and honesty of the platform and product supplier within the peer-to-peer activity.

Table 4.11 Significance of regression coefficients: Constructed data ($N = 152$)

Construct	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta		
Ability	.201	.073	.208	2.741	.007**
Benevolence	.346	.090	.297	3.841	.000***
Integrity	.232	.086	.217	2.708	.008**

Note: Dependent Variable: Intention to use. $F (3,148) = 22.421$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .312$, Adjusted $R^2 = .299$. Significant at: *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, and ***$p < .001$.

Accordingly, *H1, H2, and H3* are all supported as Figure 4.2 shows.

Online Trust Beliefs
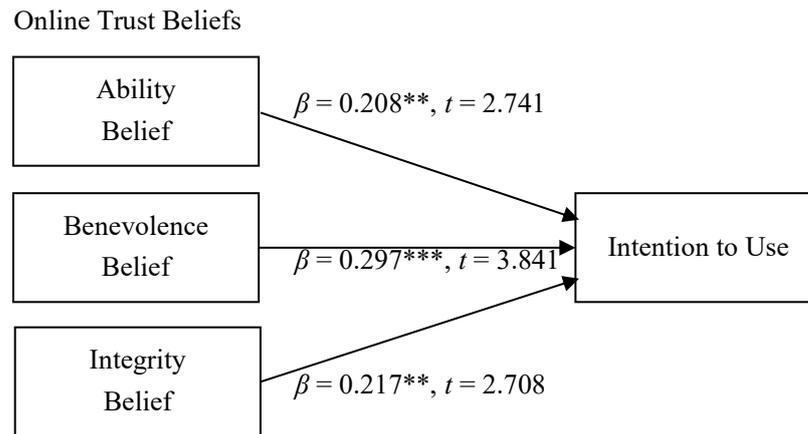
Figure 4.2 Test results for constructed data

4.5 Identifying variations in the base model: The influence of model groups

4.5.1 Exploratory ANOVA tests on the effects of risk propensity and prior experience

After confirming the basic model in Figure 4.2, additional interest lies in the fact that the results might be influenced by certain respondent characteristics, particularly previous Airbnb experience and risk propensity. Under 4.1.1 it was already discussed how both previous experience and risk propensity are related to certain demographic characteristics like age and gender. In this part, ANOVA tests seek to explain if any significant relationships exist between the two groups and usage intention, on the one hand, and online trust beliefs, on the other hand.

A one-way ANOVA (see Table 4.12) tested the differences in intention to use Airbnb based on respondent characteristics, including age, gender, ethnicity, latest travel time, travel frequency, prior Airbnb experience, and risk propensity. Results reveal that there only existed statistically significant differences of intention to use Airbnb between prior experience group (F (1,150) = 15.822, p-value < .001), which logically implies that respondents who had previously used Airbnb were more likely to use it for future travel purposes as well.

Table 4.12 Significant patterns to intention to use Airbnb

ANOVA ($N = 152$)		
Factors	**F**	**Sig.**
Age	1.004	.480
Gender	1.029	.312
Ethnicity	.198	.657
Latest travel	1.121	.438
Travel frequency	.021	.885
Risk propensity	.852	.358
Prior Airbnb experience	15.822	.000

Table 4.13 applied an ANOVA-test to seek the relationship between prior Airbnb experience (people with or without prior use experience), risk propensity (risk avoiders or risk takers) and each online trust belief. The result found no significant difference, meaning that the mean scores for the three trust-constructs were similar among prior Airbnb experience groups and risk propensity groups. This supports the approach taken in the current study which examines the effects of both characteristics through group-comparisons, instead of introducing prior experience and risk propensity as trust antecedents.

Table 4.13 Significant patterns to online trust beliefs regarding model groups

Group	**ANOVA Significance ($N = 152$)**		
	Ability	**Benevolence**	**Integrity**
Prior Airbnb experience	.815	.654	.199
Risk propensity	.134	.107	.103

4.5.2 The influence of prior Airbnb experience: Answering Hypothesis 4

The previous ANOVA tests reveal that prior Airbnb experience had an influence on the intention to use but were not significantly influenced by online-trust characteristics. However, this does not mean that the relationship between online-trust characteristics and intention to use remains unchanged. In order to answer Hypothesis 4 and test the regression paths of Figure 4.2, the constructed model was tested for two different groups.

The results shown in Table 4.14 reveal that the Airbnb usage intentions of both the user group and the non-user group were affected by different online trust beliefs. The

benevolence belief is the only dimension affecting both groups. For the 87 experienced Airbnb users, only the ability belief had no effect on the usage intention, and integrity belief contributes most to predicting intention to use. However, the situation for 65 non-users seemed to be the opposite. The ability belief contributed to the highest significance towards non-users' intention to use Airbnb, while the integrity belief did not predict the usage intention.

This shows that since Airbnb users have knowledge on how to deal with the platform and how Airbnb operates, their trust in the functionalities of Airbnb – such as its ability to provide a good service - may thus become less important to their continued usage intention. However, people who have never used Airbnb may have higher expectations towards Airbnb and the hosts' ability and therefore intend to use it. On the other hand, compared with the ability and benevolence expectations that can easily happen in the initial stage when people get in touch with a new platform, integrity – related to the reliability and honesty – tends to make more sense in the ongoing usage period. This might only be developed during a period of staying at a real accommodation when people can confirm whether the host description is accurate. In this regard, intending to use Airbnb by trusting in its integrity tends to make more sense with Airbnb users rather than non-users, as the results reveal.

