

THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF AIRBNB IN THE PERCEPTION OF TOURISTS

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Abstract

Airbnb has experienced rapid growth, with millions of tourists using its service. This study seeks to identify the main reasons why tourists choose to use the Airbnb platform and its competitive advantages. To this end, online research was conducted with a sample of 49 respondents who have already used this type of service. The main results of the study show that price (53.1%), followed by the flat's facilities (22.4%) and location (20.4%) are the main motives for choosing Airbnb accommodation. When rating the importance of the main features that characterise Airbnb, 67.35% of respondents considered price to be very important and 65.31% rated location the same. In terms of satisfaction, the majority of respondents (59.2%) said they had a very satisfactory experience. Had Airbnb not existed, 53.1% of respondents would have opted for a hotel room. Hotels are therefore a major competitor for Airbnb and the advantages and independence of the services should be maintained or even improved.

Keywords: Airbnb, advantage, authenticity, tourists, hotels

JEL Classification: L83, M10, Z32

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1. Introduction

Since Airbnb was founded in 2008, more and more tourists have opted to stay in a host's home rather than in conventional accommodation. The service is associated with several attributes that motivate tourists' choice, including affordable price, location – most Airbnbs are located in residential areas -, in-home amenities, and authenticity due to the high possibility of interacting with hosts or locals and experiencing local life (So et al., 2018). This paper analyses the main reasons why tourists choose Airbnb and its competitive advantage in the market.

In the first part of this article, the main characteristics of Airbnb were highlighted based on the literature review, along with the advantages over traditional accommodation providers, with the accommodation experience being one of the main research interests in the hospitality industry (Demir and Emekli, 2021). The quality of the service offered remains an important competitive factor for any type of accommodation, including Airbnb properties. The literature emphasises the uniqueness of the Airbnb experience rather than the practical attributes that are at the forefront of choosing a hotel (Guttentag et al., 2018). The difference within these attributes emphasises the difference between Airbnb and traditional accommodation, the added value and innovation that Airbnb has brought. Furthermore, Airbnb has a positive economic impact on the hospitality industry such as restaurants, bars and other attractions in the area by increasing revenue and employment rates (Lalicic and Weismayer, 2018). However, it could also have a negative impact if the majority of tourists prefer Airbnb to hotels (Dogru et al., 2020a). Currently, Airbnb focuses on improving the experience for customers, as they book this type of accommodation mainly to interact with the local community and explore the destination in a different way. In addition, customers are also motivated by the affordable prices (Lalicic and Weismayer, 2018).

The second part of this article presented the quantitative study, which aimed to identify the main reasons for choosing Airbnb accommodation and its advantages over other accommodation alternatives. To this end, the objectives of the study, the results collected through the survey, the statistical tests applied and

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the associated explanations were presented. Finally, the study was concluded by highlighting the most important aspects of the topic under investigation.

2. Literature review and hypothesis development

Founded in 2008 in San Francisco, California, Airbnb is a peer-to-peer accommodation provider that brings together those who have a space to rent – hosts - with those who are looking for accommodation – guests (Gutiérrez et al., 2017). Airbnb brings together around four million hosts in over 220 countries around the world, who have earned \$150 billion and arranged over one billion overnight stays since the company's launch (Özen, et al., 2023). There are a variety of accommodation options, ranging from modest flats to castles, igloos and even tree houses (Guttentag, 2019). The main idea of Airbnb is to give guests a sense of familiarity and encourage them to socialise with locals. In return, hosts are encouraged to treat guests like family or friends, show them their favourite places and help them experience the local lifestyle. The platform offers the possibility to make last-minute reservations and also includes personalised services, discounts or gift cards (Onete et. al, 2018).

Airbnb's business model currently works in most places with a limited degree of regulatory control. To increase and strengthen trust in the service, Airbnb has introduced the feedback option for both hosts and guests. Guests can submit a review on the platform to rate their stay based on cleanliness, location and communication (Zervas et al., 2017). Guttentag et al. (2018) suggested that Airbnb performs worse than traditional accommodation in terms of cleanliness and safety, but tends to be cheaper and offers an authentic local experience as well as other various benefits associated with staying in a home, such as household facilities. The authors also point out that Airbnb is a disruptive innovation, where a product or service is introduced using existing technologies, with a focus on a number of unique features designed to attract customers, such as affordability and simplicity. Their research shows that the main reason why tourists prefer Airbnb accommodation over traditional accommodation is the affordable price, which is related to the principles of disruptive innovation. The second reason is location, as tourists prefer to avoid crowded areas. Airbnb accommodations are usually located in residential neighbourhoods, as opposed to hotels, which are mostly located in city centres.

