Citació per a la versió publicada

González-Reverté, F. [Francesc], Gomis-López, J.M. [Joan Miquel] & Díaz-Luque, P. [Pablo] (2022). Airbnb as a hotel competitor in touristified cities. Perceptions among upscale hoteliers in Barcelona. Tourism Geographies. doi: 10.1080/14616688.2022.2131898

DOI
http://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2022.2131898

Handle O2
http://hdl.handle.net/10609/147173

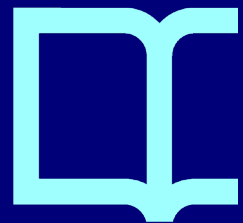**Versió del document**

Aquesta és una versió acceptada del manuscrit.
La versió en el Repositori O2 de la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya pot ser diferent de la versió final publicada.

Drets d'ús i reutilització

Consultes

Si creieu que aquest document infringeix els drets d'autor, contacteu amb l'equip de recerca: repositori@uoc.edu

Airbnb as a hotel competitor in touristified cities. Perceptions among upscale hoteliers in Barcelona

Francesc González-Reverté[,1] Joan   Miquel Gomis-López[1] and Pablo Díaz-Luque[1]

[1]Open University of Catalonia, Barcelona, Spain

Direct editing of the affiliation lines is not allowed. Please click on the edit icon to the right of the affiliation lines in order to make changes.

CONTACT Francesc González-Reverté fgonzalezre@uoc.edu

ABSTRACT

This study explores the opinions and perceptions that shape narratives among 4-star hotel managers around Airbnb as a competitor, and presents the arguments on which their differences in perception are based. We used an interpretive and emic approach to obtain data through in-depth interviews with upscale hotel executives in the city of Barcelona in its present state of touristification. The results suggest that the dominant discourse among hoteliers is sceptical as to the extent to which Airbnb is replacing hotels. However, some hoteliers perceive Airbnb as a threat requiring a proactive, unified response by hotels taking into account the urban environment and the neighbourhood where they are located.

KEYWORDS

Upscale hotels; Airbnb; touristification; Barcelona

Introduction

The arrival of peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, particularly Airbnb, has transformed the tourism industry considerably and the accommodation sector especially. Airbnb's main strength with regard to its value proposition is its capacity to combine practical and functional features with more authentic travel experiences than those offered by traditional hotels (Guttentag & Smith, 2017). Despite the number of studies on Airbnb's impact on the hotel industry, some still question it (Benitez, 2019; Ginindza & Tichaawa, 2019). Few empirical studies have been conducted into hoteliers' points of view. Such research would provide information on hoteliers' adaptive responses and on opportunities for transforming their business strategy in view of the arrival and consolidation of P2P accommodation platforms. Several studies focus on standard and budget hotels (Koh & King, 2017; Sedlacek, 2016, cited in Alrawadieh et al., 2020), though little work has been done on Airbnb's impact on urban upscale and luxury hotels. Further studies are needed to provide conclusive results on how the impact differs according to geographical context, hotel categories and consumer types. To bridge this gap, we analyse the perception among 4-star hotel managers in Barcelona of the main peer-to-peer platform operating in the city—Airbnb—in the context of the consolidation of this kind of accommodation in Barcelona. We use disruptive innovation as our conceptual frame of reference, given Airbnb's close association with disruption (Guttentag & Smith, 2017) and its potential to challenge the future competitiveness of hotels. We ask the extent to which hoteliers consider Airbnb a real competitor and the extent to which hotel companies are likely to face growing competition from sharing economy providers across different consumer markets.

Upscale hotels in particular merit study, not only because of their significant presence in the Barcelona hotel market and their strong links to and representation in local institutions, but because the literature generally views their business model as the least affected by P2P platforms. We use an emic approach to obtain information from participants and to identify differences and changes of emphasis in hoteliers' own points of view. Our chosen study method is a critical discourse analysis based on narrative construction. Although this approach is relatively infrequent in tourism studies, it permits a critical review of hoteliers' perceptions. To the extent that narratives are constructed socially, it also enables personal information to be added collectively from a discourse that magnifies the social reality being analysed—in this case, the impact of competition from Airbnb on the hotel industry. Furthermore, we want to show how hoteliers' discourse around Airbnb is also addressed to renegotiate hotels' responsibility for negative tourism externalities in the city.

Conceptual framework

Disruptive innovation and Airbnb

The theory of disruptive innovation is an appropriate framework for looking at the innovative nature of a company and its competitive relationship with other companies in their sector. Placing the activity of platforms such as Airbnb within said framework helps define their potential impact on tourist accommodation (Guttentag, 2015; Guttentag & Smith, 2017; Blal et al., 2018; Dogru et al., 2019) and on the tourism industry in general (Meged & Zillinger, 2018). The theory

describes a process whereby the disruptive product transforms the market to a point where it overtakes its competitors and previous market leaders. Although a disruptive product usually has a lower initial market presence, it has certain benefits (e.g. it is cheaper, simpler or more suitable) which make it more attractive to consumers over time and boost its mainstream market share (Guttentag, 2015).

In defining the concept of disruptive innovation, Bower and Christensen (1995) establish that, initially, disruptions offer attributes that differ from the leading products but which come to dominate over time. A disruptive product or service offers a novel feature in each market, but its attributes are not sufficiently attractive in the beginning compared with those of the traditionally dominant companies, which continue to focus on their most profitable market segments. From this point, two simultaneous phenomena occur: firstly, the disruptive product or service steadily improves its features and gains a significant market share; secondly, traditionally dominant companies gradually react to the first phenomenon by introducing incremental innovations in the new competitive scenario (Dogru et al., 2019). This model is applicable to Airbnb. Its business was limited in its early years before it achieved significant, rapid growth affecting the business of the dominant companies in the accommodation sector (Guttentag, 2015).

Numerous publications have analysed the disruptive nature of Airbnb in the tourist accommodation sector. Guttentag (2015) introduces this in a comparative analysis of indicators, including the turnover of Airbnb and traditional accommodation or the nature of demand for each model. Guttentag and Smith (2017) look more closely at the concept of disruptive innovation and claim there is no empirical evidence for the disruptive nature of Airbnb. Among other reasons, it is unclear whether Airbnb's attributes can be considered disruptive innovation based on the original theoretical model (Bower & Christensen, 2015; Christensen et al., 2015). This has generated much academic debate on the disruptive nature of Airbnb (Dogru et al., 2019; Martin, 2016). Some authors question its disruptive nature, arguing its services fall short of the generally accepted standard service level for hotels, such as cleaning or quality customer care. However, Guttentag and Smith (2017) maintain that this does not affect disruption, as Airbnb users may see many such hotel attributes (which they must pay for) as unnecessary. Furthermore, such users might prefer accommodation they consider more experiential (Mody et al., 2017) or functional; some customers enjoy the greater autonomy provided by features not available in hotels, such as a private kitchen. The concept of disruptive innovation clearly exemplifies the conceptual gaps in the theory of innovation in tourism (Brooker & Joppe, 2014; Gomezelj, 2016), as its nature and definition remain topics of academic debate. However, there is a consensus that analysing the processes facilitates study of the impact of innovation and change on a given community (Smith & Druehl, 2008). This justifies our interest in analysing perceptions among members of 4-star hotels in Barcelona.