Table 4.14 Significance of regression coefficients: Users versus non-users

| Construct | Users of Airbnb ($n = 87$) | | | Non-users of Airbnb ($n = 65$) | | |
| | Unstandardized | | Standardized | Unstandardized | | Standardized |
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Beta	Std. Error	Beta
Ability	.093	.088	.103	.425***	.107	.451***
Benevolence	.322*	.124	.266*	.224*	.106	.231*
Integrity	.366**	.113	.349**	.140	.107	.144

Note: Dependent Variable: Intention to use. Significant at: $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, and $***p < .001$.

To conclude, Hypothesis 4, which is presented by Figures 4.3 and 4.4 together, is fundamentally supported. Indeed, differences between users and non-users do exist in the relationships between online trust beliefs and intention to use Airbnb.
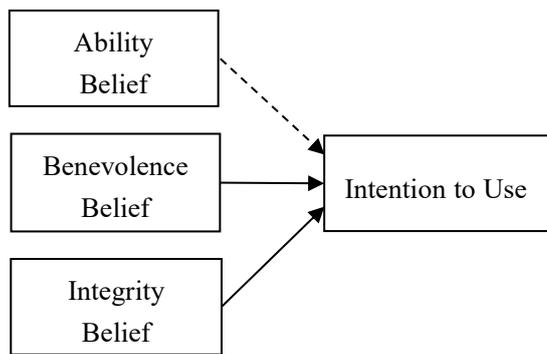
Fig. 4.3 Tests result for users (*n*=87)   Fig. 4.4 Test results for non-users (*n*=65)
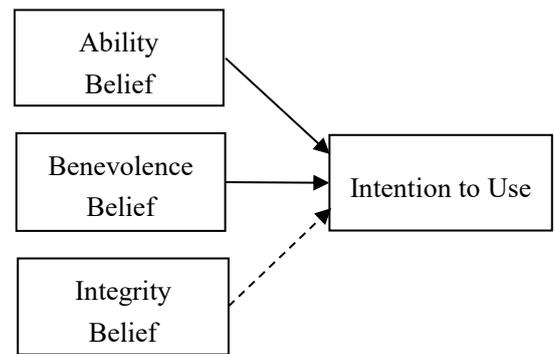
Note: ⟶Significant. ---► Non-significant.

4.5.3 The influence of risk propensity: Answering Hypothesis 5

In order to additionally seek a potential effect of risk personality on trust-factors towards Airbnb use, this study compared risk avoiders with risk takers among the dataset of 152 respondents.

Slightly more risk takers (58.8%) than risk avoiders (56%) had used Airbnb – either to actually stay at an Airbnb accommodation or to at least search for accommodation. A larger proportion of risk takers (55.9%) as opposed to risk avoiders (46.4%) had stayed at an accommodation. In other words, risk avoiders seemed less likely to have stayed in a booked Airbnb accommodation. The ANOVA analysis (Table 4.12) reveals that future intention to use was not significantly different for risk avoiders and risk takers. In order to answer Hypothesis 5 and understand whether risk propensity affects model constructs and trust effects, the basic model was again tested for the two groups of respondents.

Table 4.15 Significance of regression coefficients: Risk avoiders and risk takers

	Risk avoiders (*n* = 84)			Risk takers (*n* = 68)		
	Unstandardized		Standardized	Unstandardized		Standardized
Construct	Beta	Std. Error	Beta	Beta	Std. Error	Beta
Ability	.142	.099	.140	.264**	.110	.288**
Benevolence	.407***	.104	.375***	.235	.171	.179
Integrity	.305**	.108	.287**	.169	.144	.154

Note: Dependent Variable: Intention to use. Significant at: $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, and $***p < .001$.

Regarding Hypothesis 5, the results firstly reveal both risk taker group and risk avoider group were not affected by all online trust beliefs (see Table 4.15). For the 84 risk

avoiders, benevolence belief and integrity belief positively predicted their intention to use Airbnb. However, conversely, the 64 risk takers only showed a higher intention to use due to Airbnb's ability.

The results show that intention to use Airbnb by risk avoiders is more affected by their trust in Airbnb and its host having good intention, benevolent behaviours, and reliable actions. However, risk takers intended to use Airbnb by mostly trusting the ability of Airbnb's service, the quality of the accommodation, the hosts' interaction with guests under Airbnb's guidance and the possibility to connect with the local community. Compared with benevolence belief and integrity belief that are cognitive-based and highly emotional, ability belief is more effect-based since it describes functionalities related to system traits. Therefore, the results might reveal that when considering using Airbnb, risk takers are less sensitive to individual emotion, while risk avoiders are concerned with less objective traits.

Overall, Hypothesis 5 is supported as Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6 together demonstrate. There indeed exist differences towards relationships between online trust beliefs and intention to use Airbnb regarding risk avoiders and risk takers.
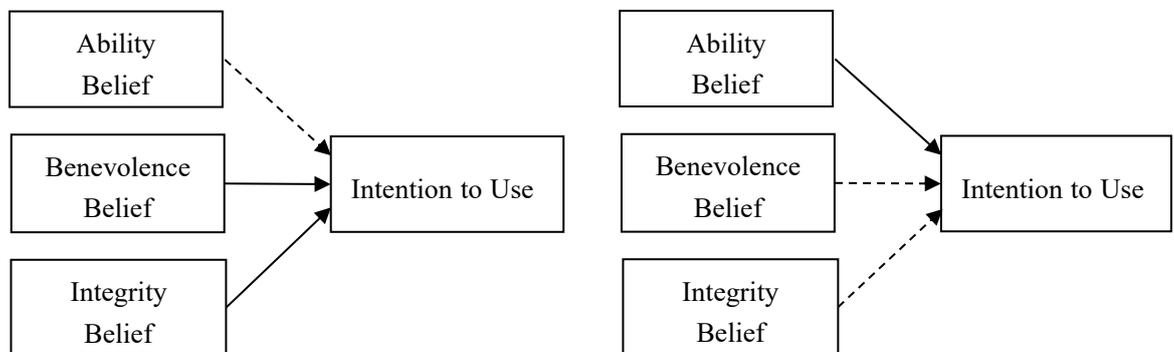

Fig. 4.5 Test results for risk avoiders (n=84)   Fig. 4.6 Test results for risk takers (n=68)

Note: ⟶ Significant. ---▶ Non-significant.