Staying in a local's house or flat in areas with fewer tourists leads to novel activities in a unique environment. In addition to the opportunity to live like the locals, Airbnb guests also have the chance to explore a particular neighbourhood. Hosts often suggest places they like and enjoy, such as restaurants, cafes, bars and local shops, helping tourists discover less popular places in a destination, but which can be quite relevant. Therefore, peer-to-peer accommodation diversifies tourism activities and attracts tourists looking for authentic and personalised experiences (Tussyadiah and Pesonen, 2016). The article also highlights the different types of Airbnbs and their characteristics. Hosts can offer: (1) the entire accommodation – house, flat or studio, (2) a private room with access to shared facilities or (3) a shared room. Renting a shared room can result in greater savings and creates a favourable environment for social interactions with hosts. Even when renting an entire house or flat, Airbnb customers can benefit from the authentic tourist experiences that traditional accommodation cannot provide, such as observing or participating in the daily lives of locals. Stors and Kagermeier (2017) pointed out that the social aspect of Airbnb is just as important as the economic aspect, as most hosts are willing to give guests valuable tips. Belarmino et al. (2017) also supported this idea. Furthermore, they surmised that guests who prefer hotels are more interested in hotel-specific facilities such as room service. However, Mody et al. (2017) found that Airbnb outperformed hotels in terms of authenticity, representation of the local community and personalisation of services. Guttentag et al. (2018) argued that tourists choosing a hotel are influenced by cleanliness, location, reputation, price, service quality, comfort and safety when deciding on accommodation.

Tussyadiah (2015) found that tourists who choose Airbnb services have a high level of education, are frequent travellers and are willing to try different types of accommodation. In addition, customers want to stand out from the crowd and try new travel options (Guttentag et al., 2018). When they choose Airbnb, they tend to stay longer at a destination and look for authentic experiences by staying in residential neighbourhoods (Tussyadiah, 2015).

The impact of Airbnb in major European cities is primarily on hotels. The increase in Airbnb accommodation is affecting their revenues as they are forced to lower their prices to compete (Onete,

et al., 2018). In their study, Zervas, Proserpio and Byers (2017) point out that hotels that do not cater to corporate groups and lower-end hotels are particularly vulnerable to Airbnb accommodation. Airbnb offers a much broader range of products and services than hotels and can expand supply much more easily compared to hotels, which must be built to specific local regulations (Zervas et al., 2017). However, Dogru et al. (2020a) point out that Airbnb is a substitute for hotels and that if their prices were to fall, fewer people would be interested in Airbnb accommodation and would prefer to stay in hotels instead. Considering the different types of tourists and the variety of accommodation offerings, we believe that Airbnb could continue to attract customers due to its unique features. Tourists will continue to be attracted by the unique experiences, the sense of familiarity that Airbnb offers and the interaction with the local community.

The rapid rise and popularity of the Airbnb platform around the world has resulted in changing consumer behaviour of tourists, satisfying more complex needs of tourists, supporting small businesses, creating new jobs (Onete, et al., 2018), generating additional income for locals and growing local economies by introducing tourism to new areas of cities (Demir and Emekli, 2021). Therefore, according to Dogru et al. (2020b), Airbnb brings numerous benefits to the tourism industry by creating new jobs and sources of income.

Demir and Emekli (2021) also highlighted less positive aspects of Airbnb in their study, such as the development of unplanned tourist attractions and the creation of safety risks for hosts, guests and locals. We believe that the development of tourism in areas that are considered less attractive or less popular with tourists is not a negative aspect, as it stimulates economic growth. Also, most tourists who choose accommodation in residential areas take into account the advice they receive from hosts regarding tourist attractions, so they can be encouraged to explore the area where they are staying. In terms of security, Airbnb encourages the use of safety-enhancing items such as security cameras, smart locking systems, noise monitors, smoke and carbon dioxide detectors and lights with motion sensors. In their study, Mare, Roesner and Kohno (2020) concluded that both guests and hosts alike want a smart security system, but guests are concerned about the impact this could have on their privacy. Hosts are responsible for creating an environment where guests feel safe and comfortable. In addition, guests appreciate the efforts of hosts, so the quality of their behaviour has an impact on guests' loyalty to the Airbnb platform (Lalicic and Weismayer, 2018). The study by Lalicic and Weismayer (2018) recommended preparing hosts for their role through training or workshops. Airbnb has a well-developed customer service, but hosts need to be informed and guided so that they can meet the expected standards. The authors also pointed to increasing customer loyalty by adding key services such as local advice and providing important information for exploring the neighbourhood.

