



Impact of Airbnb in a residential area: A Qualitative Study of Plaza de Joanic and Poble-sec in Barcelona

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of Airbnb in residential areas by identifying the factors which have affected two residential areas of Barcelona. Based on a holistic approach of three stakeholders (tourists, Airbnb host and residents), the research study has evinced multiple perspectives of the impact of Airbnb, most notable was the positive contribution made by the sharing business and the negative effects of gentrification. The study has also found a correlation between tourist growth and residential sentiment which is in accordance with Doxey's index. The mix semi-structured and non-directive interviews have also revealed the intrinsic relationship between Airbnb host and guest which plays a pivotal part of the sharing experience which is more personal as to a hotel. In conclusion, each stakeholder has different views and interpretations of Airbnb depending on their benefits and their involvement in the tourist system.

Keywords: *Sharing economy, disruptive innovation, Airbnb, growth, qualitative, stakeholders, gentrification, and tourist system*



Introduction

Yi Li (2017) confers that the increase in mass tourism consumption has become ubiquitous (pg. 13) in polycentric cities such as London, Paris and Barcelona with governments competing to attract tourist to increase revenue (Newman 2009) or as Fainstein and Gladstone (1999) call ‘serial reproduction’. As tourist’s places become very similar, a new sub-sector has emerged called ‘*off the beaten track*’ where tourists wander to non-tourist’s areas for a more authentic experience (Maitland 2013, pg. 12). When tourists travel to other destinations, they inadvertently bring tourists habits, however the impact it has in a community is ambiguous with the Guardian (2017) stating tourists in local area is ‘killing neighbourhoods’ with residents blaming the nascent of peer to peer (P2P) technology such as Airbnb.

Airbnb allows host to share their idle asset through the internet; founded in August 2008 in California (Hong and Lee 2018), the business has become a phenomenon over the past decade. However, the light business model has garnered bad publicity, in terms of regulation, policy, illegal renting and monopoly. Much research has been done into the disruptive innovation (Guttentag and Smith 201, pg. 3) such as the concept of sharing (Lutz and Newlands 2018; Sutherland and Jarrahi 2018; and Cheng 2016) and the adverse effects (cf. Guttentag 2015; and Zervas et al. 2014) however not much attention has been given into the impacts of Airbnb through the perspective of the stakeholders. Following on the limitations of previous literature of the sharing economy (Fang et al. 2015; Guttentag & Smith 2017; Chen & Chan 2018; & Cheng & Foley 2018), this research will investigate the impact of Airbnb in residential areas through the perspective of tourists, Airbnb host and residents. The research will use qualitative approach content analysis and Doxey’s irredex (1975).

Globalisation has penetrated the mass market of tourism, making holidays cheaper for even the impecunious person. Consequently, world cities such as Barcelona are vying for tourists (Yi Si and Bouchon 2017, pg. 13) with Maitland (2013) stressing the importance of tourism as many nations infrastructure are oriented towards the industry. Urban tourism is at the forefront of tourism generation (Harvey 1999) however, such polarity has caused a perpetual polycentric tourism



product (Maitland and Newman 2009). Such tourism novelty has made some tourist travel beyond the tourist district and into neighbourhoods hence the term ‘off the beaten track’.

Research into tourism cities and development has been approached by many academics (see Law 1993; Page 1995 & Chawla 2006), however research into the backstage of tourism has been scant. Richard and Wilson (2007) did however cultivate the experience of tourist’s in non-tourist’s district and their motives for travelling, with inclination towards authenticity, and fascination (pg. 82), yet their motivation towards accommodation, and their consequent implication in a community was not discussed at times (cf. Wang 1999; Maitland 2013; & Yi Li 2017).

In a report by The Independent (2017), resident’s attitudes towards tourists has waned in recent years as they blame them for their social and economic discontent. Furthermore, a survey conducted by Barcelona council protrudes tourism to be the second highest problem after unemployment (ibid). The maxim suggests hostile relationship between host and guest, however many countries thwart more tourism problems and adverse effects with relationship less hostile. understanding the relationship between the stakeholders will improve the mechanism of the underlying problem then just surveying with no expansion towards the kinetics behind the answer (hence for qualitative approach in research). Dissension and negative assumption towards tourists led many to assume the fundamental motivator is the emergence of sharing economy (SE) (Cupers 2005).

The sharing economy has transformed the accommodation sector with exponential growth especially in Barcelona, with the industry expected to grow to \$335bn by 2025. Airbnb is one of the most popular SE in the world, helped by the network hospitality (NH) which is the social exchange and networking of accommodations (Kaplan & Nadler 2015) and the user-host aspect of sharing (Kim et al. 2015; Kraker et al. 2016; & Edelman et al. 2017).