The disruptive effects of apartment rental platforms on the hotel business

Studies on the influence of Airbnb on hotel activity have dominated the field of disruptive innovation in tourism in recent years. For instance, Zervas et al. (2017) detected that the presence of Airbnb affected the financial performance of hotels in the city of Austin, USA, and found a significant correlation between the increase in Airbnb rental accommodation and lower profits and returns on investment, especially among budget hotels (Dogru et al., 2019). Previous research also suggests that the sharing economy has gradually given tourists a wider range of products and services at more reasonable prices (Heo et al., 2019). Research also shows that although the impact has not been precisely quantified, in periods of constant demand the increase in the accommodation offer caused by Airbnb's arrival on the market has led to lower prices and falling income for hotels (Dogru et al., 2019).

Analysis of the short-term impact of tourist apartment rental platforms on hotel businesses focusses not only on financial results but also on the replacement of demand for hotel rooms (Guttentag & Smith, 2017; Hajibaba & Dolnicar, 2017; Varma et al., 2016), the financial sustainability of the business model and business performance (Akbar & Tracogna, 2018; Dogru et al., 2020), price competition (Roma et al., 2019), the impact on sales (Blal et al., 2018) and the introduction of negative externalities in cities (Heo et al., 2019; Niewland & Melik, 2018; Williams & Horodnic, 2017).

The reaction from the hotel industry and especially upscale hotels has generally been sceptical and more reactive than proactive, revealing a reluctance to see platforms like Airbnb as a real threat. This matches the view maintained by Airbnb, which argues that its offer does not affect the interests of the hotel sector (Guttentag, 2015) but rather complements it, since it has a different business model and its users do not generally use hotel services. In this context, Wang and Nicolau (2017) show that Airbnb users do not consider factors deemed relevant when choosing a hotel, such as hotel categories and brands. Similarly, Mody et al. (2017) argue that there are significant differences between the two offers. Pricing and lower fixed and labour costs chiefly favour Airbnb (Guttentag, 2015), though there are other factors where Airbnb is also superior to hotels: the ability to build trust between owner and renter through communication mechanisms; co-creation of experiences, and the authentic nature of the offer, which provides opportunities for visitors to adapt to daily life in the neighbourhood (Belarmino et al., 2019; Johnson & Neuhfer, 2017; Lin et al., 2019; Lu & Tabari, 2019). Airbnb is also controversial from the local community point of view. Despite Airbnb having been criticised for its negative impacts on residents' quality of life, recent research on the topic re-examines the attitudes of local residents towards Airbnb and shows that, contrary to the popular discourse, non-hosting residents perceive higher positive than negative impacts and also perceive Airbnb as a key player in empowering residents within communities (Mody et al., 2020; Yeager et al., 2020).

Other authors offer a contrasting view, raising problematic issues in tourist destinations caused by the activity of platforms like Airbnb (Fang & Law, 2016; Guttentag, 2015). There is evidence that the presence of visitors in the local neighbourhood is a source of varying degrees of tension depending on the characteristics of the destination and the local community composition. For instance, safety has been identified as a key factor with regard to support for Airbnb by non-hosting residents with children in their household. This is attributed to parental fear of visitors around children (Suess et al., 2020). Furthermore, legal issues now represent another source of criticism for P2P platforms, since many accommodation providers do not operate within the law. This produces two problematic issues: fiscal concerns, since accommodation owners do not pay tax to the community, and regulatory issues, since the accommodation does not comply with applicable regulations and bypasses controls.

Although Airbnb is generally considered to have hit budget hotels harder than upscale hotels, conclusive figures on the characteristics of the most directly affected establishments are lacking (Choi et al., 2015). Failure to reach a definitive verdict on Airbnb's global impact on the hotel industry can be explained by difficulties in drawing general conclusions from studies that tend to focus on specific areas, research that is predominantly descriptive and insufficient data to assess the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, among other factors. The literature outlines a variety of responses to combat the effects of short-term rental platforms. These range from the creative destruction of old business models and the gradual introduction of creative forms of participation in the sharing economy (Belk, 2014), such as using the Airbnb platform as a distribution channel (Kesler, 2015), directly competing with platforms by using hotels' value proposition (Guttentag, 2015) and innovating in elements

which support the economic, social and technological success of P2P platforms. For example, the concept of co-living has been introduced by a number of hotel chains (Ting, 2016). The strategies can be categorised into two types. The first approach aims to attack Airbnb's weaknesses, which include significant user uncertainty regarding the product and the safety of its location, lack of specifics on the tourist services provided by private accommodation, a shorter period of availability because the accommodation is also the owner's home (Akbar & Tracogna, 2018), and negative externalities caused by Airbnb's presence in destinations and, more specifically, in districts where most listings are located (Nieuwland & van Melik, 2020; Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018; Williams & Horodnic, 2017). Common strategies under this approach include improving the positioning of hotels' strengths—especially regarding the quality of hotel service—as well as adopting and adapting aspects of the platform economy and lobbying for citywide regulations. The second approach diverts attention from short-term rental platforms and focuses on improving long-term competitiveness in relation to other hotels. Strategies associated with this approach include inventive financing, attracting emerging markets, total revenue management (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016), brand strengthening (Richard & Cleveland, 2016) and personalising and co-creating experiences (Mody et al., 2017; Richard, 2016).

Contextualising the impact of Airbnb, in the city of Barcelona, on hoteliers' discursive strategies

The conversion of Barcelona into a benchmark destination for international tourism following the 1992 Olympic Games spurred unprecedented growth in the number of hotels in the city (see Table 1). Since then, the hotel sector has played a key role in the development of tourism in Barcelona via a virtuous circle based on international projection of the city's image, institutional engagement with tourism and continuous growth in tourist arrivals (López Palomeque, 2015). Over the last 30 years, the hotel sector in Barcelona has been an economic pillar. It constitutes around 5% of the city's GDP, contributes more than €340 million in taxes annually and directly employs more than 30,000 people. In addition, the hotel industry is considered key to the internationalisation and positioning of Barcelona, especially when it comes to landing major events and attracting talent, new companies and research centres. The hotel industry is a key economic sector for the city which is difficult to relocate, stable, solid and reliable (Val, 2021).

Table 1. Evolution of hotel accommodation in Barcelona, 1990–2019.

	1990	2000	2010	2019	Increase 1990/2019
4-star hotels	30	56	214	183	153
Total hotels	118	187	691	857	739
4-star rooms	5302	15135	32189	39130	33828
Total hotel rooms	18569	31338	120538	137114	118545
Airbnb (listings)				18504*	n.a.

Source: Turisme de Barcelona, 2019.

*Wilson et al. 2022.