4.5.4 Combining risk propensity and prior Airbnb experience

In the previous two group analyses, it was observed how both prior use experience and risk propensity influenced the base model. However, it was also noticed previously that

there seemed to be a modest connection between having already used Airbnb and having a risk-taking personality. In order to compare the influence of both variables at the same time, a final set of models combines both groups. From the analysis, it can be concluded that for risk avoiders, prior use experience did not significantly alter the model structure. However, in the group of risk takers, only respondents with prior use experience showed the importance of ability belief, while for risk taking prior users, trust beliefs did not affect future intentions at all.

Table 4.16 Significance of regression coefficients: Risk propensity and prior experience

Construct	Standardised Beta			
	Risk avoider		Risk taker	
	User	Non-user	User	Non-user
Ability	.086	.248	.139	.672***
Benevolence	.346**	.333*	.169	.124
Integrity	.372**	.320*	.340	.030

Note: Dependent Variable: Intention to use. Significant at: *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, and ***$p < .001$

4.6 Summary

This study presented the survey results with a total number of 184 complete responses in the dataset and 152 respondents in the constructed dataset (as a subsample filtering out only respondents who had heard of Airbnb prior to the study). The initial analysis of the full sample of 184 respondents focuses on the respondent characteristics in regard to demographics and behaviours. Afterwards, the constructed dataset was used to test the conceptual model that was developed in the literature review. Through EFA and CFA a valid and reliable trust model was established that could serve to answer the 5 study hypotheses.

All hypotheses were supported, with benevolence belief as the strongest predictor towards an intention to use Airbnb. However, when the data was filtered by prior Airbnb experience and risk propensity group, differences in trust-effects on intention to use became obvious. The results showed that benevolence beliefs affect both Airbnb users' and non-users' intention to use the platform. While prior users are also affected by their integrity belief, non-users are influenced by an ability belief. Risk avoiders

intending to use Airbnb trust its integrity and benevolence, regardless of their prior Airbnb experiences. The ability belief impacted on the usage intention of the risk takers, but only those who had no prior Airbnb experience. The next chapter will further reflect on these findings and link the results to previous literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The study set out with an objective to gain a better understanding of the potential for Airbnb among New Zealand residents. Specific attention was given to the multidimensionality of trust and its effect on the intention for future use, based on particular characteristics. This chapter will discuss the results presented in Chapter 4 in light of these research aims, particularly focusing on the model results and similarities and differences between previous studies.

5.1 Airbnb and the New Zealand context: Current and future use

In order to achieve the first aim of this research, which is the evaluation of the potential for Airbnb use among New Zealand residents, this section focuses on discussing travel experience and travel frequency, knowledge of Airbnb and the use of Airbnb. The current study screened out people holding visitor visas and concentrated on people who have had long-term experience of either living or travelling in New Zealand, in order to concentrate on the New Zealand context. Although due to the specific composition of age, ethnicity, and even eligibility in our sample, the sample cannot fully represent all New Zealanders, the results can still offer valuable insights on a new and emerging travel segment.

Analysing the respondents' latest travel experience and their travel frequency, we can see a strong travel propensity among New Zealanders', to both domestic and international destinations. Only 2.7% of New Zealand-based respondents had not travelled at all in the past two years, while 66.3% have travelled both domestically and internationally with mostly 3-4 domestic trips and 1-2 international trips. It shows that New Zealand has a strong potential for travel-related services, and products such as Airbnb in particular. This is confirmed by tourism reports on domestic and outbound travel. Stats NZ's (2013b) report points out that domestic tourism contributes 59% to total tourism expenditure in New Zealand. Another Stats NZ's report (2017) on outbound travel indicates that the percentage of departures from New Zealand has

continuously increased from 2015 to 2017. Taking a small example, the departures in August 2017 had risen by 7.2% compared to the similar period for the year prior. Our survey results, combined with these official statistics, further predict a strong potential for the continuous growth of New Zealanders' travelling.

With regard to the familiarity of respondents with Airbnb, this research found that 82.6% of 184 respondents had heard of Airbnb. Furthermore, of the 152 people who were familiar with Airbnb, 50.7% had stayed in an Airbnb property before. This means there is a strong possibility of New Zealand resident's recognition of Airbnb, although some limitations concern the snowball sampling method and subsequent non-representative sample. Although Airbnb in New Zealand seems to be growing at a slower rate than in many developed countries such as the USA and Japan (AirDNA, 2017a, 2017b, 2017c), the current results show a positive sign towards Airbnb recognition and potential use. A continued increasing development can thus also be expected for Airbnb. Further reviewing responses of those respondents who had used Airbnb prior to this study, there were 5 people who have served as hosts renting out their accommodation to travellers. These respondents recognised the prospect of becoming tourism entrepreneurs via Airbnb, although it is noticeable from the low numbers that New Zealand people are more likely to use Airbnb for travelling than for hosting.