3. Research methodology

The aim of this study is to identify the main reasons why tourists choose Airbnb and what advantages Airbnb offers compared to traditional accommodation. The platform offers various accommodation options with common household amenities, it encourages interaction between host and guest and creates a sense of familiarity. These unique features help to satisfy the different needs of tourists.

Therefore, a questionnaire-based survey was conducted as the most appropriate research method for the defined scope. In this context, four objectives were set to be achieved:

- O1:** Determine the level of satisfaction of tourists who have already used the services of Airbnb;
- O2:** Identify the main reason why tourists choose Airbnb accommodation to the detriment of traditional accommodation;
- O3:** Identify the extent to which tourists tend to choose Airbnb accommodation to the detriment of traditional accommodation;
- O4:** Identify the three most important advantages of Airbnb.

In addition, 18 questions were designed to collect the data. They were entered into the Google Forms platform and distributed via social media between 11 and 13 January 2024, primarily to Airbnb groups, students, friends and family members. As the survey was only aimed at Airbnb service users, the first question served as a filter, followed by 11 Airbnb-specific questions and six identification questions. In

the end, the questionnaire was completed by 54 respondents, 49 of whom confirmed that they had already used the Airbnb platform. Therefore, only their answers were taken into account.

4. Results and discussions

The socio-demographic factors were analysed first. The majority of respondents (51%) were between 18 and 30 years old, were female (69.4%) and came from urban areas (75.5%). 30.6% were in the 30 – 45 years old category and 18.4% were in the 45 – 60 years old category. None of them were over 60 years old. In terms of monthly income, most of them (42.9%) earned between 3501 – 5000 RON, followed by those with 6500 RON (20.4%). 18.4% earned between 2000 – 3500 RON, 14.3% between 5001 – 6000 RON and only 4.1% less than 2000 RON. Almost half of them (49%) were employed, 22.4% were students, 22.4% were entrepreneurs and the rest of the respondents (6.1%) were unemployed. None of them were retired.

As previously mentioned, the first question, which served as a filter, successfully separated the users of this platform's services from the non-users in order to obtain the most relevant data for the defined area. Therefore, the 90.7% (49) of respondents who answered this question in the affirmative were able to continue completing the questionnaire.

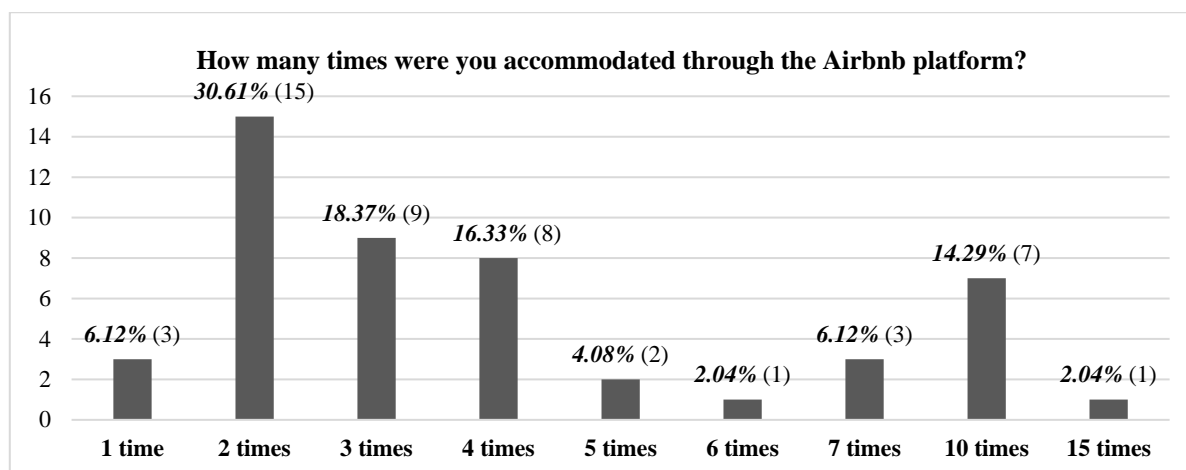


Figure 1. The number of bookings through the Airbnb platform

Source: created by author

When asked “How many times have you been accommodated through the Airbnb platform?”, as shown in Figure 1, most respondents answered that they had been accommodated twice (30.61%), followed by those who had been accommodated three times (18.37%) and four times (16.33%). The number of those who had been accommodated more than 10 times via the platform was quite high, but this can easily be explained by the distribution of the questionnaire across Airbnb groups. Furthermore, when analysing the data, it was found that those who used the service more than 10 times earned more than 6500 RON per month and were entrepreneurs.