After decades of boosterism, the electoral victory of a left-wing coalition in 2015 led to a change in tourism strategy. The Special Tourist Accommodation Plan (PEUAT), part of Barcelona's Strategic Tourism Plan, enabled Barcelona City Council to suspend tourism accommodation licences throughout the city. Limiting tourism accommodation growth fuelled disagreement and controversy between hoteliers and the local government. In addition, tourism was progressively perceived as a major urban problem in local resident surveys. The emergence and consolidation of Airbnb in the city created new scenarios in the urban context, accentuating the perception of overtourism and tourism unpopularity among residents and causing episodes of social discontent.

The advent of 'digital capitalism' and its impacts on touristification posed various challenges to the city of Barcelona. Growth in short-term rentals has contributed to changing global mobility patterns and the creation of international enclaves (Cocola, 2020), opened up new markets for real estate investment and challenged traditional modes of regulation, forcing public institutions to deal with informal practices and new transnational companies (Aguilera, Artioli & Colomb, 2019). Tourism hosting capacity in Barcelona has changed since the emergence of short-term platform rentals (see Table 2), which constitute the second most important accommodation type in the city, and the growth in P2P platforms has contributed to the uneven distribution of tourism supply. Spatial distribution patterns of Airbnb show a high concentration in the city centre. Listings tend to be located in the same areas as hotels, relatively close to tourist attractions, contributing to uneven development of tourism and exacerbating tourism pressure and socio-spatial inequalities in the city (Arias & Quaglieri, 2016; Wilson, Garay & Morales, 2020). However, other studies highlight that the distribution of Airbnb accommodation follows a centre-suburb pattern, since listings also extend to residential districts not served by hotels (Gutiérrez et al., 2017). A further impact of Airbnb in Barcelona relates to increased housing market tensions in terms of housing access and affordability. The progressively commercial orientation of the platform and the convergence with a 'hometel' model rapidly substituted an initial P2P sharing model, indicating that the market for Airbnb is currently controlled by very few participants, most of them professional hosts (Wilson, Garay & Morales, 2020; Lladós et al., 2020). In addition to the inequalities generated by the presence of Airbnb, there are underlying regulatory issues insofar as the expansion of Airbnb has been based on unlicensed listings which are primarily concentrated in areas identified as tourism 'deconcentration' zones (Arias & Quaglieri, 2016; Wilson, Garay & Morales, 2020).

Table 2. Evolution of Airbnb listings in Barcelona, 1910–2019. ⊕

	2010	2013	2016	2019	Increase 2010/2019
Airbnb listings	40*	2500*	14753**	18504***	18464

Sources: *Delgado, J.T., 2017; **García-López et al., 2019; ***Wilson et al., 2022

This new scenario, characterised by the growing unpopularity of Airbnb, has been used by hoteliers to ease confrontation with local governments and create new bridges of understanding, as exemplified in the statements of the chairman of the hotel association: 'The priority is to continue working hand-in-hand with the local public sector to eradicate all illegal listings in the city in the form of short-term rentals and apartments, which are seriously damaging the tourist image, causing rejection of the activity, reducing access to housing and affecting the tourism quality of our destination'.

Hoteliers' discourse incorporated protests against illegal tourist apartments as a way of generating complicity with the local government and sharing interests in eliminating illegal tourist apartments marketed by Airbnb, which fits well with the goal of limiting accommodation. Hoteliers also use anti-Airbnb discourse to build bridges with the local community.

From a conceptual viewpoint, hoteliers' critical discourse of Airbnb can be assimilated to that of the associations that Novy and Colomb refer to as representatives of tourism, but which have a critical view of certain aspects of the tourism model (Novy & Colomb, 2019). Hoteliers highlight the global nature of the platforms as an issue that affects residents' quality of life. For example, the Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona (Barcelona's Hotel Association) hosted the 2019 ReformBnB meeting, which brought together hotel associations from more than 30 countries to agree on calls for government action on Airbnb's activities. Two of the seven guidelines are calls for measures to limit and control tourist apartments to avoid negative social effects on the local community and empower residents against the pressures from Airbnb (ReformBnB, 2019).

Methodology

The emic approach enables the study of behaviour from within the system (Pike, 1967). This follows the work of authors such as Cohen, who claims that studying tourism processes from the outside does not go far enough and that participants should also be recognised and given the opportunity to express their point of view and attitude on the topic of study (Cohen, 1979). This study looks at hoteliers' personal interpretation of Airbnb as a disruptive agent and assesses how organisational firms' issues and each participant's specific circumstances and personal views on the tourism industry affect their perception.

We used interviews based on a semi-structured questionnaire to obtain information on hoteliers' perceptions of Airbnb's disruptive capacity. We conducted interviews with a total of 10 executives of 4-star hotels, between June and September 2019. Interviewees were selected based on a snowball method, starting with a preliminary meeting with representatives of the Barcelona Hotel Association. Various hotels were proposed in this initial meeting, based on different criteria: participation in internal reflection on the impacts of Airbnb on the local hotel sector, launching innovative hotel products, and having a strategic vision that includes an adaptive response to Airbnb. We contacted more than 50 hotel representatives, though most refused to be interviewed, either because they did not have time for a 2-hour interview or because they were not interested in giving their opinion on sensitive issues related to their business strategy. However, the representativeness of the hoteliers interviewed was satisfactory. The interviewees represented the basic upscale hotel types (business and urban leisure) operating in the city. Some interviewees were managers of different hotel associations operating in the city or in their tourist influence area (Spanish Confederation of Tourist Hotels and Apartments, the Barcelona Hotel Association and the Sitges Hotel Association) and, thus, represented a wide range of hotel companies. Interviewees were specifically asked to distinguish between the considerations of their particular hotel and those of the group of hotels they represented. We established the final number of participants once the theoretical saturation level for the information was reached (Patton, 2002), since the opinions gathered in further interviews would not add new valuable information to our research. The questions covered four basic aspects of Airbnb in relation to both the hotel sector in Barcelona and hoteliers' own hotels: (i) general impression of Airbnb as a competitor, (ii) the impact of Airbnb on the hotel sector, (iii) the steps hoteliers were taking to combat the rise in use of Airbnb for tourist accommodation and the extent to which Airbnb might change the hotel industry, and (iv) hoteliers' opinion on the future of the hotel industry in the medium term.

We used narrative analysis to identify interpretive processes generated in the interviews. This approach identifies the narrative structures individuals use to shape their discourse and present their view of Airbnb, based on their experience as hotel managers. The first step in the analysis was to exhaustively review information from the interview transcripts to obtain a full understanding of the overall meaning of the discourse (Hall, 1975).

We used the following operational definitions as analytical categories for this study: (1) Airbnb's disruptive and innovative nature, (2) competitive factors and competitiveness between the hotel industry and Airbnb, and (3) external environmental forces, where complex dynamics, lobbying and unique local contexts determine the role, influence and advantages or disadvantages of hotels and P2P platforms in the local tourism system. We could then relate each of these concepts to emerging themes (recurring references to the narratives that characterise it) or secondary themes (recurring references to complementary issues). This results in 3 categories (the perceived disruptive nature of P2P platforms, the competitiveness of the hotel product, and the relation with the city tourism system and stakeholders) and 14 attributes that may affect participants' evaluation of P2P platforms as a competitor (see Table 3).