In addition, 10 Airbnb users have never stayed at any booked Airbnb accommodation, which means that those respondents only search and collect the accommodation information or may cancel the booked accommodation before check-in. That was one of the reasons why this study engages "intention to use" from multiple dimensions: to own a personal account, to search accommodation for the next trip, to get information, and to book accommodation in the future. Such results reflect the value of measuring "intention to use" along multiple behavioural dimensions, compared to estimating only single-dimension behavioural intention such as "intention to get the information" or "intention to consume" in previous literature, which would not provide a complete scope on how people engage with the Airbnb platform.

The multidimensional approach to measuring usage intention also provides direction to understanding how people might wish to utilise the Airbnb platform in the future. As the descriptive statistics in the results chapter (Chapter 4) analysed, people tend to first and foremost own an Airbnb account for seeking future accommodation, without necessarily using it as a booking engine. Comparing prior use to intention to use, it is clear that more people suggested interest in using Airbnb in the future than their past behaviour suggests. This might partially be due to risk avoiders (which occupy over half the constructed data), who are less likely to accept and use a platform in the short term than risk takers.

5.2 Online trust beliefs towards using Airbnb

The second and third aim of this study concerned the relationship between online trust beliefs and usage intention, and the influence of prior usage group and risk propensity group on the model constructs. In order to achieve this aim, first of all the trust model was constructed via EFA and CFA.

Looking at the descriptive statistics and the CFA findings, the measurement item on the belief towards Airbnb's ability to provide diverse types of accommodation meeting different guests' requirements (ABI1) was found to decrease the general reliability of the ability-belief factor. Since another measurement item of ability belief – the expectation of good value for money of Airbnb accommodation – was also dropped after the pilot study, it could be inferred that people seem more likely to simply hold expectations of Airbnb as an accommodation search engine rather than a booking platform. This also, to some extent, answers why questionnaires engage more potential consumers who have heard of but not used Airbnb than real consumers who have used Airbnb. Plus, in terms of specific behavioural intentions, people are more likely to consider owning an Airbnb account for future travel plans than to actually book accommodation via Airbnb for their next trip. In the current survey, 10 out of 65 platform users had never stayed at any Airbnb accommodation; this also supports the finding. Therefore, while a growth of Airbnb can be expected, the results indicate a

need to convert account users to accommodation users.

Regarding the benevolence belief and the integrity belief, four initial measurement items were dropped either through the pilot study, or after the CFA. Four items were all related to trust in the host, not trust in the Airbnb-platform. It may indicate that the consumer's trust towards the host's good intentions, their benevolent behaviour, reliable promises and openness, are irrelevant to the consumer's intention to use Airbnb. Alternatively, it might also mean that respondents expect the host reliability to be guaranteed by Airbnb, thereby not recognising a difference between Airbnb-trust and Airbnb host-trust Furthermore, this result might also be affected by prior Airbnb experience, since people not using Airbnb may not be able to recognise the hosts' benevolence and integrity in depth.

5.3 Model Constructs and relevant measures

5.3.1 Identifying the effects of trust beliefs on intention to use

The CFA results show that the three-dimensional trust model from the B2C (business-to-customer) studies is valid and reliable in the context of P2P (peer-to-peer) Airbnb studies. The hypothesis testing also indicates that all three online-trust beliefs positively impacted the consumers' intention to use Airbnb in the future. This is similar to Hwang's (2014) findings in his study on Amazon within a B2C context.

The benevolence belief had the strongest significance on future use intention ($\beta = .297$, $t = 3.841$) in our study. In comparison, the benevolence belief was the only online trust belief that had no significant effect on platform-usage intention in Hwang's B2C study (2014). Similarly, Lu et al. (2010) did not find much significance of benevolence beliefs affecting behavioural intention either. This difference might be due to their investigation of a well-liked platform (such as Amazon, or Taobao, for example). This means a benevolence belief may primarily affect the intention to use a new platform or website unfamiliar to a certain proportion of consumers than the well-known and frequently used ones. Regarding previous Airbnb studies, benevolence was highlighted as being

important (Kim et al., 2015). Hawlitschek et al.'s Airbnb study (2016) even concluded that the benevolence belief in terms of both trust in platform and host was the only one affecting consumer intention.

5.3.2 Identifying variations in the base model: The influence of prior Airbnb experience

Prior Airbnb experience was found to significantly relate to consumers' usage intention via both ANOVA analysis (Table 4.12) and regression analysis (Table 4.14), which supports Hwang's study (2014) in a B2C field that found a highly significant connection between initial intention to use and a continuing intention to use (loyalty). However, prior experience did not influence the strength of online trust beliefs (Table 4.13), which seemed to go against Gefen's previous studies in the field of B2C organisations that treated familiarity as a strong predictor, influencing online trust (Gefen & Heart, 2006; (Gefen & Straub, 2004). Although a completely different way of identification and measurement towards "familiarity" construct can cause such different results, the current findings still somehow show that adoption by the consumer may differ from business-to-customer transaction and peer-to-peer interaction.

5.3.3 Identifying variations in the base model: The influence of risk propensity

Testing model differences for risk propensity groups, we found that of the 152 subsample respondents, 84 were risk avoiders and 68 considered themselves risk takers. This shows that a higher proportion of people residing in New Zealand are more likely to avoid a relatively new technology platform. On the other hand, although risk avoiders overtook risk takers in numbers, those risk avoiders still would consider using Airbnb, which shows a positive prospect for Airbnb's development, even though at the initial stage their use might primarily relate to information gathering. Moreover, reviewing the ANOVA test that indicates people 16-44 years old are more risk-taking, we can expect that younger people, who use Internet more frequently than older people, can gain an

easy access to get in touch with Airbnb.