One of the questions related to the main purpose of their travelling when using Airbnb services, the results of which are shown in Figure 2. The majority of respondents (85.7%) chose leisure as their main purpose, followed by visiting family members or friends (12.2%), attending events/festivals (10.2%) and travelling for business (8.2%). When the main purpose is visiting friends or family members, in most cases people receive free accommodation in their homes. Furthermore, Airbnbs are usually located in residential areas that are not close to places where events or festivals are organised. In addition, the literature points out that Airbnbs are not intended for corporate groups, which could explain the low results for these three options.

Regarding the type of accommodation preferred by respondents, more than half (61.2%) rented an entire house or flat and the rest only rented a private room (38.8%). None of them rented a shared room.

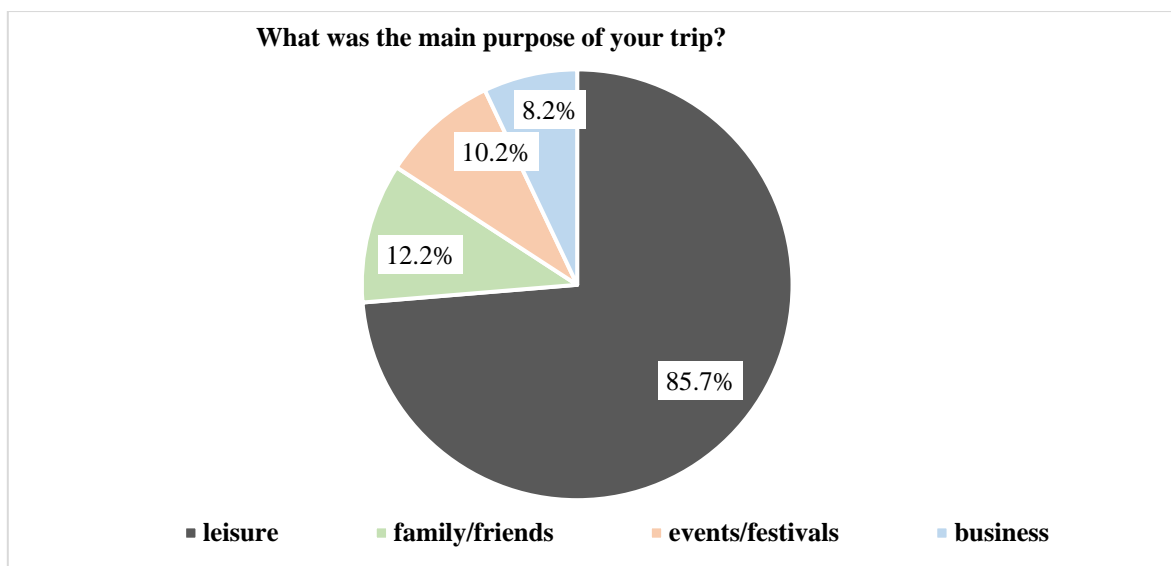


Figure 2. The main purpose of the trip when using Airbnb’s services

Source: created by author

When asked to what extent they tended to favour Airbnb over traditional accommodation, 46.9% tended to choose Airbnb to a very great extent and 22.4% to a great extent. 24.5% were neutral, 2% tended to choose the platform to a small extent and 4.1% to a very small extent (Figure 3).