Research aim:

To explore the implications induced by Airbnb from a holistic standpoint in a residential environment in Barcelona



Research Objectives:

1. To evaluate contemporary literature about Airbnb;
2. To evaluate tourism impacts pertaining from the perspective of Airbnb host in Barcelona;
3. To critically explore social and cultural impacts of Airbnb upon the residents in Barcelona;
4. To explore the motivational factors of tourists booking Airbnb in non-tourist locations

Literature review

Airbnb

‘Airbed and breakfast’ aptly named Airbnb was founded in August 2008 in San Francisco, California (Hong & Lee 2018, pg. 284). The business start-up started making profit from 2016 (Lutz and Newlands 2018) and is now a common theme for young travellers to explore the new form of accommodation as to hotels. Airbnb uses idle assets of property owners to monetise their space, in the opinion of Blal et al. (2018, pg. 86), the firm uses asset light business model denoting the firm to expand quicker compared to the hotel sector. The firm collects a fee from both host and guest of up-to 3 per cent while some guest is charged between 5-10 per cent depending on length of reservation (Hong and Lee 2018). Airbnb also do not own any of the properties which allows the business to focus primarily on services and host-guest relationship (P2P) with the firm only generating revenue through charges and fees from users (ibid.). San Francisco was the first city where Airbnb was used, studies found 72 per cent of listings were situated outside of prime locations or hotel/tourist places; further, the research also evinced Airbnb generated \$56m in local spending (ibid.) and supported 430 jobs (Airbnb 2018). The study concluded Airbnb guest spend \$1, 0145 and visit San Francisco for 5.5 days compared to hotel, where guest stay for only 3.5 days and spend \$840 (ibid.). In Barcelona, study found Airbnb generated \$175m in economic activity in 2014 and supported more than 4,000 jobs (Airbnb 2018). Conforming to Chen and Chang (2018), Airbnb has been appealing to backpackers, and independent travellers for their inexpensive accommodation however, much has changed in a decade as many tourists are more inclined to try Airbnb for its unique appeal and experience which are not pairable to trivalent locations (tourist



areas, hotels, and commodified areas). The appeal of Airbnb is not just its unique concept of using unfacilitated idle assets but the array of different accommodation types which stretch from three-thousand castles to fourteen-hundred tree houses (IPM 2018) that can be accessed through an app. The nascent of web 2.0 has made tourism industry more efficient and bought the emergence of collaborative consumption (CC) where users go online to provide a service to another user through an intermediary site (Chen and Chang 2018) such as eBay, Expedia, and Airbnb. As the tide of technology revolutionises the tourism sector, the effects of Airbnb have been of much attention to academics, focusing on the concept of sharing (Lutz and Newlands 2018; Sutherland and Jarrahi 2018; Cheng 2016; and Mehmed 2016) with many academics further investigating solely on the parallel benefits (Karakas 2017; and Lampinen and Cheshire 2016) and adverse effects of Airbnb (cf. Guttentag 2015; and Zervas et al. 2014). As the perpetual development of Airbnb supersede hotels with low star-ratings (one and two stars), studies have been published into the regulatory system into Airbnb (Hong & Lee 2018; Hong and Lee 2017; Childers 2017; Moylan 2016; Sundararajan 2016; Kaplan and Nadler 2015). *In contrast however, there has been a lack of studies into the impacts of Airbnb in residential areas from various viewpoints (host, guest and residents).* Yi Li and Bouchon 2017; Maitland 2013; Wang 1999; Pearce and Moscardo 1986 have explored the many concepts of tourism off the beaten track, though much of its research are defined lapsed, this is because of the movement of new technology and network hospitality (NH) which is defined as online social networking and exchange of accommodation such as Airbnb and Tujia (see Yi Li and Bouchon 2017, pg. 14). Such technology had profound effect in tourism and in residential areas, especially micro entrepreneurs.

Research Methodology

In philosophy, how knowledge is acquired and the process of discovering this new found-knowledge is considered subjective (Scotland 2012, pg. 9), Carrie Williams (2007) (Greenburg 2010, pg. 4).In the field of tourism, research has changed the dynamics of how knowledge is gathered, as erudition into higher education in tourism studies has increased lateral-thinking to infer critical discourse. However, Franklin and Crag (2001) consort with the notion that tourism researchers have the tendency to follow a template thus questioning the epistemological issues



current in social science research in tourism (Cohen et al. 2007); (Phillimore & Goodson 2004);(Denzin & Lincoln (1998, pg. 18) (Onwuegbuzie and Leech ,2005).

This research followed the inductive approach as it has already been applied in the field of tourism, especially in the research in to the perception of the subject. Both inductive and deductive approach have advantages and disadvantages, however the abductive approach focuses to stem the lacuna left from the two approaches(Woo et al. (2017) expound abduction is the explanation and the development of theories (pg. 257) deducing the theoretical reason behind a phenomenon. As such, the three channels for academic research contribute towards an academic discipline in their unique way; in summation, induction/exploratory to discover new knowledge, abduction/explanatory sought feasible explanation and theories and deduction/conformity validate a hypothesis. This research therefor followed the hermeneutic approach as a research method as the paradigm has been explored in social science and contemporary research.

This research used both unstructured and semi-structured interviews of tourist stakeholders as conducted by previous similar research in the field (e.g. Hingtgen et al. (2015). The semi structured interview allowed the interviewer to probe the main questions to fulfil the objectives requires before probing through the non-directive technique to explore different avenues and perspective of the participants.

Twelve interviews were conducted in two Barcelona locations in seven days: four Airbnb hosts, four tourists and four residents, six from each destination (i.e. Plaza de Joanic and Poble Sec). The interviews with Airbnb host took place in their residents, interviews with tourist took place in a café and residents in their homes. Interviews took place in the stakeholder's own environment, this allowed the interviewee to feel more comfortable and at ease; the interviewer asked general questions before selective probing. Questions for each stakeholder differed in terms of relevance and fulfilling the objectives for this research.