Table 3. Attributes affecting the perception of peer-to-peer platforms as competitors for upscale hotels. ⊕

Categories	Attributes
No table footnotes are available	

Categories	Attributes
Disruptive nature of peer-to-peer platforms	Technology (platform and websites)
	Attraction of new market segments
	Distribution
	Consolidation in the city
Hotel competitive position	Product differentiation
	Product quality
	Brand and image
	Trust
	Price
	Authenticity
External environment	Impacts and negative externalities
	Relationship with local government DMOs and the local tourism system
	Regulation
	Complementarity
No table footnotes are available	

We used coding to identify emerging themes based on topics previously identified in the academic literature on adaptability and firm behaviour, and grouping together words, sentences and paragraphs related to each topic to facilitate their classification. We conducted an inductive, iterative thematic analysis of the data, applying procedures based on grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). We conducted the analysis manually, without a preliminary categorisation objective, to allow the narrative to unfold in the search for reflections, emotions and statements that may express participants' attitudes towards adaptability. We applied an open coding procedure to the transcription and revision of the initial texts, thereby obtaining lower-level codes to establish a preliminary reflection relating the data to key research concepts. We gradually grouped the initial codes into broader categories in line with the principles of axial coding to relate concepts to one another (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Finally, we repeated the coding process several times with new data. Recoding, based on constant consultation of a code book, helped to eliminate or combine inadequate or redundant codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Pairs of independent researchers checked intercoder reliability by reviewing the codes and codifying each unit based on the previously identified categories while also allowing for new categories. The initial coding was not affected by later coding, hence we kept the categories initially identified. The process produced a consistent coding system with a very high, easily replicable level of analytical reliability.

We opted for narrative analysis as the basis for our study as it is particularly useful for contextualising links between categories and analytical themes (Mura & Sharif, 2017). The method identifies association patterns and facilitates interpretation of the underlying reasons for these patterns (Mura, 2015; Buzinde & Almeida, 2009). We used the hotel executives as a reference group representing certain norms and values through their shared narratives. Studying hoteliers' discourse on Airbnb using narrative analysis provides a practical view, through the strategic reaction to Airbnb and its perception as a competitor, of how hoteliers interpret key strategies in their business. In this context, our study offers a methodological perspective as the basis for confirming and continuing other quantitative empirical studies using an emic approach towards what hoteliers consider important with regard to Airbnb's impact on the hotel industry (Table 4).

Table 4. Profile of participants.

No.	Gender	Age	Position held	Hotel demand niche	Hotel type
1	Male	46	General Manager	Urban	Small chain
2	Male	35	Chief Growth Officer	Urban	Small chain
3	Male	34	General Manager	Urban	Small chain
4	Female	42	Sales Director	Urban	Small chain
5	Male	60	General Manager	Urban	Large national hotel chain
6	Female	46	General Manager	Business	Small chain
7	Female	38	Regional Operations Director	Urban	International hotel group
8	Male	56	General Manager	Vacation	Small chain
9	Male	38	General Manager	Urban	Small chain
10	Male	59	General Manager	Vacation	International hotel group
No table footnotes are available					

Results

Decoding Airbnb's competitiveness through hoteliers' viewpoints

In most interviews, hoteliers' initial, instinctive answer was that Airbnb and P2P platforms do not constitute genuine competition to their business or to the hotel sector in general. As the interviews continued, however, numerous signs pointed to recognition of this competition in relative terms, thereby qualifying the initial position. Despite the instinctive metanarrative in which Airbnb does not represent a disruptive risk for 4-star hotels, the hoteliers interviewed do, in fact, recognise certain impacts. Hoteliers adopt two specific positions on Airbnb, which we can use to decode their view of the company as a genuine competitor: the sceptical position, and the self-critical position. The different narratives emerging from this duality in hoteliers' discourse are discussed below.

Scepticism based on the superiority of the hotel product

The discourse of superiority is more noticeable among managers of large chains, given their vast advertising budgets, established reputation and brand image, and loyal clientele (Varma et al., 2016). Consequently, their strategic response adopts a passive, wait-and-watch approach—a finding supported by previous literature (Blal et al., 2018). This attitude is most prevalent in hotels with captive customers (such as business and corporate customers) and whose strength is associated with service quality and a differentiated product. These hoteliers share the opinion that Airbnb is incapable of competing with the standard of upscale hotel products. 'I cannot say Airbnb affects us as a company' [H9], or 'Airbnb is not a direct competitor for hotels' [H10] are typical model answers expressed by most interviewees. Two themes run through arguments that deny the problem. The first stresses the superior quality of service in the hotel product, given the potential inconvenience of tourist apartments for users. 'Someone going to a hotel is looking for the sort of quality in their holiday you will not find in an apartment, which is like living at home, but on holiday' [H7]. In the second, hoteliers further argue that the enormous difference between the two products means the target markets are separate. 'We do not think the platforms are competitors as our hotel focusses on a different customer profile (meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE), and business travel)' [H7]. These results bear resemblance to those of similar work on upscale hotels in Paris (Yoonjoung, Blal & Choi, 2019).

Hoteliers often point to the fact that prices have not fallen or, at worst, have remained stable as tangible evidence that Airbnb's value proposition does not affect their business model. For instance, one hotelier mentioned that 'Airbnb's service is very different from ours and customers seek different experiences, so they are not our direct competitor… nor does it generate price competition' [H7]. Or 'Another hotel might steal my market share but not Airbnb' .

The reaction of some executives to the strengths of tourist apartments and the authenticity of the experience reiterates the defensive and critical nature of their discourse. Some executives questioned the commitment to authenticity among Airbnb landlords: 'by contrast, once you are in a flat that is clean and have been given the keys, that is all the contact you get' [H9]. One executive stressed this point by graphically describing the degree of imposed and preconceived authenticity experienced by most Airbnb customers:

> *The concept of the tourist experience is highly relative… hotels are judged on absolutely everything we offer and do, while in the context of a tourist apartment, getting bitten by a rat is considered an authentic experience. [H7]*

Similar to the results obtained in other studies (Varma et al., 2016), there are two strategic adaptive responses built upon the superiority discourse. Urban hotel executives point out that hotels have better relations than Airbnb with tourist destinations. For instance, they consider rental apartments a permanent source of conflict with local residents. One of the hoteliers interviewed claimed 'I have never seen local residents protesting against the building of a hotel, but I have seen protests against tourist apartments' . Arguments based on economics and which recommend and promote the city also appear frequently in hoteliers' discourse, e.g. 'hotels make a bigger contribution to tourist destinations because they pay taxes and tourism levies while the platforms do not' [H10]. Lastly, hoteliers describe the potential for using their facilities to offer a service to the local neighbourhood as a very significant differentiator compared with tourist apartments. 'The main difference [between hotels and tourist apartments] is hotels' ability to influence the city environment. A hotel is a safe place 24 hours a day; it provides infrastructure that local residents can use, jobs, purchases from local suppliers, and so on' .