The exploratory ANOVA analysis did not find significant differences in terms of usage intentions (Table 4.12) and trust beliefs (Table 4.13) between risk propensity groups. However, for the constructed relationships, risk propensity did influence the relationship of different elements of trust on usage intention (Table 4.15). Risk takers care most for functional advantages while risk-averse users need confirmation of a company's reliability and good intentions. Given the examined effect of risk propensity on risk perception (e.g., Sitkin & Pablo, 1992) and significant relationships between risk perception and trust (e.g., Lu et al., 2010) as the literature review mentioned, there might still exist an indirect relationship between risk propensity and trust or usage intention. Since age and gender variables were related to risk propensity, a managerial suggestion towards Airbnb and even the P2P platform to categorise consumers by characteristics is provided in the next chapter.

5.3.4 The combined influence of risk propensity and prior Airbnb experience

Although all of the three online-trust beliefs tended to positively impact on the intention to use Airbnb, results are clearly different between different categories of groups (Table 4.16). Among the risk takers, only the ability belief impacts on the usage intentions of consumers who had not used Airbnb. This supports the result of Hwang's (2014) finding within the Amazon platform. Accordingly, we may deduce that a trust in ability tends to impact risk takers' usage intention the most, both in B2C or P2P context.

In the current study, risk avoiders were found more likely to use Airbnb by trusting the website's benevolence and integrity, whether or not they had used Airbnb before (see Table 4.16). In comparison, Hwang's (2014) study found that only risk avoiders who had already used the platform would use it (being built directly on loyalty) by trusting its ability and integrity. The ability belief was found to have an important role in establishing behavioural intentions in other B2C studies (Gefen & Heart, 2006; Gefen & Straub; 2004) as well. By comparison, the ability belief in this study seemed the least

relevant; except for the risk takers using Airbnb, respondents were not impacted by an ability belief when intending to use Airbnb. While these B2C studies mainly focus on trusting the ability of the platform itself and found its importance, the Airbnb study by Hawlitschek et al. (2016) confirmed that trusting the ability of the platform had no effect on a consumer's intention. This may be explained by the fact that trusting the ability of a B2C platform (e.g., Amazon) is akin to trusting the platform itself, whereas the ability of a P2P platform is strongly linked to property suppliers who become as important as the platform itself. As previous chapters reported, suppliers serving the peer-to-peer consumption activities are much more essential than in business-to-customer transactions.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the survey results and infers that there is a lot of potential for Airbnb developing in the New Zealand market, specifically from the perspective of a guest. The high recognition of Airbnb and an increasing domestic and outbound travel market provides a comprehensive base for Airbnb's local development. Since Airbnb is a relatively new platform, which has not developed as a mature product in New Zealand, some local people still tend to treat Airbnb as a search engine instead of booking accommodations from this platform, and intend to use it as such in the future, even though they trust in Airbnb with its hosts' ability, benevolence, and integrity.

In regard to these trust beliefs, which affect the intention to use Airbnb, the usage intention, and specifically the trust-relationships leading to future use, was influenced by prior experience and risk propensity. It shows that online trust in different consumption channels can generate different outcomes, even when engaging the same theoretical model.

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Chapter 6: Conclusion and study implications

Airbnb as a novel travel channel with phenomenal development over the last few years drew the researcher's attention. The aim of the study was to understand its importance and potential for the New Zealand travel market and how trust in the website can affect consumers' intention to use it. This study adopted a model investigating the relationship between multidimensional online trust and usage intention from business-to-customer studies and transposed it onto the peer-to-peer context. Following a quantitative methodology, an online questionnaire was sent out via the snowball sampling method, receiving 184 responses with 152 of them to be used for the model test. The results showed that New Zealand is a mature travel market with a good knowledge of Airbnb, although this is not always reflected in actual use. It was found that various trust concepts influence the intention to use and this was further influenced by prior experience and risk propensity.

This chapter will continue by providing concluding statements and reflecting on the theoretical and practical implications of this research. Limitations and future research opportunities are identified subsequently.

6.1 Theoretical implication

First, this study adopted a model developed within a B2C (business-to-customer) context (Hwang, 2014) and modified it for the P2P (peer-to-peer) domain: consumer usage intention was observed under multidimensional online trust effects for prior use groups, risk takers and risk avoiders. Multidimensional trust has been adopted by B2C and even C2C (customer-to-customer) investigations but has barely been seen in P2P studies. Although Hawlitschek et al.'s (2016) study adopted online trust beliefs in Airbnb, they solely focused on booking intention, while this study measures the usage intention over various dimensions, including account-owning intention, information-searching intention, etc. This helps in understanding the full spectrum of behavioural intentions of consumers. Furthermore, based on Hwang's study (2014), the

current research adopted two types of grouping variables to better understand model heterogeneity, which is an innovative approach compared to previous Airbnb literature that are more likely to simply treat risk propensity and prior Airbnb experience as questionnaire items. The significant differences in results in terms of different groups, suggested that there is relevance in a group-based approach when investigating behavioural intention. After analysing the model groups' results separately, this study incorporated both groups into a set of four models, which is a novelty as well.

Second, this study described consumer's familiarity with Airbnb on different levels. Respondents can be separated by people who have not heard of Airbnb; people who have heard of Airbnb but not used it; people who have used Airbnb but have never stayed at a booked accommodation; and people who have already stayed at a real Airbnb accommodation. Even the experience of being a host could be added into the question to observe consumers' progressive familiarity.

