
EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO BOOK AIRBNB: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN US AND SPAIN

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In December of 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported an unknown pneumonia was starting to surface in Wuhan, China. By January 2020, there were 41 confirmed cases in Chinese hospitals of what would become known as the novel coronavirus or COVID-19 (Huang et al., 2020). Initially, the virus spread through China's Wuhan region but went largely unnoticed or ignored by political leaders worldwide, even though warnings were issued by intelligent services about potential global cataclysmic consequences (Washington Post, 2020).

As the severity of the virus was quickly realized in China, a lockdown was put into place for Wuhan, and the number of cases stabilized to around 80,000 by mid-February (European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, 2020). March 11, 2020, the WHO's Director-General officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic (WHO, 2020a). Since March 2020, the world watched as the novel coronavirus drastically impacted the global economy, put strain on international political relationships, and challenged the complex and diverse socio-cultural systems around the world.

Countries quickly followed China's example and enacted various forms of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPI), including lockdowns, social distancing requirements, closure of schools/universities and non-essential businesses/workplaces, canceling or postponing events, and imposed travel bans with border closures (Gössling, Scott, & Hall,

2020) leaving the tourism and hospitality industries in a critical condition. The global tourism system went from a state of over-tourism (Celata & Romano, 2020; Seraphin et al., 2018) into a sudden collapse of the entire sector (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). Tourism has always been a highly vulnerable industry to these risks but has become resilient in bouncing back (Novelli et al., 2018). However, COVID-19 has created unprecedented circumstances that will impact the tourism industry and lead to long-term structural and transformational changes (Sigala, 2020).

Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, scholarly papers highlighted the unquestionable growth of Airbnb (Andreu, Bigné, Amaro, & Palomo, 2020; Buhalis, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2020; Tussyadiah, 2016; Guttentag, 2019; Hossain, 2020). Airbnb is an example of a business model for the circular economy with the largest single supplier of short-

term stays (OECD, 2018). Airbnb specifically does not own a single apartment on its platform but acts as a medium or channel that connects hosts and guests. With the need to reduce overall consumption of resources (Möhlmann, 2015), the 'circular economy' was introduced as a high-level strategy to move our societies to a state where we no longer compromise the carrying capacity of our planet's ecosystems while also meeting social goals like job creation and social cohesion (European Commission, 2015; Schwanholz & Leipold, 2020).

This study aims to progress research within the circular economy and, in particular, to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on consumers' intention to book Airbnb as a peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation platform. Life as we know it is becoming known as the 'new normal' as COVID-19 influences our daily routines and social habits (see Chesbrough, 2020; Kirk & Rifkin, 2020; Sheth, 2020; Sigala, 2020; Woodside, 2020). Although previous studies have highlighted the significant growth and impact of Airbnb, the pandemic's shock effect needs further research and the influence it has on consumers' booking intention.

This paper contributes theoretically and practically in several ways. First, due to the magnitude of the COVID-19 threat and its global impact, it is timely to investigate the change in consumer intentions to book Airbnb accommodations with the added perceptions of COVID-19. Second, the paper analyzes if the factors traditionally significant in booking a property have changed due to the pandemic. Third, a new model based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is tested in two contexts with a different market penetration of Airbnb.

Before analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on consumers' behavioral intentions, this article provides an overview of how the current health pandemic affects the sharing economy. Second, based on previous studies on the sharing economy, key attributes that motivated consumers to book travel accommodations through Airbnb and factors influencing consumers' intentions to use Airbnb are identified. An empirical study is conducted in two countries, Spain and the US, to evaluate Airbnb attributes important to travelers during the pandemic and determine which factors influence consumers to book accommodations through Airbnb.

HOW COVID-19 AFFECTS TOURISM AND P2P ACCOMMODATION ↓

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a substantial amount of uncertainty within the tourism industry; thus, research into travelers' post-pandemic behaviors is critical (Han et al., 2020). COVID-19 is a health crisis that causes long-term structural and transformational changes to the tourism industry (Sigala, 2020). Internationally, tourist arrivals are expected to decrease by 78%, triggering a loss of US\$1.2 trillion in export revenues as well as 120

million job cuts within the tourism industry (UNWTO, 2020). Airlines cut their workforce by 90%, popular tourist destinations are likely to see negative revenue numbers in 2020 (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020; Gallego & Font, 2020), and the stock valuations for the hotel, airline, cruise lines, and car rental industries have experienced a substantial fall starting in March 2020 (Sharma & Nicolau, 2020).