For urban executive and, especially, holiday hotels, regulation is the issue most frequently raised and is the subject of a complex narrative based on three characteristics: (1) the accusation that Airbnb harms the 'right to the city', (2) the importance of regulation as a solution, and (3) an ambivalent view of city governance, demanding action but recognising the difficulties in establishing effective measures in the short and medium term.

The narrative around Airbnb regulation argues that this is the only way of ensuring a level playing field in the market while guaranteeing the right to the city. Some hoteliers claim the platform causes the widespread urban problem of the unchecked spread of tourism, which creates tensions and tourism-phobia. 'The relationship between the local neighbourhood and the holiday apartment model generates more problems [than hotels], as they co-exist [in the neighbourhood], and the rhythm of holidays is very different from that of daily life' [H7].

Some hoteliers explain that potential problems around competition from Airbnb stem from its position outside the regulatory and legal framework that hotels abide by, and the absence of legal authorisation for some tourist apartments. 'The regulation of tourist apartments does not ensure quality of service, all that is required to obtain a licence is the certificate of occupancy, thereby reducing the requirements for and provision of real services' . Another hotelier saw the matter in terms of unfair competition. 'Illegal accommodation can operate and be marketed on the platforms. They are not subject to regulation and do not meet quality or health standards, nor do they pay taxes, which is unfair competition' . From another, more radical perspective, one hotelier saw regulation as a necessary tool to prevent future hotel investment in tourist apartments and flats triggered by a continuing lack of protection from unfair competition and price-cutting:

> *Family hotels, more than large chains, could start redirecting their investment towards acquiring four or five unlicensed apartments not included in the government circuit and penalty system. There is a danger of small owners grouping together to invest in non-legalised accommodation, displacing their interest from their own hotel business. [H8]*

These findings are consistent with similar studies highlighting hoteliers' feelings about unfair competition from Airbnb rentals, which has been a common critical refrain from the industry (Guttentag, 2017; Alrawadieh et al., 2020).

Airbnb as a lesson to learn from and a source of innovation

This discourse is fuelled by urban hotels with a highly innovative culture and organisational capacity, such as family-run hotels where innovation can be transmitted easily from executives to hotel team managers and workers, and vice versa. Executives recognise Airbnb's innovative capacity and influence on the hotel industry—a pattern supported by the academic literature (Akbar & Tracogna, 2018; Blal et al., 2018). This discourse contains two narratives: self-criticism around the lack of reaction, and implicit recognition of the impact on the hotel industry. For instance, one hotelier stated that the Airbnb model is a source of inspiration. 'It has made us

take notice of the look and feel created by its website, it is proving to be a source of inspiration for changing hotel websites' . Another hotelier said 'Airbnb has helped the hotel industry discover the existence and potential value of a strong market for apartments in Barcelona among a segment with medium-high purchasing power, which hoteliers had never before considered a business opportunity' . They recognise that interest in some demand segments has waned or might be substituted in the future, as hotels have lacked flexibility and speed in adapting to these changes:

> *Although the presence of platforms has not led to cancellations, it does make us think further into the future than we have been doing. In the medium term, there could well be a major diversion of demand to this type of accommodation [marketed by Airbnb]. [H7]*

Some hoteliers take a very different position, implicitly recognising Airbnb as a competitor that outperforms the hotel industry in the provision of some experience dimensions (Mody, Suess & Letho, 2017). This discourse stresses the need for a range of specific improvements which may be classified into two types: internal improvement processes, and adapting or incorporating processes from the sharing economy to compete more effectively with Airbnb. This is consistent with other studies that show that the expansion of the peer-to-peer market for tourism accommodation in Barcelona has negatively affected hotel occupancy and economic returns, irrespective of the type of hotel, suggesting that Airbnb accommodation is, to some degree, a substitute for hotel accommodation (Benítez, 2019).

Unlike in superiority discourses, the perception of Airbnb as a uniform structure is also questioned here. Airbnb is a multifaceted structure providing multiple value propositions for guests, whether they are travelling for business or for pleasure, and its listings go beyond traditional home-sharing. The narrative recognises the diversification of the accommodation supply offered by Airbnb (including rooms in boutique hotels, inns and bed and breakfasts, as well as traditional holiday rentals, holiday homes, luxury villas and entire apartment complexes) (Ting, 2018). It also stresses Airbnb's capacity to attract hosts and owners with very different motivations, i.e. professionals and non-professionals (Farmaki; Stergiou & Kaniadakis, 2019). Non-professionals can be split into multiple segments such as capitalists, befrienders, ethicists, and economic or social hosts (Sweeney & Lynch, 2009; Hardy & Dolnicar, 2018).

Airbnb as a complementary business model

As other studies suggest (Richard & Cleveland, 2016), some hoteliers see an opportunity in adapting elements of the platform business model for hotels and collaborating with P2P platforms. One hotel manager states:

> *The hotel sector has a great capacity to adapt. Of particular interest are those hoteliers who see an opportunity for growth, groups such as Accord and HOTUSA have bought their own platforms and want to enter the business as an opportunity for growth and overcoming restrictive regulations.*

Moving towards mixed models represents an opportunity to increase the number of rooms, take advantage of new demand generated by Airbnb and even ease the excessive regulatory burden on the hotel industry. Conceptually, hotel rooms and rental apartments are the same product, but hotels can improve the product by adding their own services. This point contradicts one of the main arguments for superiority, which claims that the products are not comparable and do not offer the same services. However, the two business models can complement each other. 'In the future, I see nothing wrong with entering the sharing economy with them [platforms such as Airbnb], as it would help us reach more market segments' . Moreover, the value added by apartments would be greater with the benefit of hoteliers' know-how.

Similar studies (Richard, 2016) concur that hoteliers' adaptive response is based on proposals for adapting to the sharing economy business model by participating in distribution platforms through mixed models. 'There are mixed professional models that I think are valid, such as BeMate, which offers licensed tourist apartments whose use is shared with local residents, or hotels such as Derbi Hotels which have whole buildings as homes for tourist use' . Collaboration proposals are also a means of attracting market segments:

> *If we have similar clientele who we are finding difficult to attract, I think collaboration is fine, as some hoteliers do when they market their rooms on Airbnb. Future collaboration could be positive as it could help us sell our currently unsuccessful products more effectively.*

Discussion

Although the dominant attitude among hoteliers is one of scepticism, we can extract three distinctive discourses from the narratives explored above: denying the impact of Airbnb and considering it illegitimate, concern and self-criticism, and adaptation to the new competitive environment. Hoteliers' strategic responses differ depending on the hotel type, which suggests different approaches to the urban environment where the hotels are located. The main discourse on Airbnb is based on a narrative of domination and superiority owing to a higher-quality service, and differentiation of the product and target customers. The response to Airbnb in this case is to maintain the same business model and establish direct confrontation by demanding greater regulation. However, the strategy produces a number of contradictions in the context of Barcelona, because it is difficult to demand more action and efficiency from local government in a city that is already leading the effort to control the growth of tourism (Donaire et al., 2019). Furthermore, implementing measures that limit the offer represents a significant technical challenge (Nieuwland & van Melik, 2020). Hoteliers' argument that Airbnb lacks legitimacy is based on the view that tourist apartments are an urban problem that affects relations with local residents and accelerates gentrification. This generates further debate around the difficulty in isolating the effects of Airbnb from other, more general tourism-related processes where hotels might also be involved (Ioannides et al., 2019). Confidence in the hotel product and brand, coupled with the period of growth in visitors to the city at the time of the interviews, suggests there is room for everyone. According to this discourse, competition from Airbnb is only in terms of beds and is covered by a dynamic demand,

while the price difference will improve with new non-central locations, and loyal markets (such as business tourism) will be maintained. This view explains why, unlike in other cities, most Barcelona hoteliers are not considering using the potential benefits of sharing platforms as an opportunity to broaden their business model (Akbar & Tracogna, 2018; Dogru et al., 2019).