Third, an extensive knowledge of Airbnb operations in New Zealand has been provided in this study. Firstly, results drew Airbnb's attention to authentic experiences which are related to Airbnb's locality in New Zealand. Secondly, the current work contributes to a focus on people residing in New Zealand. The characteristics of the participants presents a structure of the population which shows a diversity of ethnicities located in New Zealand. The diversification of society may lead to a promising area of research. Moreover, the participants profile and hypothesis testing results may assist with reporting the psychology and social behaviour of travellers in the New Zealand context.

6.2 Managerial implications

The research results suggest to Airbnb practitioners how to promote Airbnb in New Zealand: This research focused on three aspects of trust: ability, benevolence, and integrity, as drivers of intention to use Airbnb by New Zealand consumers and the findings suggested that all three trust elements were relevant in the decision-making process of our sample. Building trust may motivate consumers to use Airbnb and also

build user loyalty. Therefore, all managerial suggestions presented in the following paragraphs are based on the previous discussion on the study findings.

As the previous discussion indicates, the usage rate, especially the consumption rate of Airbnb, is anticipated to rise. According to the previous literature, an emphasis on authenticity (Guttentag, 2016) and uniqueness (Nguyen, 2014) is combined with the current findings, featuring the importance of trust in ability, benevolence and integrity. The researcher suggests:

(1) a certain degree of cooperation between Airbnb, the local community and local tourism agencies focusing on personalised tourism, for creating an authentic and unique travel experience. This could enable Airbnb to recommend the accommodation that suits the tour routes well in both convenience of location and personal preference.

(2) a closer collaboration between the tourism company and registered hosts of Airbnb, such as a systematic guide and even certain on-site assistance staff for local areas. Considering the authentic service quality, hosts are supposed to interact with guests, sharing the local cultural features and localised essentials of living with guests during the period of the stay. Tourism companies can assist Airbnb hosts by not only providing traditional services, such as offering tourist brochure and serving as a discount point, but also by helping to establish personalised activities, like thematic or cultural parties, in order to provide guests with local authenticity.

For potential consumers and particularly the risk avoiders among them, local advertising and promotion are indispensable features of Airbnb in the New Zealand market. In terms of risk avoiders that tend to use the new online platform after seeing others' usage, taking advantage of social networks seems more viable. For example, establishing social-network accounts (Facebook or Instagram, for example) which are connected closely to local community, then pushing targeted advertising in the local market, is recommended to attract publicity.

Based on the aim of building trust, the current work helps to understand the need to

develop Airbnb's travel resources and attractions in the New Zealand market, such as local accommodation and authentic services. Airbnb needs to provide consumers with authentic experiences, not only focusing on its service but also taking charge of a local host's service. It is particularly critical to assess and select qualified hosts who are responsible for consumer products and services. Also, in order to satisfy consumers by providing accommodation and services to meet their needs, the capability of effectively connecting local community and guiding hosts to serve consumers with positive expertise (holding benevolence and integrity) are expected.

For Airbnb users, the researcher recommends Airbnb to improve its system in order to specify services according to different levels of usage experiences and different characteristics. For instance, new registered userscould be asked about their preference towards destinations and accommodation types, such as modern or vintage lifestyle, thriving or tranquil scene, etc., in a first step. Establishing complete customer files can help recommendations of suitable accommodations and improve customisation possibilities, potentially improving profitability of Airbnb. Experienced users can be recommended accommodations by Airbnb according to their comments towards prior stay experiences that show their bias on cleanness, traffic convenience, and host openness, etc. If possible, it is also viable to ask registered users a few questions about their characteristics and preferences. For instance, users can be questioned in terms of risk propensity by "Where did you hear of Airbnb for the first time?" and "Is important for you to see your surroundings having a good experience from Airbnb before you would consider using Airbnb yourself?" Different risk propensity groups can be established into different databases, implementing diversified marketing strategies. For risk-taking users, especially those new registered users, the trust of them in Airbnb' functionalities deserves consideration, especially with regard to the platform's interaction with the local community, the platform's service quality, and the service quality of the host under the platform's guidance. Therefore, the ratings of features such as cleanliness and communication of different accommodations, can be highlighted and recoded into comparisons for the users' convenience. Accordingly, accommodation that rates highly in these points can be recommended. For risk avoiders, trust in benevolence

and integrity – the more emotional elements – are particularly highlighted. The rating of "Accuracy" describes how the host's online presentation matches up with the reality of the provided accommodation. This can be emphasised in terms of comparing records and making special recommendations.

6.3 Limitations

Firstly, the analysis of respondent characteristics revealed a disadvantage due to the snowball sampling method – that is, community bias. Since the sample is strongly affected by the first participants, the results can be influenced by the researcher's social network. The current survey indeed engaged more ethnic Asians, people holding student visas, and younger people.

Large amounts of ethnic Asians' participation may have affected the survey results, such as the proportion of respondents knowing Airbnb or the distribution of the respondents' risk propensity. However, the research has found ethnicity has no effect on risk propensity and usage intention, which seems to reduce the negative effect derived from the bias of respondents. The centralisation of people holding student visas may incidentally reduce the concentration of New Zealand citizens. However, the responses involving different nationalities and people in society are likely to assist with drawing an international focus on developing the New Zealand hospitality and tourism industries. With regards to the age distribution, given that the online questionnaire is more attractive to young people due to familiarity with the internet, an overrepresentation of younger age groups tends to be acceptable. Similarly, it is reasonable that younger age groups are more familiar with Airbnb. Moreover, the ANOVA result showed that the age of the respondents relates highly to the risk propensity, which is supported by previous studies, like Pavic and Vojinic's research (2012), point out that age positively impacts on risk propensity. Ultimately, these effects might cause the study to overestimate Airbnb's potential slightly, but at the same time, due to the younger age categories, a future outlook is provided.