The research used both primary data for objective two, three and four and secondary data for objective one, primary source was collected through interviews in Barcelona of tourists in residential areas, the residents and the Airbnb hosts. Experimental research or descriptive research

such as surveys which can be obtained through either observation or through communication (Kothari 2004, pg. 95).

This research used purposive sampling approach as the technique had been implemented in the field before with success; furthermore, the boundaries and limitation makes the sampling technique feasible to implement in a foreign land.

Content analysis was conducted by three coders using triangulation of results. The technique allowed for a more definitive answer and remove any discrepancies; it also provided for a more unbiased and unobtrusive analysis of a subject (Chen et al. 2018, pg. 60). Furthermore, content analysis as a viable tool in tourism research, especially for sub-fields or niche sub-sectors that are not mainstream (ibid. pg. 59-60); empirical research published in journals is considered ‘a lens into a research direction’ (see Xiao and Smith 2006, pg. 502).

Analysis and interpretation of the result

Table 1 Result of content analysis

Themes	Sub-Themes	Frequency
Social and economical	Good social impact of tourism within both neighbourhoods;	25
	economic impact of tourists is welcomed;	20
	Airbnb influence	20
	terrorism effected tourism socially and economically;	9
	development of area improved due to tourist’s activity;	16
	increase of business;	12
	neighbourhoods more mixed;	15

	resident's relationship with tourists is good;	17
Cultural impact	Demonstration effect; homogenisation;	6
	negative influence of tourism amongst the younger generation;	9
	youth alcohol problem deduced by tourism	8
Gentrification	Increase of living;	20
	house price increase;	18
	effect of tourism impact;	15
Reason for booking Airbnb or hotel?	Cheap accommodation;	16
	authentic experience;	9
	good relationship between host and guest;	13
	location;	12
	uniqueness of place;	10
Host and guest	Relationship between host and guest; uniqueness;	15
	Airbnb more personal as to a hotel;	6
	more value for your money;	9
	relationship between host and guest before, during and after	8

Measuring the textural data can be difficult, table one organises the data into themes and times and frequency. The same approach has been applied to by Momeni et al. (2018, pg. 311) in a qualitative study to medical tourism. Themes, sub-themes and the repetition of participants (ibid. pg. 310) are represented are recorded in table 1. The table is categorised into four sections: social and economic; cultural impact; gentrification; and reason for booking Airbnb/hotel?

Social and economic – the good impact of tourism has been mentioned twenty-five times where most participants agreed it was through the influence of Airbnb in their respective neighbourhood. Terrorism was mentioned as an indicator to how important tourism is and especially to their neighbourhoods, the overall assumption of the participants mentioned the fragility of the tourism and hospitality industry, in particular Airbnb hosts.

Cultural impact – negative influence of tourism is damaging the culture for the younger generation according to the findings. The negative influence of tourism in the neighbourhoods such as drinking has been imitated by the youth. Also, participants further illustrate the damaging effect of homogenisation with tourists as the main motivator for the change.

Gentrification – gentrification to their local neighbourhoods has been a contentious subject as tourism and Airbnb is on the rise, the local stakeholders blame the impact of tourism, especially Airbnb for the rise in living costs

Reason for booking Airbnb or hotel – according to the tourists, cheap accommodation has been the prime factor for booking accommodation, whether it is Airbnb or hotel. Another factor for Airbnb guests for booking is the personalised experience between host and guest. The authentic experience is more of a by-product of the location and cheap accommodation according to the content analysis.

Table 2 – Interview participants attributes

Profession	Age	Gender	Location	Length of stay/travel	Stakeholder
HR	25-30	M	Pable Sec	10 days	Tourist
Customer Service	20-25	M	Pable Sec	7 days	Tourist
Waiter	45-50	F	Pable Sec	10 + Years	Resident

Shop keeper	40-45	M	Pable Sec	7 years	Resident
Hotel customer service	30-35	M	Pable Sec	10 + years	Airbnb host
Taxi driver	30-35	M	Pable Sec	10 + years	Airbnb host
Student	25-30	F	Plaza de Joanic	5 days	Tourist
Self-employed	25-30	M	Plaza de Joanic	6 days	Tourist
Shop keeper	35-40	M	Plaza de Joanic	8 years	Resident
Waiter	35-40	F	Plaza de Joanic	5 years	Resident
Airbnb business	50+	M	Plaza de Joanic	10 +	Airbnb host
Unemployed	30-35	M	Plaza de Joanic	10 +	Airbnb host

Table 2 shows the representation and attributes of all participants whom are from different backgrounds of profession and industry. Participants were approved by all three researchers for meeting the criteria for this investigation. Purposive sampling was used to for all participants, however with the exception of Airbnb hosts who were contacted prior to the interview months before the date. The language limitation had restricted the pool of participants though the rich data acquired sufficed for this research.

Airbnb host

Social and economic impact of tourism

The hosts' expressed strong positives from tourism denoting the social impacts as a bridge between tourists and residents. They expressed how Airbnb in particular has changed the residential environment especially in Plaza de Joanic where the hosts stated the resident's welcome tourists because they know the economic impact it brings in to the area; for example, it is easier to sell products to a tourist than a local as they have money to spend and provide an economic contribution.