Due to COVID-19, travelers experienced trip disruptions or outright trip cancellations as they had to comply with quarantine measures, causing a shift to virtual consumption of experiences and services (Sigala, 2020). Popularity and demand for such things as virtual events or working from home, e-learning, or even avoidance of public transportation all increased as a result of social distancing measures as well as the desire to avoid contact with other people (De Vos, 2020; Troko et al., 2011). The P2P accommodation has not been immune to the social distancing guidelines put in place by national governments. As with many service industries, limitations on personal contact with others, social distancing, and economic shutdowns significantly impacted the sharing economy. For example, Airbnb faced a loss of \$1 billion within the first month of the pandemic, thanks to canceled bookings (Ekstein, 2020).

Hosts involved on the hospitality platforms have seen most, if not all, of their future reservations dry up, leaving them with bills to pay and no inflow of revenue from travelers (Rodríguez, 2020). However, as a platform, Airbnb saw more online spending following the COVID-19 outbreak than Marriott, Hilton, and Intercontinental Hotels Group (Edison Trends, 2020). Airbnb says more than six million of its listings accept long term stays (i.e., 28 days or longer) because of the recent increase in flexibility of remote working and the desire to escape crowded cities (Menze, 2020). Jeff Hurst, President of Vrbo, another sharing economy platform, told Bloomberg they see upticks in rentals on their platforms within 250 miles of major metro areas, specifically near water, national parks, or mountains (Carville, 2020). Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky told Bloomberg he predicts travel will make a strong comeback as they've already noticed travelers booking twice as many remote stays compared to last year. Future travel will still look different from before with less over-tourism, business travel, and loyalty programs (Ekstein, 2020).

In this article, we focus on how COVID-19 is influencing travelers' booking intention with regard to Airbnb. Before this health pandemic, studies have highlighted Airbnb attributes in terms of home benefits, personalized services, social interactions and authenticity as critical drivers to choose Airbnb (Li, Hudson & Son, 2019; McIntosh & Siggs, 2005; Zhang, Cui, Cheng, Zhang, & Li, 2020). But currently, to what extent the adoption of Airbnb's COVID-19 sanitation protocols is the most relevant attribute? The next section reviews the motivating factors of booking Airbnb.

MOTIVES TO USE AIRBNB ↓

In the context of Airbnb, and before the COVID-19 shock, scholarly papers have identified key attributes that motivated travelers to book travel accommodations through Airbnb: price value, uniqueness and authenticity, user-generated online reviews, and host flexibility and hospitality.

Studies have shown that *value for money* or the Airbnb accommodation's price value is critical in choosing Airbnb (So, Oh, & Min, 2018; Mao & Lyu, 2017; Yang & Ahn, 2016). Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2018) found that cost was the primary motive for choosing Airbnb for American and Finnish tourists. The *uniqueness and authenticity* have been an appealing attribute for travelers to select Airbnb (Poon & Huang, 2017). Airbnb users found that interacting with hosts (McIntosh & Siggs, 2005) and staying in someone else's home made them feel more at home than hotels (Zhang, Cui, Cheng, Zhang, & Li, 2020). The possibility to access *online reviews and word-of-mouth communication* also has a positive influence on consumer behavioral intentions toward Airbnb (Mao & Lyu, 2017). Another perceived attribute that travelers value is *host flexibility and hospitality*. Using online reviews, Zhang et al. (2020) found that travelers gravitate towards Airbnb accommodations over hotels because of the flexibility hosts demonstrate regarding check-in and check-out times or the hospitality showed by allowing guests to use personal belongings while staying in their homes. Stors and Kagermeier (2015) found that vacationers appreciate travel recommendations from Airbnb hosts, and Camilleri and Neihofner (2017) found that some hosts play full-on tour guides showing guests around their respective locations and even introduce guests to their friends.

Yet, all of these studies were completed before the arrival and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which drastically changed the type of social interaction travelers are looking for. Airbnb's motto and purpose is to 'foster human connections,' but in an interview with Bloomberg, Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky points out, "right now, that doesn't mean hanging out with your host, the kinds of connections we're seeing are people using Airbnb to reconnect with those they already know and love" (Ekstein, 2020).