Secondly, the sample size is rather small. As the methodology chapter (Chapter 3) reported, sample size tends to impact on the research analysis and fit of the model. A small sample size could influence sensitivity of statistical tests. Therefore, a larger sample size (e.g., $N = 500$) should be created for the current quantitative research to produce more generalised outcomes. This study only engaged a rather small dataset compared with the ideal level, due to time and cost limitations. Despite that, the choice of analysis approaches and assessment criteria were reasonably made in consideration of the sample size. This result successfully assisted with a good model fit that finally contributed to meaningful hypothesised outcomes.

Thirdly, the research failed to potentially observe total trust in the host side and trust in the platform side respectively. The researcher originally intended to observe whether the consumer's intention to use Airbnb can be affected by multidimensional trust of the host side and the platform, respectively. However, after deleting measurement items through pre-testing, a pilot study and EFA and CFA, of the 7 items originally relating to trust in the host side, only two remained (ABI4 and INT2 respectively described the host's ability of dealing with guests and reliable promises made by hosts). This seems inadequate to observe trust in the host side separately. These results might be due to the respondents' general unfamiliarity towards the Airbnb host, since only around half of the 152 respondents had stayed at booked Airbnb accommodation before and thus had face-to-face interactions with their Airbnb host. These respondents' attitudes towards Airbnb might differ from the others who may never meet their Airbnb hosts off-line. However, since this study mainly focuses on the multidimensional trust beliefs and their effect on Airbnb use intention, it was acceptable to limit the scope by dropping certain measurement items.

Finally, the trust-intention model did not involve respondents who have not heard of Airbnb. The findings might have been different if these potential consumers would have been included. However, this study screened them out given that Airbnb is a relatively new platform and it would reduce the reliability of findings since it becomes overly hypothetical to ask people whether they would use a product they have never heard of before. Furthermore, in order to avoid a highly complex group analysis, this

study only focused on a binary level of familiarity: users versus non-users. Familiarity could be approached to more complicated levels as previously discussed, or could be drawn as a latent variable within a more complicated trust model which will be subsequently discussed.

6.4 Further research

Given the aim of observing trust in Airbnb and an intention to use Airbnb, the researcher might adopt a technology acceptance model (TAM) for future study. A TAM that involves perceived use and perceived ease of use was not discussed in this study due to the main aim of observing online trust beliefs. However, when reviewing studies examining trust, stimulating the consumer to use a new technology, researchers such as Huang, Li, and Lin (2007) has found that TAM is very frequently adopted. Gefen et al. (2003), also adopted TAM, and successfully found trust relationships with perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and behavioural intention. Therefore, future research might adopt a TAM into the Airbnb domain and seek people's acceptance of this platform.

Moreover, based on a TAM, antecedents of trust beliefs can be modelled, such as structural assurance and disposition to trust (Gefen et al., 2003). From this perspective, familiarity could also be observed as a trust antecedent instead of adopting a group study based on prior experience. Also, risk propensity can be correlated with risk perception which may contribute to trust and usage intention. Moreover, loyalty can also be investigated as an effect, related usage intention.

Another suggestion for further research is to conduct a probability sampling with larger sample sizes. As the limitation section discussed, a large sample size can reduce the instability in terms of the measures and contribute to more generalised outcomes. Consequently, certain findings which were unexpected by this study might be refined through measuring a larger sample. For instance, the effect of differences in individual characteristics may have an effect on an intention to use Airbnb after engaging a larger

sample than that of the current study.

6.5 Summary

Theoretically, this study achieves its original purpose. The consumer trust indeed impacted intention to use Airbnb in the New Zealand context. The resulting differences which exist in the model groups suggests a group study where observation groups are classified by specific characteristics. Regarding the methodology, selecting criteria for estimating and testing procedures based on research design is emphasised to achieve a significant outcome.

Practically, this study proposes that Airbnb should make further efforts in: qualified host services under Airbnb's guidance and discipline; a personalised service system; and a localised advertising campaign promoted through social network platforms.

Limitations and future research mainly suggest a larger sample size for the study, a more rigorous methodology design, especially in terms of selecting measurement items on the host-aspect, and a research model involving trust antecedents such as familiarity and risk perception, trust, usage intention and loyalty.

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Appendices

Appendix A

                                                              [signifies a questionnaire skip]

**[signifies a page break]

AUT

Questions I

Q1. What is your age?
- ❍ Under 16
- ❍ 16 - 24
- ❍ 25 - 34
- ❍ 35 - 44
- ❍ 45 - 54
- ❍ 55 - 64
- ❍ 65 - 74
- ❍ 75 or older

Condition: "Under 16" Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Q2. Which New Zealand eligibility are you holding?
- ❍ Citizenship
- ❍ Permanent residency
- ❍ Residency
- ❍ Work visa
- ❍ Study visa
- ❍ Visitor visa
- ❍ Other, please specify ☐

Condition: "Visitor visa" Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Q3. Have you heard of Airbnb before?
- ❍ No
- ❍ Yes, and I have used it.
- ❍ Yes, but I have not used it.

Condition: "No" Is Selected. Skip To: End of "Questions I" Block.