However, few hosts were over-elaborating into the social exchange of tourists and residents imploring Spain as one of Europe's most diverse nations; contorted views are according to Bernard (2006) a result of desirability effect where the interviewee will perceive positively towards questions asked, also few hosts assumed we were inspectors from Airbnb ergo some of their answers were flamboyant and therefor was discarded through triangulation.

The terrorist attack in August 2017 has hurt the tourism industry and was felt in the neighbourhoods which proved how important tourists is to the areas. The two host in Plaza de Joanic had many Airbnb properties and employed many residents from the area, the attack had a social implication which was linked to the economy and neighbourhood.

In Pable Sec, the host support the notion of tourism helping the neighbourhood socially and economically, pointing to the development of the area in the last five years has improved because of the impact of tourism, noting Airbnb as a primary motivator. Two host in Pable Sec agreed when they acquired their apartments ten years ago, the area was not known as a tourist's destination and therefore socially and economically the place was barren and cheap, but now with the influx of tourists, the neighbourhood has been transformed into a developed tourists destination.

There are now more job opportunities and inter-cultural relations than before. The hosts has also identified the quality of products were poor but the quantity has increased to deliver tourists needs, for example, the food in restaurants, takeaways and even food stall are served faster but the quality is lower than before since the area became a tourists destination. One of the host pointed his hand to one direction, saying 'look' to all the franchise restaurants which were not there five years ago but are here now because of tourism.

While the host described the economic and social contribution made by tourists, they also noted the hotel industry were doing well due to the popularity of Airbnb. The host expressed Airbnb made residential areas popular before hotels came in, with one host working in a hotel and seeing the change from within the area. The security of both areas has also increased and tourists and residents feel a lot safer especially after the terrorist attack. All host agree residents are happy that tourists reside in their area and the safety has improved because of their arrival.



Residents and tourists' relationship

The Airbnb hosts strongly agreed the relationship between tourists and residents is generally good with hosts in Plaza de Joanic stating the negative press of Airbnb users are wrong and claimed they had been hosts for five to eight years with two hosts in Joanic say they had more complaints about their quality of service of their rooms than residents' complaints. However, the dichotomy between tourists and residents in Poble Sec is different as to Plaza de Joanic, with host concurring tourism had brought development but now the residents want them out because everything is now expensive for locals.

Negative impacts

The interviews revealed the positive impact outweighed the negative impact of tourism and therefore the residents accepted tourists in their neighbourhood. The hosts in Poble Sec stated that the tourism contribution has been welcomed, this is because it is regulated by the local authority very well and pointed to another destination where it is not (i.e. La Barceloneta). The finding has also revealed the reason for the negativity towards tourists and Airbnb is because some locals rent to tourists illegally and the problem regulating in the area has been very strict.

Gentrification implication

In addition to the regulatory issues contorted by residents, one of the main themes and strongly perpetuated by the host was gentrification of their neighbourhoods. The hosts', especially in Plaza de Joanic stated the increase in price was down to tourism increase, such as house prices, food, travel, and general expenditure. One host slammed his fist on to the table, pointing to the square park which is located next to the station berating "look, it's a shit hole". All host agree gentrification was down to tourism activity, agreeing Airbnb made a significant contribution. Their argument was down to their personal experience of hosting Airbnb for more than eight years (five years the lowest for one host), they had seen the drastic change and explained the stages year by year. One fundamental element is the ascension of global brands such as McDonalds.

Regulation

Three of the four host interviewed were hosting Airbnb illegally arguing the regulatory restrictions has forced them to rent to tourists illegally. Interviews has also revealed that attaining a licence



was very difficult with one host trying for almost two years. They did however agree the crackdown on dodgy Airbnb rentals is good practice as some hosts treated tourists who rented the place very poorly, however they also concluded Airbnb rentals will increase because residents are in need of financial income and when they have an under-utilised asset which they will try to monetise. Three Airbnb host have been fined by the local authority but they continue to rent as the profits outweighs the fines.

Motivation to become Airbnb host

The primary motivation for hosting Airbnb was money, in Plaza de Joanic, one host had an estate agent and transformed it into an Airbnb business as it is more lucrative. He also uses HomeAway but states Airbnb is more popular and profitable. the majority of the hosts were in some ways desperate for money or in a situation where they had to generate revenue, two host (one from Plaza de Joanic and Pable Sec) were hosting because they had to either pay off their debts, mortgage, insurance, service charge, fines etc. The interviews did reveal the majority of host started hosting Airbnb around 2013-14.

Relationship between host and guest

Interviews have evinced the cordial relationship between host and guest and the experience of meeting people around the world and staying at their property. Hosts agreed the experience before, during and after is very different to that of a hotel with one host stating he stays in touch with a lot of his guests; building a good relationship with guest, something which is not appreciated in hotels. One host has over hundred 'thank you' messages around his Airbnb apartment from guests which he admires and appreciates; others build relationship but keep it strictly professional and do not interfere with guests personally. One host in Pable Sec who works in a hotel stated the difference between the two establishment, he says in a hotel you are like a 'robot' repeating the same words to guest which becomes monotonous but working as a host in Airbnb is 'very satisfying'. The personal experience of hosts and guests were from host with one property, whereas other hosts with many properties were more business oriented and less close to guests.