With the health crisis created by COVID-19, customers now have new priorities when traveling. As the COVID-19 virus spread worldwide, hygiene and cleaning protocols are quickly becoming an essential factor for the tourism and hospitality industries. Consumers must now evaluate every action they take, every trip they plan, every person they interact with, and weigh the risk associated with the reward. Every action now has a possible deadly consequence. A study completed by Naumov, Varadzhakova and Naydenov (2020) showcases the importance of sanitation and hygiene, in a post-COVID-19 world, as critical factors in Bulgarian tourists'

decision-making process. Within the hotel industry, chains are investing in autonomous sanitizing robots, having a mandatory 24-hour gap between check-out and check-ins, and some chains are going as far as canceling their breakfast buffets (Bagnera et al., 2020). The peer-to-peer economy is a little different because platforms such as Airbnb have to ensure hosts and guests are equally safe, two separate entities within the ecosystem with similar yet different motivations behind their fears and hesitations. These platforms have also incorporated hygiene protocols such as the 24-hour gap time between guests' transitions and suggestions on cleaning techniques and products recommended (Wood, 2020). With regard to Airbnb, the company has posted articles to their Resource Center for hosts and travelers to use and ensure health safety for everyone and provide cleaning protocols (Airbnb, 2020).

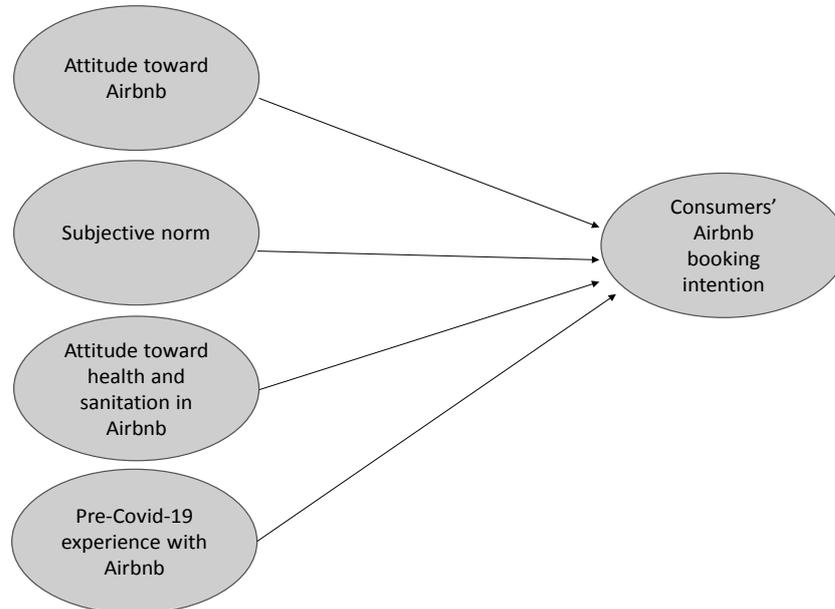
One of the main driving forces behind this research is the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and its implications on travelers' purchase intentions towards Airbnb. Previous research into the motivating factors of booking Airbnb accommodations has not included the attribute of hosts following Airbnb's COVID-19 cleaning and sanitation protocols because they simply did not exist before April 2020. Therefore, this study deemed it pertinent to measure the importance of hosts following these sanitation protocols from a traveler's perspective. This study aims to include a health and sanitation element within the research to see if it impacts the US and Spanish consumers' purchasing intentions towards Airbnb travel accommodations.

FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS' INTENTIONS TO USE AIRBNB ↓

The goal of this study is to analyze not only the perceived attributes for booking Airbnb but also to evaluate how the attitude toward Airbnb, subjective norm, previous experience and the attitude toward health and sanitation in Airbnb will impact purchase/booking intentions towards Airbnb. This study uses an extended model based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) as the conceptual framework to analyze the factors influencing consumers' intentions to book Airbnb (see Figure 1).

The TRA has long been a foundation in social psychology. It suggests that actual behavior can be predicted by behavioral intentions that are a function of two factors: attitude towards performing the behavior and subjective norm (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). According to Ajzen (1985), "the Theory of Reasoned Action is based on the assumption that human beings usually behave in a sensible manner; that they take account of available information and implicitly or explicitly consider the implications of their actions." (p. 12). The TRA has been validated in having strong predictive power and has been widely used as a model to predict behavioral intentions within marketing and consumer

FIGURE 1
FACTORS INFLUENCING CONSUMERS' INTENTION TO USE AIRBNB (COVID-19)



Source: Based on Ajzen (1991), Jiang & Wen (2020), and Lee (2020)

behavior research (Amaro, Andreu, & Huang, 2019; Lam & Hsu, 2004; Sheppard, Hartwick & Warshaw, 1988). The main constructs are described below.