****

Q4. Have you ever stayed at a booked Airbnb accommodation?
❍ No
❍ Yes, only domestically
❍ Yes, only internationally
❍ Yes, both domestically and internationally

Q5. Have you ever rented out accommodation on Airbnb as a host?
O No
O Yes

****

AUT

Airbnb's Ability

Q6. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Airbnb's Ability?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I believe that Airbnb is capable of offering diverse accommodations that fulfil different requirements of travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I believe that Airbnb knows how to connect the local community with travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I believe that Airbnb is qualified to provide good services to travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that Airbnb hosts offer good value for money.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that local Airbnb hosts are competent in dealing with travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O

AUT

Airbnb's Benevolence

Q7. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Airbnb's Benevolence?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I believe that Airbnb has good intentions toward travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I believe that Airbnb's behaviour is benevolent.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that Airbnb hosts have good intentions toward guests.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that Airbnb hosts' behaviour are benevolent.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I believe that Airbnb is well meaning.	O	O	O	O	O	O

AUT

Airbnb's Integrity

Q8. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Airbnb's Integrity?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I believe that Airbnb is reliable when dealing with travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that Airbnb hosts are honest.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that promises made by Airbnb hosts are reliable.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I expect that Airbnb hosts are open in dealing with travellers.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I believe that Airbnb is sincere.	O	O	O	O	O	O

AUT

Intention to Use Airbnb

Q9. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about Intention to Use Airbnb?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I intend to create or continue with my personal Airbnb account, and share my information with Airbnb.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I intend to search for accommodations on Airbnb, saving bookmarks for my next trip.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I intend to get useful information from Airbnb regarding my future travel plans.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I intend to permit or continue permitting the receiving of emails from Airbnb regarding recommendations.	O	O	O	O	O	O
I intend to book an Airbnb accommodation if I have a chance in the future.	O	O	O	O	O	O

AUT

Questions II

Q10. Must you see other people using innovations before you will consider them?

○ Strongly agree

○ Somewhat agree

○ Neither agree nor disagree

○ Somewhat disagree

○ Strongly disagree

Q11. To which gender identity do you most identify?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other [____]

Q12. Which ethnic group(s) do you belong to? (multiple choices applicable)

❑ European

❑ Māori

❑ Asian

❑ Pacific people

❑ Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African (MELAA)

❑ Other [____]

Q13. Your latest travelling experience (which included at least one overnight stay) happened how many month(s) ago?
(less than one month, please insert 1; No experience, please leave it blank)

[____]

Q14. How many times did you travel over the past two years, staying at least one night away from home? (multiple choices applicable, please insert number)

❑ Domestically [____]

❑ Internationally [____]

****

Please share the link to this questionnaire with as many relatives, friends and colleagues (over 16 years old) who live in NZ as possible. Thank you very much!

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey. Your response has been recorded.

Appendix B

Date Information Sheet Produced: 16 February 2017
Project Title: Understanding New Zealand tourists' trust and use of Airbnb

What is the purpose of this research?

Hi, my name is Siyu Chen, a student in the Master of International Hospitality Management programme at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). You are invited to take part in my dissertation project that will add to the knowledge about tourist's accommodation choice. The purpose of this research is to understand how travellers' trust affects their intention to use Airbnb, under the impact of risk attitudes. Your opinion as a traveller is vital for the research, so I would like to ask you to fill in a brief questionnaire.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have received an invitation to participate in this study based on your relation with other people who have been already aware of the questionnaire or because you are a member of an Airbnb Facebook group. The only requirement we have is that questionnaire participants are at least 16 years of age and have a longer-term eligibility to stay in New Zealand.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you want to participate, simply click the 'next' button bellow to fill in the questionnaire. By completing the questionnaire, your consent is given. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. If you do not want to continue, feel free to quit the website at any time.

What will happen in this research and what are the costs of participation?

The questionnaire is completely anonymous and no personal details will be collected. The questions will not take more than 10 minutes. At first, two questions on age and New Zealand eligibility will confirm that you fall within the scope of the study. The following questions will relate to your knowledge, use, and attitude about Airbnb, depending on whether or not you have heard of Airbnb before, and finally a few general questions on demographic information and travel experience will be asked.

What are the benefits and will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Your answers help us to understand more about the preferences of New Zealand tourists when choosing an accommodation form. The results will be used for a master dissertation and may be published in academic publications and presented at academic conferences. Once the study is completed, a summary report with the

results will be available via Academia.edu, while the full dissertation will be available on Scholarly Commons of AUT upon graduation.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

The questionnaire will be open until 26 May 2017. Feel free to consider this invitation before the expiry date.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Bart Neuts, bneuts@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6692.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher contact details: Siyu Chen, jcc3947@autuni.ac.nz.

Project Supervisor contact details:

Bart Neuts, bneuts@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 6692

Monique Brocx, monique.brocx@aut.ac.nz, +64 9 921 9999 ext 5818

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on *10 March 2017*, AUTEC Reference number *17/58*.

Appendix C

Invitation for Questionnaire Participation

Good day! My name is Siyu Chen, a master student of AUT, and I would like to ask for your help concerning an exciting research project on Airbnb, the trending platform of travelling accommodation. It does not matter whether or not you have heard of Airbnb before, your opinions as a traveller are vital to better understand accommodation choice of tourists.

If this appeals to you, please click this button to follow the survey: **AUT**

We would very much appreciate it if you could also share this link with your friends and family by simply sharing or forwarding this message. Due to the purpose of this study, if you are under 16 years old or not residing in New Zealand, this questionnaire may not be for you to fill in. But please do also pass the link on to any New Zealand residents you know over 16 years of age.

Thank you very much for your time and participation!
Siyu Chen

Siyu Chen
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