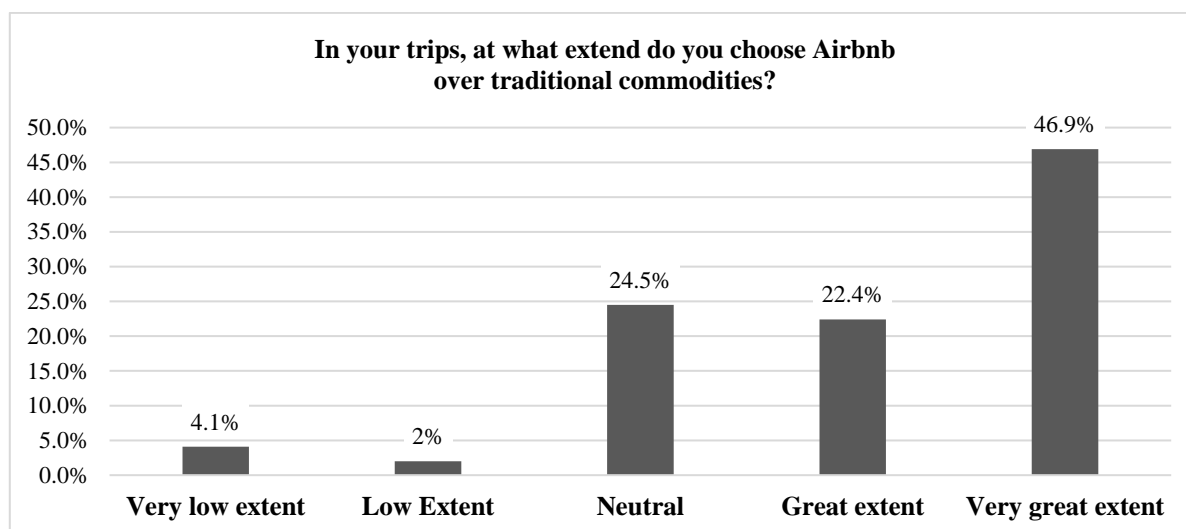


Figure 3. Preference for Airbnb

Source: created by author

The specialist literature emphasises that uniqueness is one of the main features of Airbnb and also one of the main reasons why people choose this type of accommodation. Compared to hotels, guesthouses or other traditional accommodation, tourists who rent through Airbnb usually get an authentic experience by interacting with their hosts or the local community, living in a residential neighbourhood and exploring less touristy areas. In this regard, 81.6% of respondents agreed that Airbnb offers them a personalised or unique experience, while 12.2% disagreed. Only 6.1% were neutral.

The factor that most influenced respondents when choosing Airbnb accommodation was price (53.1%), followed by the property's amenities (22.4%) and location (20.4%). The feeling of familiarity (14.3%), the authentic local experience (4.1%) and the opportunity to interact with the hosts and locals (2%) were decisive factors for a small number of respondents.

In the eighth question, all factors that contribute to Airbnb’s competitive advantage were ranked in order of importance. Price was again considered to be a factor of very high importance by 67.35% of respondents, followed by 20.41% who considered it to be of high importance. The amenities in the

home were rated as a very great advantage by 36.73% and a great advantage by 40.82%. The opportunity to socialise with guests and locals, on the other hand, was rated differently. 34.69% were neutral, 18.37% considered it very unimportant and only 16.33% very important. The feeling of familiarity applies to the same case, most of the respondents (28.57%) rated it as a factor of very high importance, 20.41% considered it very important, while 22.45% were neutral. Location was considered a very important factor by 65.31 and a major advantage by 18.37%. The authentic local experience was rated as very important by most respondents (32.65%), followed by those who thought it was very important (30.61%). These results, shown in Figure 4, indicate that the most valued benefits are price and location, followed by amenities in the home.

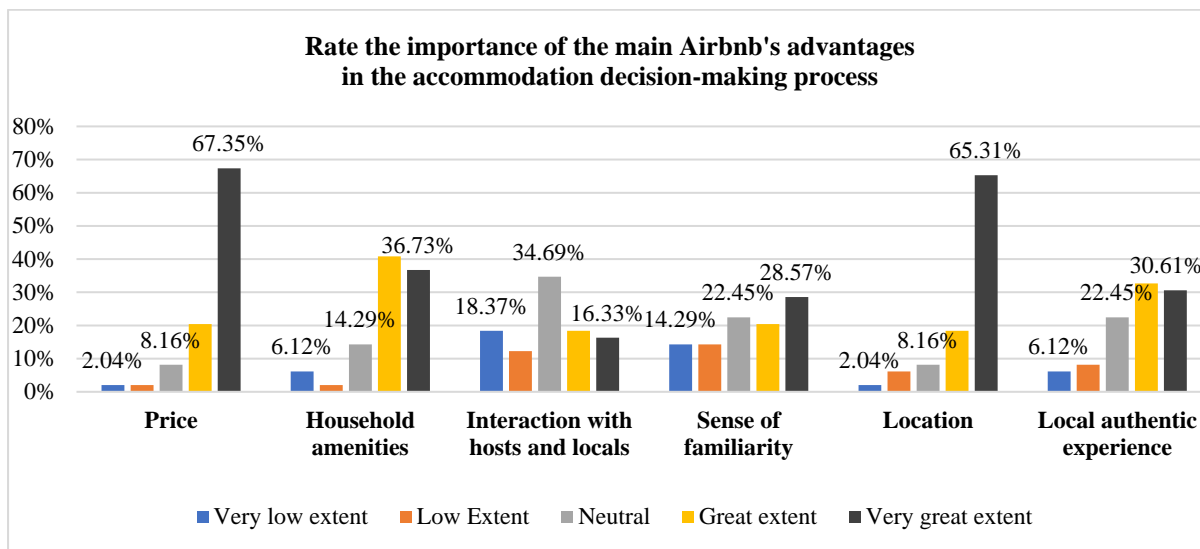


Figure 4. The importance of the main Airbnb's advantages
 Source: created by authors

Regarding the respondents' experience with their stay after booking accommodation through Airbnb, the results showed that the majority of them (59.2%) had a very satisfactory experience and 30.6% had a satisfactory experience. Furthermore, 4.1% of respondents gave a neutral answer to this question, while the same percentage answered that their experience was unsatisfactory and 2% that it was very unsatisfactory, as shown in Figure 5.

