

ABSTRACT

Access-based consumption has become a popular alternative consumption method. Yet, companies offering these services have failed to induce sufficient demand as people still prefer legal ownership over temporary access. Previous scholars found increasing the sense of psychological ownership of customers as a solution to substitute legal ownership and to increase demand for access-based services. However, empirical evidence and reasoning behind psychological ownership in general and psychological ownership towards access-based services in particular, are inconclusive. In response, this study aimed to examine the factors affecting psychological ownership towards access-based services, why and under what conditions these factors influence psychological ownership. This cross-sectional quantitative study collected data from a purposive sample of 314 users of access-based coworking spaces in Sri Lanka using a structured questionnaire. Structural Equation Modelling with AMOS was used for data analysis.

The findings revealed that self-identity, self-efficacy, and communal identification make positive impacts on psychological ownership, and these relationships are partially mediated by psychological safety. The relationship that exists between psychological safety and psychological ownership varies according to the self-construal of individual users as it was confirmed that the independent group did not show any significant impact on the relationship between psychological safety and psychological ownership while the interdependent group showed a strong influence on the same relationship. The impact of tenure duration, which is the controlling variable, on psychological ownership was found insignificant. Based on these findings, the current study being the first to test the phenomenon of access-based coworking space context using PO theory and being one of the few attempts to develop and test a comprehensive model explaining psychological ownership relationships using moderated mediation analysis, tests the Psychological Ownership Theory in the access-based service context by introducing psychological safety and self-construal as determinants of varying reactions of access-based service users when stimulating psychological ownership feelings. Further, this study helps practitioners to identify the importance of formulating strategies to stimulate senses of psychological ownership towards access-based services to increase consumers' demand. Accordingly, this study not only broadens the theoretical perspective of the effect of psychological safety and self-construal on PO, but also reveals the importance of increasing service PO for improving ABS demand.