Behavioral intention to use Airbnb. The TRA posits that behavioral intention is a function of two factors; attitude towards actually performing the behavior in question and subjective norm (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This study intends to analyze behavior intention as travelers' purchase intention towards Airbnb (Han et al., 2010; Mao & Lyu, 2017). With COVID-19 being a highly infectious disease and a significant health concern, it is understandable that this would affect travelers' intention to visit locations that would be hazardous to their health (Zhang et al., 2020; Jonas et al., 2011).

Attitude toward Airbnb. Attitude is an essential element within the TRA that determines behavior intention and can be described as "the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of the behavior in question" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 188). The two constructs are positively correlated to where if a person's attitude is positive, their behavioral intention will be positive (Mao & Lyu, 2017). Previous studies have confirmed the positive influence attitude has on purchase intention toward Airbnb (Amaro et al., 2019; Chatterjee et al., 2019; Mao & Lyu, 2017).

Subjective norm of Airbnb. In the TRA framework, the second determinant of intention is the subjective norm, which measures the impact others have on a person's intention towards the behavior in question. Ajzen (1991) defined subjective norm as "the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior" (p. 188). In this study, the behavior

in question would be booking intention towards Airbnb travel accommodations after the COVID-19 outbreak.

Attitudes toward health/sanitation. The importance of surface sanitation, hygiene, and travel accommodation cleanliness quickly became the focus of attention, with COVID-19 being easily contagious and spread by surface contamination (WHO, 2020b). Previous research in the travel and hospitality industry has found that overall hygiene and cleanliness is a decisive factor associated with travelers' satisfaction (Gu & Ryan, 2008), patron delight (Magnini et al., 2011) and customer loyalty (Barber and Scarcelli, 2010). Traveling in the aftermath of the COVID-19 outbreak, travelers will most likely patronize lodging accommodations that offer reassuring hygiene and cleanliness protocols (Jiang & Wen, 2020).

Previous experience with Airbnb. When assessing destination services or products, first-time tourists tend to evaluate based on information about the product or service attributes, whereas travelers' with previous experience hold a psychological connection to the destination because of those past experiences (Rodríguez-Molina et al., 2013). More relevant to this study as it pertains to an influenza pandemic, Lee et al. (2012) found that during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, the frequency of past behavior had a positive effect on travelers' intention to travel internationally. Likewise, through structural equation modeling, Lee (2020) found that previous experience with Airbnb affects endogenous variables such as risks, attitude and behavioral intention.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

	Characteristics	Spanish sample (n = 434)		US Sample (n = 297)	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	200	46,2	178	59,9
	Female	233	53,6	119	40,1
Age	18-34	115	26,5	116	55,9
	35-54	262	60,0	115	38,7
	55 +	57	12,1	41	5,4
Used Airbnb during COVID	Yes	370	85,0	220	74,1
	No	63	15,0	77	25,9

Source: Authors

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ↓

Data Collection ↓

Two independent studies were conducted in the US and Spain. A panel of US consumers, aged 18 years or older who had used Airbnb in the previous year, were recruited to complete an online survey, with data collection in September 2020. US respondents were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). A total of 297 valid responses were obtained. The Spanish sample was recruited by a professional market research company (i.e., Toluna) of Spanish consumers who had traveled during the last 12 months, dated in October 2020. The sample consisted of 434 valid responses, and 85% have used Airbnb. Table 1 depicts the description of the sample. The Spanish participants are a bit older than the US counterparts, and also the US sample is a bit more focused on women.