The divergent lines of discourse around Airbnb recognise its disruptive potential. Hoteliers accept their inferiority when it comes to price competition, attracting families and younger segments, and customers' perceptions of authenticity. The strategic response from this self-critical discourse is proactive. There is criticism of hotel accommodation as a commodity compared with Airbnb's ability to generate a close host-guest relationship. As other studies show, the strategic response arising from this discourse proposes creating memorable experiences (Mody et al., 2017), promoting a sense of belonging to the hotel through sharing spaces and opening up the facilities to local residents (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016), personalising spaces to create more authentic experiences, reducing routine tasks to free up staff time for personal customer care, and switching attention from the hotel room to the public space (Richard, 2017).

There is a third perspective that sits between the two positions described above (dominant and divergent) and proposes a negotiated future with Airbnb. In the context of a monopolistic or deregulated free market, sharing economy accommodation represents an opportunity to recover markets, attract new ones and diversify risk in light of the arrival of Airbnb. This discourse mixes superiority and self-critical narratives and is primarily based on adapting the business model at a key moment, plus the fact that hoteliers would provide a better service for tourist apartments while attracting market segments that mainly opt for these. The strategic response mainly involves acquiring apartments or participating in platforms as a distribution channel. However, it also suggests bringing the skills and competencies of hotel management to technological platforms to add value (Akbar & Tracogna, 2018).

From a local tourism perspective, our study has identified 'sense of place' as a hotel strategy that seeks to match tourist accommodation to the local urban identity and impact the local neighbourhood. Sense of place is expressed when comparing hotels' ability to integrate into and become part of the city's identity to the external, usurping and problematic nature of Airbnb. The narrative strategy tends to identify hotels as a part of the local infrastructure with the ability to offer a number of 24-hour services to local residents (such as courier package deliveries and, more recently, hospital beds during the COVID-19 outbreak) and help meet the needs of the city by opening up its spaces and facilities (restaurants and terraces, swimming pools and more) to the general public. Hoteliers defend their strategic responses as broadening the customer experience at the destination, starting and finishing at the hotel itself, which is considered an integrative part of the urban public space.

Our research expands knowledge of the strategic view that the 4-star hotel sector has of Airbnb. Hoteliers combine a discourse of superiority with their recognition of Airbnb as a competitor. This must be placed in the context of a mature destination where complementarity is increasingly giving way to competition. The discourse suggests that hotels will progressively adopt strategic adaptive responses to deal with the situation. Our study has also detected differences in the perception of Airbnb as a competitor based on hotel type and size, and identified the influence that a potential adaptive response and differentiation strategies may have on the urban tourism model (see Table 5). Hoteliers highlight the need to lobby for regulation to reduce and limit the illegal short-term rentals offer.

Table 5. Factors explaining the perception of Airbnb as a competitor for upscale hotels.

Hotel type	Discursive categories	
	Competitiveness and disruption	External environment
Large chains	Discourse based on product superiority. Airbnb is not considered a real competitor but a negative externality for the local community	Lobbying and hotel differentiation as a strategy aimed to create an urban sense of place
Holiday/vacation	Discourse is based on lobbying and external regulation. Airbnb is associated with unfair competition, but they are open to collaborating with P2P platforms	Airbnb unfair competition threatens target markets. Family-owned chains can be converted into apartments
Urban hotels	Discourse based on innovation and continuous change in the hotel sector. Airbnb is not considered a full competitor as the growth in tourist arrivals compensates for an increase in accommodation volume,	Quality is the primary strategy. Contribution to the city's 'experiencescape' and local community approach.
No table footnotes are available		

In that regard, hoteliers and particularly large chains claim to be 'citizens' and position themselves as a product rooted in Barcelona, with the capacity to spread its economic impact throughout the city and provide urban services for residents (surveillance and security, catering, school routes, etc.). Paradoxically, we can assimilate hoteliers' discourse of strong opposition to Airbnb's impacts on the city to that of urban social movements, insofar as hoteliers identify the platform as being responsible for housing problems in the most touristic neighbourhoods and for increased tourism pressure in peripheral areas of the city.

Urban hotel managers in particular lead the discourse on the importance of localness as a dimension of the hospitality experience and to differentiate themselves and deliver experiences that immerse guests in local communities (Oates, 2015; Mody et al., 2017). The discourse centres around adaptive reuse of hotel facilities to create better local connections, enhance the guest experience (restaurants, co-working spaces, etc.) and integrate tourists and local residents. This strategy fosters a sense of authenticity and *communitas*; an evolving feeling of communion with friends, family and strangers. It also tries to create short-lived emotional bonds built through hospitality transactions which are active and immersive, and stresses the socially transformative power of travel. Compare this with Airbnb's 'Belong Anywhere' strategy centred around the sense of community and belonging that its travellers seek (Mody, Suess & Letho, 2017). Urban hotels, which see service quality as their strength, stress the need to compete by improving the urban 'experiencescape', providing quality service, enabling innovation and heightening the 'sense of place' in hotel facilities. Holiday hotels, by contrast, view regulation as a survival strategy, as they are more affected by illegal accommodation and unfair competition. Such holiday-oriented hotels see the purchase of property as an opportunity to diversify and improve competitiveness, since they perceive Airbnb as a threat.

This study has a number of limitations due to the specific, exploratory nature of the research and the difficulty in comparing results from similar studies. Any conclusions and generalisations drawn from the results should therefore be treated with caution. Furthermore, lack of a clear definition of the concept of disruptive innovation adds an element of subjectivity which could hinder participants' conceptual identification, since each individual may perceive and interpret disruption differently. The emic approach aims to minimise this obstacle, but further case studies are nonetheless required. Similarly, it is difficult to find an appropriate metric for the disruptive nature of P2P platforms and their impact on hotel performance when impacts are perceived and therefore subjective. Our study detects differences in the adaptive response based on personal and sociocultural positions, especially among younger, newly trained executives who stress innovation as a means of competing with Airbnb. However, the extent to which these aspects influence decision-making is difficult to assess, since the results of the study are partial and more research in this area is required. It will also be necessary to analyse changes in hoteliers' perception of Airbnb in a post-pandemic scenario. Lockdown restrictions, strict health measures and the dramatic fall in tourist arrivals to the city has undoubtedly changed the competitive field. Lastly, new specific studies may reveal whether or not residents share hoteliers' perception when evaluating the impacts of Airbnb on quality of life in the city.