Residents

Social and economic impacts of tourism

Residents agree tourists is good for the neighbourhood in Poble Sec and Plaza de Joanic, though residents in Joanic agree tourists behaviour is more cordial and respectful compared to local residents. Interviews identify residents support for tourists as they bring economic stability and business opportunities to the area, something which did not exist before. Furthermore, tourists is good for business as they spend towards the local community, though the support for tourists in Poble Sec is far from giving. Residents accept tourism but argue their increase has also brought some negative impact to the neighbourhood, for example pick pockets, drugs, prostitution, beggars and other crimes has increased, with one person pointing to the direction of Av. Del Paral-lel. Overall, the support for tourism is fairly good as the benefits of jobs creation, money contribution, development of area had all improved. The impact of tourists has also brought many festivals to the area of Plaza de Joanic, interviews has also revealed there are about two-three festivals per month within the area which brings in many tourists as local residents together which brings economic value and good host-guest relationship.

Cultural impact of tourism

Cultural shift of Barcelona has been changed with some residents blaming the impact of inbound-tourists, interviews (especially in Plaza de Joanic) has revealed that youngsters copy and imitate tourists' activity and appearance just be 'cool' and different. For example, the drinking and night life of tourists has been imitated by some young locals and because the restriction of alcohol is relaxed, many youths acquire the intoxicant with ease. Residents in both areas agree the areas are very mixed in terms of racial diversification and it is not liked by some residents in particular in Poble Sec where they believe the language, food, and other things has changed because of tourism. In addition, the residents believe the integration of tourists has changed the culture which is not good with two residents declaring their intention to move, one resident mentioning Valencia and Alicante as their preferred destination because of more Spanish residents. Interviews has also revealed that both areas have been commodified to suit tourists needs, franchise shops such as



McDonalds and other outlets are more prevalent than before thus eroding the local heritage and communities culture.

Gentrification

Interviews conclude that gentrification is a hot topic and affirming tourism is a primary factor to the phenomenon. Residents in Plaza de Joanic state that gentrification is not down to tourism as the increase in house prices, products etc can be seen everywhere. All residents agree tourism is easy to blame and single out as they are visible and can be identified as a palpable factor. Some residents were forced out because of high price to living and believed the fundamental factor which created this is tourism activity. Interviews has also suggested two different laws in their neighbourhood, one for residents and the other for tourists with the latter taken care of better especially after the terrorist attack last year, consequently making the residents feel like second class citizens after tourists.

Dichotomy between tourists and residents

The behaviour of tourists is generally good with residents agreeing that the division is more factiously documented by the media. Residents in Plaza de Joanic say they have more conflict between Catalonians and Castilians which got worst in the past few years then tourists conflict. One of the factors to why residents are welcoming tourists is down to the local government stating the ‘mess’ made by tourists such as alcohol bottles, littering is cleaned by the local authority daily; one resident claimed the residential areas is cleaned three times a day to ensure there are no conflict between tourists and locals.

Tourist

Cheap accommodation

The overall consensus for staying in an Airbnb accommodation was price, though some did stay in hotels; the interviews have revealed many tourists feel likelier to book Airbnb as to a hotel or other more common accommodations in Barcelona. The young generation prefer booking Airbnb because it gives them more freedom and access compared to a hotel and also allows them to stay for longer. Another factor is that the number of guest that can stay at a specific accommodation is



more than what a hotel can offer. Furthermore, the more guest who stay tend to share the fees which tends to work more cheaper and better value for money than a hotel. Most Airbnb guests were in their mid-teens or early thirties evincing the trend of millennials. Furthermore, interviews revealed most guests book a whole apartment when travelling in groups which allows them to freedom to roam the whole place which usually has a kitchen, living room etc; these extra benefits which is not found in a hotel room helps guest to feel more at home. Also, the freedom of Airbnb and relaxed rules compared to hotel is also a decisive factor.

Location

Another decisive factor is location, although this is a by-product for renting Airbnb in a residential area. The Airbnb guests has revealed their intention for staying away from tourist's areas is the local amenities which you cannot find in tourist's areas. Many guests who stay for longer than four days agreed staying further away from the tourists is better, especially when the transport system is good. The tourists who booked hotels as to Airbnb argued their expenditure was more and they did not choose to book Airbnb because either they did not know what it is or because of trust as they had never booked through a different medium before. They did agree they will try Airbnb as to experience the difference in living, not for price, location or anything but the overall experience of staying in a Airbnb accommodation.

Authentic tourists experience

Both Airbnb and hotel guest agreed they booked their accommodation because of pricing; however, the Airbnb guests revealed another decisive factor for booking in residential areas was the overall authentic experience. They enjoyed mingling with the locals, buying fruits from the local shop and just doing everyday things; such playfulness allowed them to enjoy the little things. They did however mention that they did enjoy the touristic sightseeing but preferred the little things which are more mundane and meaningful. The interviews have also revealed the local area is full of tourists, even though it is not a tourist area. One guest said seeing what every other tourist does or see is boring therefor being a bit adventurous and different feels more like a holiday. The tourists also revealed hotels offer everything you find in your home but some Airbnb places



literally have only a bed, the experience of not having is better and more exciting than the everyday norm.