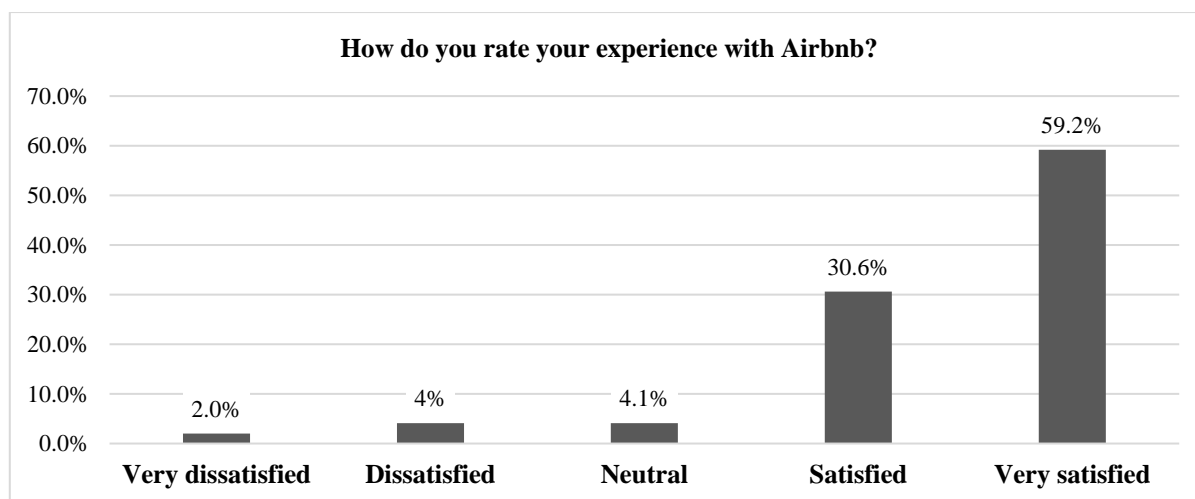


Figure 5. The satisfaction of respondents after using Airbnb services
 Source: created by authors

The possibility of mutual feedback, for both hosts and guests, is a method of facilitating transparency and increasing guests' confidence in choosing this service. In this study, 61.2% of respondents confirmed that they are highly positively influenced by this factor when making accommodation

decisions, followed by 28.6% who believe that they are only highly influenced. The percentage is lower for the remaining three levels. 4.1% of respondents chose a neutral answer, while 2% believed they were only influenced to a small extent and 4.1% to a very small extent.

Based on the specialised literature, the safety and cleanliness standard of Airbnb is considered below average compared to the expected standard, which is why a question on this topic was included. The results show that 44.9% of respondents are negatively influenced by this factor to a high degree, while 18.4% believe that they are influenced to a high degree. A neutral response was given by 24.5% of respondents and 6.1% felt that these factors had little or very little influence on their stay.

It was also important to find out what alternatives the respondents would have looked for if the Airbnb service had not existed. More than half of the respondents (53.1%) answered that they would have opted for a hotel, followed by 28.6% who would have chosen a guest house as an alternative. Meanwhile, 14.3% responded that a villa was their alternative of choice, while 8.2% favoured motels. Finally, 2% of respondents chose the alternative of staying in a hostel or flat.

In the subsequent analysis, the data obtained was entered into the SPSS application, where several correlations between the variables were tested to enrich the research. Therefore, only the statistically significant relationships (with $p < 0.01$ or $p < 0.05$) are presented in this paper, which are listed in Table 2 and which, together with the linear regressions in Table 3, shed more light on certain aspects of the topic.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the analysed variables

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Preference for Airbnb (Q5)	49	1	5	4.06	1.088
Price (Q8)	49	1	5	4.49	0.893
Household amenities (Q8)	49	1	5	4.00	1.080
Interaction (Q8)	49	1	5	3.02	1.315
Sense of familiarity (Q8)	49	1	5	3.35	1.408
Location (Q8)	49	1	5	4.39	1.017
Authenticity (Q8)	49	1	5	3.73	1.169
Satisfaction (Q9)	49	1	5	4.41	0.911
Possibility of feedback (Q10)	49	1	5	4.41	0.977

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS

Before the statistically significant correlations were analysed, the descriptive statistics of the variables involved were compiled (Table 1). Since the questions are on a Likert scale, the minimum value is 1 and the maximum value is 5 for all these variables.