Conclusions

This study has identified key attributes that affect managers' perception of peer-to-peer platforms as competitors. We believe our study provides a framework and theoretical underpinning for advancing our understanding of the adaptive response by upscale hotels. Our study also provides a novel perspective on the role of Airbnb from an emic perspective. Though we identified a dominant sceptical narrative in hoteliers' discourse, this does not obscure other, self-critical narratives based on the different adaptive responses. Lastly, we wish to mention a number of theoretical and practical implications arising from our research. The study broadens knowledge of how Airbnb has become part of urban tourism. Hoteliers' perception of Airbnb is that it is built on global phenomena such as city touristification. Their concerns go beyond the parameters of the hotel business and relate to the response to residents' concerns regarding overtourism. This illustrates the existence of a widespread discourse among hoteliers in cities suffering from tourism overrun, and the need for strategies that integrate hotels into the public space and their local neighbourhood to combat Airbnb's urban model. It also suggests a need for new discursive alliances with local governments and the local community.

Hoteliers use 'locality' in their discourse, identifying local values with hotels and global threats with Airbnb. The locality argument is used at different scales. At the global scale, hoteliers base their merits on the decades-long construction of the city's successful international tourism image. At the local scale, hoteliers attempt to influence tourism governance in the city by lobbying and by associating the emergence and rise of Airbnb with the increase in different social and economic impacts perceived more sharply by residents (gentrification, the formation of international tourist enclaves or the rise in housing prices). At the neighbourhood scale, hoteliers' discourse highlights the role of hotels as complementary urban services which directly benefit residents and strengthen their place attachment.

Our contribution paves the way for new lines of research to provide a fuller understanding of hotels' adaptive response based on sustainability criteria. There is also the matter of how to redesign the hotel model to effectively cater for local residents' needs and provide urban elements that are useful to the city.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

References

Ajuntament de Barcelona. (2020). *Barcelona 2019. Informe de l'activitat turística*. Observatori del turisme de Barcelona.

Akbar, Y., & Tracogna, A. (2018). The sharing economy and the future of the hotel industry: Transaction cost theory and platform economies. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *71*, 91–101. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.12.004

Alrawadieh, Z., Guttentag, D., Aydogan Cifci, M., & Cetin, G. (2020). Budget and midrange hotel managers' perceptions of and responses to Airbnb: Evidence from Istanbul. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *32*(2), 588–604. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-01-2019-0015

Arias, A., & Quaglieri, A. (2016). Unravelling Airbnb: Urban perspectives from Barcelona. In P. Russo & G. Richards (Eds.), *Reinventing the local in tourism: Producing, consuming and negotiating place* (pp. 209–228). Channel View Publications.

Benítez, B. (2019). Is Airbnb bad for hotels? *Current Issues in Tourism*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2019.1646226

Blal, I., Singal, M., & Templin, J. (2018). Airbnb's effect on hotel sales growth. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *73*, 85–92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.02.006

Bower, J., & Christensen, C. (2015). Disruptive technologies: Catching the wave. Harvard Business Review. *January-February 1995*.

Brooker, E., & Joppe, M. (2014). Developing a tourism innovation typology: Leveraging liminal insights. *Journal of Travel Research*, *53*(4), 500–508.

https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513497839

Buzinde, C., & Almeida, C. (2009). Interpreting slavery tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *36*(3), 439–458. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2009.02.003   Christensen, C., Raynor, M., & McDonald, R. (2015). What is disruptive innovation? *Harvard Business Review*.

Cohen, E. (1979). Rethinking the sociology of tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *6*(1), 18–35. https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(79)90092-6

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research*. Sage Publications.

Cheng, M. (2016). Sharing economy: A review and agenda for future research. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *57*, 60–70. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2016.06.003

Cocola, A., & López, A. (2020). Transnational gentrification, tourism and the formation of 'foreign only' enclaves in Barcelona. *Urban Studies*, *57*(15), 3025–3043. https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098020916111

Delgado, J. T. (2017). "Los alquileres turísticos en Barcelona se han multiplicado por 20 en cinco años". El independiente. Retrieved October 2021. https://www.elindependiente.com/economia/2017/08/08/la-oferta-alquileres-turisticos-barcelona-se-ha-multiplicado-20-cinco-anos/

Dogru, T., Mody, M., & Suess, C. (2019). Adding evidence to the debate: Quantifying Airbnb's disruptive impact on ten key hotel markets. *Tourism Management*, *72*, 27–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.11.008

Dogru, T., Mody, M., Line, N., Suess, C., Hanks, L., & Bonn, M. (2020). Investigating the whole picture: Comparing the effects of Airbnb supply and hotel supply on hotel performance across the United States. *Tourism Management*, *79*, 104094. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2020.104094

Donaire Benito, J. A., Zerva, K., Palou i Rubio, S., & Blasco, D. (2019). Do not cross the line: Planning the limits of tourism in Barcelona. *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles*, *83*(83), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.21138/bage.2835

Fang, B., Ye, Q., & Law, R. (2016). Effect of sharing economy on tourism industry employment. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *57*, 264–267. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2015.11.018

Farmaki, A., Stergiou, D., & Kaniadakis, A. (2019). Self-perceptions of Airbnb hosts' responsibility: a moral identity perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2019.1707216

Garay, L., Wilson, J., & Morales, S. (2020). Tweeting the right to the city: digital protest and resistances surrounding the Airbnb effect. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *20*(3), 246–267. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2020.1772867

Garcia-López, M.-À., Jofre-Monseny, J., Martínez-Mazza, R., & Segú, M. (2020). Do short-term rental platforms affect housing markets? Evidence from Airbnb in Barcelona. *Journal of Urban Economics*, *119*, 103278. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2020.103278

Ginindza, S., & Tichaawa, T. M. (2019). The impact of sharing accommodation on the hotel occupancy rate in the kingdom of Swaziland. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *22*(16), 1975–1991. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2017.1408061

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Transaction Publishers.

Gomezelj, D. O. (2016). A systematic review of research on innovation in hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *28*(3), 516–558. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2014-0510

Gutiérrez, J., García-Palomares, J. C., Romanillos, G., & Salas-Olmedo, M. H. (2017). The eruption of Airbnb in tourist cities: Comparing spatial patterns of hotels and peer-to-peer accommodation in Barcelona. *Tourism Management*, *62*, 278–291. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.05.003

Guttentag, D. (2015). Airbnb: disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *18*(12), 1192–1217. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2013.827159

Guttentag, D. (2017). Regulating innovation in the collaborative economy: an examination of Airbnb's early legal issues. In D. Dredge & S. Gymóthy (Eds.) *Collaborative economy and tourism perspectives: politics, policies and prospects* (pp. 97–128). Springer.