Access to more facilities

Everyday amenities, local prices, good transport system and easy access to other facilities which cannot be found in a tourist's area where the fundamental factors for booking in residential areas for both Airbnb and hotel guests. Airbnb guests tend to book knowing in advance the area is cheaper than the norm as to hotel guest who book because the hotel room is cheaper than tourists areas.

Relationship between host and guest

Tourists revealed hotel guest relationship with hotel staff is professional and direct, they feel they are getting what they paid for most of the time and feel welcomed. However, Airbnb guests tend to be more personal before, during and after; some guest revealed they build a close relationship with the host which makes them more comfortable where they are staying as they know when they need something, they contact the host. Furthermore, the guest also revealed when they have questions, regarding location, food places, areas to visit, places not to visit, they refer to their host as they have good knowledge of the neighbourhood, conversely, they protrude hotels do not share the same expertise and believe that this distinction is what made them choose Airbnb again.

Results and Discussion

Data And Findings For Airbnb Host

The host agree the impact of tourism in a residential area is beneficial to the community, bringing sustainability, business, money, jobs, and other social and economic benefits. The findings also support the maxim of Montererrubio et al. (2018) who reiterated the intermingling of tourist and residents help in the perception of tourism within the community. When applying Doxey's irredex (1975), the Airbnb host are in the first stage of tourism development which is euphoria (i.e. when positive social and economic benefits outweigh the negative). The host value tourism as they view



their positive input into the community, furthermore their monetary value especially to their business is incremental to their perception of tourists.

The host also mentioned the positive impact and development of the area which they consider was down to Airbnb and tourism, supporting the report by Airbnb (2018) stating communities benefit from guest as they stay for longer, spend more in the community and generate jobs. Host has also revealed that not only Airbnb are thriving, they are also helping the hotel industry into new areas of business (i.e. Poble Sec and Plaza de Joanic) contradicting negative impacts of Airbnb in the hotel industry (see Zervas et al. 2017; Hou 2018; and Heo et al. 2018).

While the Airbnb host noted the positive impact of tourism, they did avert the drastic change which came at a cost; one of which was gentrification of the neighbourhoods. The interviews support Monterrubio et al. (2018) maxim of tourist's places becoming monotypic, though the research findings are from residential areas, the concurrent theme is present. The paradigm of gentrification of house prices, increase living cost, change in living, development, and commodification is present in this research with findings supporting negative impact of tourism in both areas of Barcelona.

The research has also gained new findings into the relation between host [i.e. Airbnb] and guest; according to the host, the relationship they share with guest is more personal and starts before a guest stays in their accommodation. The findings have also revealed that guests book Airbnb then a hotel for cheap accommodation and the personal experience they share with the host.

The relationship between host-guest and the findings has revealed how important it is for the host to be part of their experience. However, many host started hosting for a number of reasons, primarily it was money. The host admitted their intention for hosting was somewhat 'forced' upon them as they were seeking new avenues to generate revenue regardless of their situation. Fang and Laws' (2015) assertion to idle asset do point out the benefits from owner and user but did not grasp the technicalities and motivation for hosting. Lutz (2018) 'micro entrepreneurs' assertion of Airbnb host does not support the research carried out, as many host are warped into Airbnb to survive financially.



As host become victims of change, the regulation for hosting in Barcelona is very difficult. The research has found many hosts illegally rent out their idle asset because they are unable to attain a licence, though they incur many fines, the host agree that the positive income generated outweighs the negative. The findings do however support Mounts (2018) assertion of regulating internet platforms in Barcelona such as Airbnb, HomeAway when they momentarily stopped issuing licenses to residents. Furthermore, the high employment in Barcelona is also forcing many residents to rent through Airbnb.

Data And Findings For Residents

The research has revealed the social and economic impact in Poble Sec and Plaza de Joanic have two conflicting opinions and sit in different stages in Doxey's irredex. In Plaza de Joanic, the residents are in the first stage of Doxey's irredex (i.e. euphoria) however, the negative impact incurred in Poble Sec has resulted the resident's perception of tourist to move to the second stage which is apathy (though it may be borderline euphoria/apathy).

The benefits of tourism in Plaza de Joanic has been more positive than negative with the locals welcoming tourist into their neighbourhood. The interviews have revealed the locals can see the development of tourism in their neighbourhood such as tourist spending, infrastructure, jobs, security, and festivals. The research supports Airbnb's indagation (see Airbnb 2018) into the economic and social benefit of SE within a neighbourhood and also cited the city of Barcelona as one of the beneficiaries of the sharing economy supporting 4, 000 jobs and generating \$175m in 2014. Conversely the positive impact in Poble Sec is marred by negative influence of tourism where the increase in tourism activity has bought many social problems such as pick pockets, prostitution, and beggars. The cohesion and acceptability between tourism and residents in Plaza de Joanic and Poble Sec is different, in Plaza de Joanic residents and tourist get along with good cohesion however in the Poble Sec, the residents waver to the perception of tourists. Unlu (2011) did assert a dichotomy is evident if there is no social relationship between tourism and residents, such an avenue is seen in Dubai where tourism do not mingle with residents (i.e. enclave tourism). the aforementioned maxim supports the relationship of tourism and residents in Poble Sec where



tourism, though wared with benefits is seen more as a negative impact to the community where social interrelationship do not co-exist.