Table 2. Significant Pearson correlations

Variables	Pearson correlation	Variables	Pearson correlation
Satisfaction (Q9)	Preference for Airbnb (Q5) $r = 0.584^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49	Satisfaction (Q9)	Possibility of feedback (Q10) $r = 0.511^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49
Preference for Airbnb (Q5)	Possibility of feedback (Q10) $r = 0.564^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49	Price (Q8)	Location (Q8) $r = 0.682^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49
Satisfaction (Q9)	Household amenities (Q8) $r = 0.339^{*}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.017 N 49	Interaction (Q8)	Sense of familiarity (Q8) $r = 0.559^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49
Satisfaction (Q9)	Sense of familiarity (Q8) $r = 0.310^{*}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.030 N 49	Location (Q8)	Authenticity (Q8) $r = 0.562^{**}$ Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 N 49

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS

The variable that measures satisfaction and that is particularly important for the present study, namely respondents' previous experience after interacting with Airbnb services (Q9), is directly associated to

several variables. A moderately strong ($r = 0.58$) and positive relationship can be found between the extent to which respondents tend to prefer Airbnb accommodation services over traditional ones (Q5) and their satisfaction with the services (Q9). According to the simple linear regression applied, 34.1% of the preference for Airbnb services is explained by the level of satisfaction that was generated by the past experiences with the services. An additional level on the satisfaction scale (Q9) is associated with a 0.70 increase in preference for Airbnb services (Q5).

In addition, preference for Airbnb services (Q5) is also moderately positively correlated ($r = 0.56$) with the ability to provide feedback reciprocally (Q10). The analysis shows that 31.8 % of respondents' preferences can be explained by this outstanding feature. An additional level on the scale of importance of feedback (Q10) is associated with an increase of 0.63 in the preference for Airbnb services (Q5).

It was very important to emphasise that the level of satisfaction with Airbnb services (Q9) also had a moderately strong positive correlation ($r = 0.51$) with the ability to provide feedback in a reciprocal manner (Q10). According to the applied linear regression, 26.1% of the respondents' satisfaction is explained by this mechanism. An additional step on the scale of the importance of feedback (Q10) is associated with a 0.48 increase in the level of satisfaction with Airbnb services (Q9). The level of satisfaction (Q9) is also positively but weakly correlated ($r = 0.31$ and $r = 0.34$ respectively) with the importance respondents attach to the presence of household amenities in their chosen accommodation (Q8) and the importance attributed to the sense of familiarity (Q8). The linear regression model shows that 11.5% of the overall satisfaction level is explained by the importance respondents attach to the presence of amenities in their accommodation and 9.6% by the importance they attach to the feeling of familiarity. In practical terms, an additional level on the scale of importance of the presence of amenities in the home is associated with a 0.29 increase in satisfaction level and an additional level on the scale of importance of the feeling of familiarity is associated with a 0.2 increase in satisfaction level.

Table 3. Linear Regression applied

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	F-Test	R Square	N
Dependent: Preference for Airbnb (Q5) Independent: Satisfaction (Q9)	0.70** Std. Error: 0.14	24.30**	0.341	49
Dependent: Preferință Airbnb (Q5) Independent: Possibility of feedback (Q10)	0.63** Std. Error: 0.13	21.91**	0.318	49
Dependent: Satisfaction (Q9) Independent: Household amenities (Q8)	0.29* Std. Error: 0.12	6.09*	0.115	49
Dependent: Satisfaction (Q9) Independent: Sense of familiarity (Q8)	0.2* Std. Error: 0.09	4.99*	0.096	49
Dependent: Satisfaction (Q9) Independent: Possibility of feedback (Q10)	0.48** Std. Error: 0.12	16.61**	0.261	49
Dependent: Price (Q8) Independent: Location (Q8)	0.60** Std. Error: 0.09	40.77**	0.465	49
Dependent: Sense of familiarity (Q8) Independent: Interaction (Q8)	0.60** Std. Error: 0.13	21.36**	0.312	49
Dependent: Authenticity (Q8) Independent: Interaction (Q8)	0.44** Std. Error: 0.11	14.99**	0.242	49

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS

The eighth question recorded answers for six different variables (Q8). Therefore, several correlations were tested, with the most important ones for this study being those that had medium strength and were statistically significant ($p < 0.01$ or $p < 0.05$). The first, with a Pearson coefficient of 0.68, was between the importance attributed to price and the importance attributed to location. In this case, the linear regression model shows that 46.5% of the variance of the dependent variable price (Q8) can be

explained by location (Q8). An additional level on the importance scale for location is associated with an increase of 0.60 in the importance attributed to price.