Guttentag, D., & Smith, L. J. (2017). Assessing Airbnb as a disruptive innovation relative to hotels: Substitution and comparative performance expectations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *64*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.02.003

Hall, S. (1975). Introduction. In A. Smith (Ed.). *Paper voices: The popular press and social change 1935-1965* (pp. 11–24). Chatto and Windus.

Hajibaba, H., & Dolnicar, S. (2017). Substitutable by peer-to-peer accommodation networks? *Annals of Tourism Research*, *66*, 185–188. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2017.05.013

Hardy, A., & Dolnicar, S. (2018). Networks and hosts: A love-hate relationship. In S. Dolnicar (Ed.). *Peer-to-peer accommodation networks: pushing the boundaries*. Goodfellow Publishers. 182–193. https://doi.org/10.23912/9781911396512-3614

Heo, C. Y., Blal, I., & Choi, M. (2019). What is happening in Paris? Airbnb, hotels, and the Parisian market: A case study. *Tourism Management*, *70*, 78–88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.04.003

Ioannides, D., Röslmaier, M., & Van der Zee, E. (2019). Airbnb as an instigator of 'tourism bubble' expansion in Utrecht's Lombok neighbourhood. *Tourism Geographies*, *21*(5), 822–840. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2018.1454505

Koh, E., & King, B. (2017). Accommodating the sharing revolution: a qualitative evolution of the impact of Airbnb on Singapore's budget hotels. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *42*(4), 409–421. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2017.1314413

López Palomeque, F. (2015). Barcelona de ciudad con turismo a ciudad turística. Notas sobre un proceso complejo inacabado. *Documents D'Anàlisi Geogràfica*, *61*(3), 483–506. https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/dag.296

Lladós, J., Massagué, A., & Rodríguez, I. (2020). Understanding Peer-to-Peer, Two-Sided Digital Marketplaces: Pricing Lessons from Airbnb in Barcelona. *Sustainability*, *121*(3), 5229. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12135229

Martin, C. J. (2016). The sharing economy: A pathway to sustainability or a nightmarish form of neoliberal capitalism? *Ecological Economics*, *121*, 149–159. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2015.11.027

Meged, J., & Zillinger, M. (2018). Disruptive network innovation in free guided tours. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *18*(3), 303–318. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2018.1497317

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Sage Publications.

Mody, M., Suess, C., & Lehto, X. (2017). The accommodation experiencescape: a comparative assessment of hotels and Airbnb. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *29*(9), 2377–2404. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2016-0501

Mody, M., Woosnam, K. M., Suess, C., & Dogru, T. (2020). Hapless victims or empowered citizens? Understanding residents' attitudes towards Airbnb using Weber's Theory of Rationality and Foucauldian concepts. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1–23. 10.1080/09669582.2020.1834567.

Mura, P., & Sharif, S. (2017). Narrative analysis in tourism: a critical review. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *17*(2), 194–207. https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250.2016.1227276

Nieuwland, S., & van Melik, R. (2020). Regulating Airbnb: how cities deal with perceived negative externalities of short-term rentals. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *23*(7), 811–825. https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2018.1504899

Novy, J., & Colomb, C. (2019). Urban Tourism as a Source of Contention and Social Mobilisations: A Critical Review. *Tourism Planning & Development*, *16*(4), 358–375. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2019.1577293

Oates, G. (2015). Evolution of Local in Hospitality in 2015, Retrieved 13 October 2021: https://research.skift.com/report/evolution-of-local-in-hospitality-in-2015/

Oskam, J., & Boswijk, A. (2016). Airbnb: the future of network hospitality businesses. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, *2*(1), 22–42. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-11-2015-0048

Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Sage Publishers.

Pike, K. L. (1967). *Language in relation to a unified theory of structure of human behavior*. Mouton.

ReformBnB. (2019). *Guidelines ReformBnB Barcelona*. Barcelona.

Richard, B. (2017). Hotel chains: survival strategies for a dynamic future. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, *3*(1), 56–65. https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-06--2016-0018

Richard, B., & Cleveland, S. (2016). The future of hotel chains: branded marketplaces driven by the sharing economy. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, *22*(3), 239–248. https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766715623827

Schmidt, G., & Druehl, C. (2008). When Is a Disruptive Innovation Disruptive? *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, *25*(4), 347–369. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5885.2008.00306.x

Sedlacek, N. (2016). Analysis, B.A The sharing economy: does Airbnb pose a threat to hotels and guest houses in the Czech Republic? dissertation, Empire State College.

Suess, C., Woosnam, K. M., & Erul, E. (2020). Stranger-danger? Understanding the moderating effects of children in the household on non-hosting residents' emotional solidarity with Airbnb visitors, feeling safe, and support for Airbnb. *Tourism Management*, *77*, 103952. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.103952

Sweeney, M., & Lynch, P. (2009). Classifying commercial home hosts based on their relationships to the home. *Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development*, *6*(2), 159–170. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790530902981563

Ting, D. (2018). *Skift Forum Europe Preview: Airbnb's Jeroen Merchiers on the Battle with Booking*. Retrieved on October 15 2021: https://skift.com/2018/04/23/skift-forum-europe-preview-airbnbs-jeroen-merchiers-on-the-battle-with-booking

Val, D. (2021) . No todo vale en una ciudad como Barcelona, que apuesta por el turismo de calidad. *Tecnohotel*, 15. Retrieved 17 October 2021. https://tecnohotelnews.com/?p=66475? utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=thnews20211014&mc_cid=3614df6d44&mc_eid=9cd4cef005&key_user=5ff2f6da37ac454ef66e651776248f 5

Varma, A., Jukic, N., Pestek, A., Shultz, C. J., & Nestorov, S. (2016). Airbnb: exciting innovation or passing fad? *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *20*, 228–237. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2016.09.002

Wachsmuth, D., & Weisler, A. (2018). Airbnb and the rent gap: Gentrification through the sharing economy. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, *50*(6), 1147–1170. https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X18778038

Wang, D., & Nicolau, J. L. (2017). Price determinants of sharing economy-based accommodation rental: A study of listings from 33 cities on Airbnb . *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *62*, 120–131. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2016.12.007

Williams, C., & Horodnic, I. (2017). Regulating the sharing economy to prevent the growth of the informal sector in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *29*(9), 2261–2278. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-08-2016-0431

Wilson, J., Garay, L., & Morales, S. (2022) . Politicising platform-mediated tourism rentals in the digital sphere: Airbnb in Madrid and Barcelona. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *30*(5), 1080–1101. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1866585

Yeager, E. P., Boley, B. B., Woosnam, K. M., & Green, G. T. (2020) . Modeling Residents' Attitudes toward Short-term Vacation Rentals . *Journal of Travel Research*, *59*(6), 955–974. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287519870255

Zervas, G., Proserpio, D., & Byers, J. W. (2017). The Rise of the Sharing Economy: Estimating the Impact of Airbnb on the Hotel Industry. *Journal of Marketing Research*, *54*(5), 687–705. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmr.15.0204