Cultural shift in Barcelona has been a talking point with residents in both areas affirming that tourism is changing the local culture. Residents have the youth imitating the tourist habits such as drinking, smoking, dress code, and other things. The result assert the demonstration theory of local youths imitating tourist habits, further supporting Fisher's (2004) maxim of youth adopting the trends and habits of tourist within an area., however he also mentions the synthesis of movies, adverts, and technology play more a pivotal role than tourism as a motivator for demonstration effect deducing tourism as a low motivator. Furthermore, globalisation and homogenisation of culture is more apparent and accredited for changing the local traditions where people adopt the western model of dress, food (such as franchises), and way of life.

The interrelation between different cultures has received two conflicting opinions in the two neighbourhoods researched, in Plaza de Joanic, the intermingling of residents and different background of tourist has been welcomed. However, in Pable Sec, the relation between residents and tourism is more sensitive with residents complaining that their culture is being erased, especially their language and traditional food. Their viewpoints coincide with Montererrubio et al. (2018) aphorism deducing tourism go through stages, as infant tourism destinations become monotypic to suit tourist needs. As tourism become a global phenomenon, the residual gentrification is becomes ubiquitous and a normality and even residential neighbourhoods such as Pable Sec become commodified to suit tourist needs. Anti-Airbnb residents argue the nascent of SE (especially Airbnb) are eroding the culture and local heritage (Mody et al. 2018), however the residents did not blame Airbnb guest in particular, they argued it was more a global phenomenon though Airbnb played a significant role.

Gentrification is rife and is a considerable factor in the perception of tourist in both neighbourhoods. They agree the increase in house prices, products, living costs, and area development is down to tourism activity, however the residents especially in Plaza de Joanic believe that it is easy to blame tourism because their activity is visible to residents. Montererrubio et al. (2018) did suggest cultural world cities such as Barcelona, London and Paris divide tourism



and residents, though some cities neglect residents and channel the revenue stream of tourism activity such as Barcelona; the repercussion is the process of gentrification and McDonaldisation of neighbourhoods thus receding local culture and heritage. Macloed's (2005) assertion of gentrification which leads to commodification has been evinced as a prevailing problem within the tourist community as many tourism industries supersede local heritage and culture for monetary gain.

As gentrification becomes ubiquitous, the relationship between host and guest in a neighbourhood is becoming news worthy especially to the media. The findings conclude resident's perception of tourist in both generally good with Plaza de Joanic accepting tourism more than their counterpart. Residents in Joanic believe the friction between residents and tourists is more media probed, the local residents say the local in-fighting of nationalist is more common than tourists conflict with residents though the residents did mention other areas that are not favourable to tourism. The general consensus is resident's opinion is generalised by the conception of positive and negative impact as the study by Faulkner and Tideswell (1997) suggest resident's demeanour tolerate tourism as long as the benefit outweighs the negative impacts.

Data And Findings For Tourist

The majority of tourists booked their accommodation according to low price, they tend to orient their booking in accordance to value. Many guests booked through Airbnb for its cheap accommodation and easy access to apartments. The aforementioned result supports Fang and Law's (2015) and Heo et al. (2018) assertion to the benefits towards the renters who attain a room which is cheaper than a hotel. However, the investigation did reveal that many booked through hotel as it is cheaper and in some cases then Airbnb, though an age segmentation imparted the difference between tourist's choice into booking an accommodation. The younger generation or the 'millennials' tend to book more Airbnb accommodations whereas the older generation lean towards hotels; the new generations' travel habits purported by Ross (2018) does share similarities to the findings of this research citing that millennials unorthodox way of travelling. The means of



technology, especially in regards to the millennials has helped become more independent and more tech savvy than their older counter-parts; everything is done through their smart devices, whether it is booking an accommodation, or hiring a vehicle. Furthermore, it is now easier to compare hotel prices and shared accommodation thus the use of travel agents become redundant. Their adventurous nature supports Lou's (2018) notion of their tendency to try and experience something different.

Experience plays a pivotal part in booking accommodation and Airbnb is like no other. The research has revealed many tourists book hotels for the actual experience of the accommodation and local surrounding which is not commodified to suit tourists' needs. MaCannell's (1973) research dated four decades ago is still academically sound and supports the research findings in regards to back stage tourism. MaCannell mentioned the backstage of tourism is mundane and monotonous, however the social exchange, empathy, intimacy, and authenticity is what makes the touristic experience more real than the front stage of polycentric tourist destinations. The research revealed sightseeing of tourist attractions is almost secondary for guest using Airbnb, Maitland's (2013) research of London tourist did reveal many visitors making the primary pit-stop of tourist places however, the nascent of millennials travelling has disrupted the tourism market with their unconventional approach to cultural experience.