The second significant correlation shows a positive relationship with moderate strength ($r = 0.56$) between the importance respondents attach to the possibility of interacting with locals or hosts and the importance they attach to the sense of familiarity. In this case, the linear regression shows that 31.2% of the total level of familiarity is explained by the possibility of interacting with locals or hosts. An additional level on the scale of importance of interaction with locals or hosts (Q8) is associated with an increase of 0.60 in the importance attributed to the presence of familiarity (Q8).

The final statistically significant correlation identified shows a positive and moderate relationship between the importance respondents attach to place (Q8) and the importance they attach to having an authentic local experience (Q8), again with a Pearson coefficient of 0.56. The linear regression shows that 24.2% of the importance respondents attach to having an authentic local experience (Q8) is due to the opportunity to interact with locals or hosts (Q8). An additional level on the scale of importance attached to interacting with locals or hosts (Q8) leads to an increase of 0.44 in the importance attached to the opportunity to have an authentic local experience (Q8).

Last but not least, by applying the Chi-square test (Table 4), an average strong correlation of 0.45 was found between the nominal variable type of Airbnb accommodation chosen by the respondents (Q4) and the nominal variable age (Q13) – which was categorical in this case. Respondents' age is therefore related to the preferred type of Airbnb accommodation, namely whether they rent the entire flat or just a private room. According to the results, 60% of respondents in the 18-30 age category opted for a private room, 87% of respondents aged 30-45 rented the entire property and 78% of respondents aged 45-40 also opted for the entire home.

It is also important to note that no relationships were found between the respondents' gender (Q14) and the other variables. At the same time, it is worth noting that the variables on origin (Q15), income (Q16), occupation (Q17) and level of education (Q18) were in the same situation.

Table 4. Chi-Square Test applied to Type of Airbnb accommodation and variable Age

Chi-Square Test Type of Airbnb accommodation (Q4) and Age (Q13)	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Symmetric measures	Value	Approximate Significance
Likelihood Ratio	10.472	2	0.005	Phi	0.449	0.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	6.623	1	0.010	-	-	-
N	49		-	-	-	-

Source: Developed by authors using SPSS

To summarise, customer satisfaction is diminished from the outset if an operator does not provide the opportunity for feedback, does not adequately equip the establishment with standard household amenities and does not create an atmosphere that evokes even the slightest sense of familiarity. Nonetheless, the opportunity for feedback has a significant impact. In addition, it is important to note that when booking Airbnb accommodation, respondents are looking for a competitive price and a desirable location at the same time, and that the hospitality of hosts can enhance guests' comfort during the stay, contributing to their authentic experience.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, following the entry of Airbnb on the market, tourists are seeking enhanced experiences throughout their journeys. Authenticity and the possibility of interacting with the local community, among other benefits such as affordable prices, location, home amenities or a sense of familiarity, could motivate tourists to opt for Airbnb's services.

The research of this article revealed that the main reason why tourists choose Airbnb accommodation is the price. The other two major advantages are the household amenities and the location. Tourists therefore appreciate the practical features of the services rather than the social ones. Most of the

respondents have already stayed on the Airbnb platform twice and are very satisfied overall. In addition, almost half of the participants (46.9%) would very likely choose Airbnb accommodation over traditional accommodation.

After analysing the data using SPSS software, it was found that 26.1% of satisfaction was due to the opportunity to provide feedback to both guests and hosts, and 21.1% was due to the importance respondents placed on the amenities in the home and the sense of familiarity. At the same time, the satisfactory experience had an impact on the preference for Airbnb. It is also worth noting that the results indicate that the age of respondents is relevant to the type of Airbnb accommodation they choose, particularly whether they rent the whole home or just a private room.

Another aspect that emerged from this study is that contact with locals or hosts is not an essential element, although it has an impact on the sense of familiarity, which could explain the satisfaction of the interviewees, but also on having an authentic experience. Even without the desire for interaction, a significant percentage of participants believe that Airbnb provides an authentic experience. At the same time, feedback on the platform positively influences tourists' accommodation choices, but the counterpoint is the poor level of cleanliness and safety, which is also highlighted in the literature review. Nonetheless, Airbnb is expanding in the market, helping small businesses to grow and increasing competition.

Future research could also consider the length of stay in Airbnb accommodation. We also believe that a comparative analysis between people who prefer to stay in Airbnbs and people who prefer to stay in hotels, guesthouses, villas or hostels is needed.

As the survey was largely distributed to groups engaged with the platform, the result could be subjective. When analysing the results, we noticed that entrepreneurs or people who use the platform for commercial purposes form a larger sample, which includes service users in particular.

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