Tourist experience was also intrinsically linked to host and guest relationship as this started before the guest starts his journey. The research has revealed the guests' unique experience as mentioned by MaCannells (1973) is part of the overall authenticity. The intimacy noted by the author is evident into the relationship between host and guest and shows that the direction of where tourism travel is heading. Conversely, hotel accommodation seems to be laborious in terms of serviced quality, almost to the extent of being redundant for its done again approach. Airbnb or in general, the sharing economy envois a different dimension, one that which cannot be obtained by hotel format thus evincing the direction the tourism sector is heading. The relationship between host-guest and front stage and back stage may become more obscure as the approach of mutually conforming with one another becomes ubiquitous; Blau's (2018) depicted report of relationship



between host and guest shed light on the value of reality, morality, and to the point of where a tourist should stop.

Recommendations

The exploratory study of Airbnb impact into residential areas has enlightened many talking points as the co-current social, economic, and environmental impacts of Airbnb to a given destination. The research recommends further investigation into this area, especially the motivational factors of host's and guest, relationship between hosts and guests, and the implication of tourist in a residential area.

In regards to Airbnb hosts, the study shows the law and legislation for governing Airbnb listings has to change, adapting the law to suit the host's and governments needs will eradicate or reduce illegal sub-letting in neighbourhoods. Furthermore, reducing the time to implement to policies will also further increase the likelihood of illegal letting. The fundamental flaw pointed out by the government was the money lost through illegal letting in neighbourhoods, however with the collaboration of Airbnb and government can adopt a system where tax is automatically implemented when tourists book through the app; this in turn will reduce losses gained by an internet business in Barcelona. Further, the relationship between hosts and guest was positive and can be applied to tourism and residents through events, festivals, and other gathering as implemented lightly by Plaza de Joanic district. This will reduce the negative perception of tourism especially in Poble Sec. the financial gain from Airbnb is beneficial to hosts, guests as well as communities and in a place where employment is high, Airbnb shows solace to the impecunious local and can help alleviate many residents out of low income/poverty line.

Tourism can be used to alleviate a place through tourism spending and through the contribution of tourist development as seen in Plaza de Joanic and Poble Sec with the impact of Airbnb. The effects of Airbnb can be utilised as a way of channelling systematic growth of a neighbourhood, this will the government through taxes, help community through tourists spending and marketing and also further more opportunities such as jobs, and businesses. The impact of Airbnb can be utilised positively especially in neighbourhoods which require revitalisation. Airbnb growth and potential



in Barcelona has the framework to become successful however, the relationship between hosts and guests has to be mutually consent which will avoid the neighbourhood's negative perception of tourist which may lead to a high level in Doxey's irredex.

This research was conducted in seven days into the impacts of Airbnb in Barcelona of two districts, further studies garnering wider tourist stakeholders, focus groups, and government intervention will help better understand the wider implications of Airbnb and tourism within a neighbourhood. This research has increased the groundwork for further studies which can be utilised for all three stakeholders. For example, understanding the motives of Airbnb hosts in neighbourhoods can help introduce policies and laws to help, prevent and combat the growth of Airbnb in a sustainable systematic way. Researching into tourism trend in local neighbourhoods can reduce negative impacts of tourism such as environmental impacts and mass tourism. residents' perception of tourism is paramount to a local communities' success, interviewing residents and advising them of the current trends of Airbnb and trying to work with them will increase the cohesion of hosts and guests. Larger scale study to the impact of tourism in Barcelona will help ascertain valuable information by interviewing more stakeholders in the tourism system.

Further to sustainable issues, Barcelona government realise the correlation between tourism increase and residents disdain for tourists in neighbourhoods. The government should create a policy or structure to limit and sustain tourism within a neighbourhood. The operant effect of such policies will help in the rehabilitation of tourism perception and further the sustainability of a community.

Conclusion

In this research, we investigated the impact of tourism in two residential areas of Barcelona using Airbnb as the foci. The research looked into three different stakeholders (Airbnb host, residents, and tourist) using the qualitative approach through content analysis. Implementation of the Doxey's irredex on residents and Airbnb hosts' has helped to articulate the perception towards tourists.



From the content analysis, the research has found three different conflicting opinions about Airbnb and tourist's activity within their neighbourhoods from the different stakeholders. The Airbnb host agree tourism within their local is beneficial for their business, socially, economically, and in terms of tourism development in both areas. The Airbnb hosts are in the first stage of Doxey's irredex though they did aver the contentious conflict between gentrification and tourism flow. The increase in house prices, living costs and culture was blamed at tourists for their role in marketing their local community as a tourist destination. The increase in Airbnb listing within the neighbourhood has been fought by regulations and policies; the research has found that many Airbnb hosts' illegally sublet to tourist for monetary gain as they argue the stringent law forces them to do so. The monetary motivation has been the primary motivator for becoming a host's which also had a profound effect in the neighbourhood, socially and economically. The qualitative content analysis has also revealed new insight unto the relationship between Airbnb host's and guest; the findings has revealed the relationship between the two is more personal and the point of contact starts before the guest arrives.

The qualitative findings for tourists residing in residential areas has found the motivation for staying at a hotel or Airbnb was low cost for the respective accommodations. The result did find the age discrepancy or segmentation in accordance to choosing of accommodation; Airbnb guest tend to be younger of age, depicting the characteristics of a millennial and the older generation book through hotels which was more habitual then anything. One may argue how the hotel concept can evolve and adapt to the sharing economy. Furthermore. Hotels were present near Airbnb places, with Airbnb host's citing their influence and impacts towards the local area has made them bring their business to the local environment.

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