Survey Design and Operationalization of Constructs. ↓

An online survey was created using Internet-based Qualtrics™ and Toluna software. The survey items were primarily Likert scale and multiple-choice. The questions focused mainly on a respondent's repurchase intention towards Airbnb travel accommodations since the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020. The questionnaire was organized into four sections. The first section consisted of screening questions, such as the use of Airbnb for travel accommodations before the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk perception of COVID-19 and risk perception of travel. The second section was a question related to attributes of Airbnb that are important to travelers when making their booking decision in the new context (COVID-19) adapted from Guttentag et al. (2018). The third section contains the measurement of the extended TRA model constructs. Using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), attitude towards Airbnb (a 3-item scale, e.g., *For me using Airbnb when traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic is good*) was taken

from Mao & Lyu (2017); subjective norm (a 2-item scale, e.g., *People who are important to me would say that I should use Airbnb during the COVID-19 pandemic*), and intention to book (a 1-item scale, e.g., *On my next trip, I would use Airbnb for booking accommodations*) were adapted from Amaro et al. (2019); and attitude towards health and sanitation (a 3-item scale, e.g., *When traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic, I worry about the cleanliness and sanitation of my Airbnb*) was adapted from Zemke et al. (2015). The last section consisted of questions related to socio-demographic information.

DATA ANALYSIS ↓

The results of the primary constructs under study are shown in Table 2. Noteworthy, the intention to book through Airbnb shows a similar and high value that reflects its importance. Regarding the Cronbach's alpha, the values are acceptable in both samples for the Attitude towards Airbnb and the Subjective norm. The attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb is poor in the Spanish sample but good in the US sample. Lastly, the concern on the perceived risk of the COVID-19 virus is high (Spain=4,11; US=4,27), but interestingly the risk perception to travel is a bit lower in both samples (Spain=3,88; US=4,04).

The first research question (RQ1) analyzes to what extent have travelers used Airbnb during the pandemic (i.e., March 2020 – September 2020). The second research question (RQ2) addresses how the threat of COVID-19 has changed consumers' perceived importance of Airbnb attributes during the pandemic. The third research question (RQ3), based on the TRA and research in the context of previous influenzas (i.e., H1N1), aims to analyze the determinants (attitude towards Airbnb, subjective norm, attitudes towards health and sanitation, and prior experience of using Airbnb before COVID-19) that influence consumers' booking/purchase intentions towards Airbnb during the pandemic.

With regard to RQ1, results confirm that hotel booking is still the primary preference for travelers in their

TABLE 2
MEAN VALUES AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF ITEMS. CRONBACH'S ALPHA

Variables	Spanish sample (n = 434)			US sample (n = 297)		
	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha
Airbnb booking intention	3,47	1,117	-	3,98	0,794	-
Attitude towards Airbnb	3,64	1,123	0,868	3,63	0,834	0,708
Subjective norm	3,62	1,114	0,710	3,83	0,968	0,813
Attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb	4,14	0,812	0,353	3,95	0,785	0,750
COVID-19 is a very frightening disease	4,11	1,064	-	4,27	0,835	-
It is dangerous to travel right now because of COVID-19	3,88	1,092	-	4,04	0,783	-

Source: Authors

vacations among those who have had holidays. Noteworthy, 85% of the Spaniards have used Airbnb during the last year, and 74,1% of Americans have used Airbnb during the pandemic. These results show a high level of confidence in Airbnb in choosing the accommodation provider. However, these results should be used with caution because they might be attributed to different reasons such as price, availability, and location, to name a few. Indeed, various reasons might motivate such a decision, as discussed in our next research question.

RQ2 aims to analyze the most relevant criteria for booking an Airbnb home compared to hotel accommodation during the pandemic. For the Spanish sample, the results show that three out of six criteria were considered the most relevant in both types of bookings: measures to prevent COVID-19, price rates, and property location. On the contrary, the facilities, services, and online ratings in social media are the less critical criteria in both types of bookings. Noteworthy that Airbnb differs from hotels in the relevance given to the measures to prevent COVID-19. Figure 2 depicts the Spanish percentages of respondents who considered each criterion as first, then the accumulated percentage of respondents who consider each criterion as a first and second relevant criteria, and lastly, the percentage of respondents who consider each criterion as first, second, and third in importance. Thus, measures to prevent COVID-19 are placed as the first most relevant as first; when first and second important criteria are accumulated, these measures are still the most important criteria and are considered the most important criteria when the first three order of importance are accumulated. In hotel bookings, although the measures to prevent COVID-19 is ranked as the first most relevant criterion in choosing such accommodations when the first three positions of importance are considered, the price is the most important criterion (65,54%) for hotel bookings, followed by location and measures to prevent COVID-19 as the third criteria of importance.

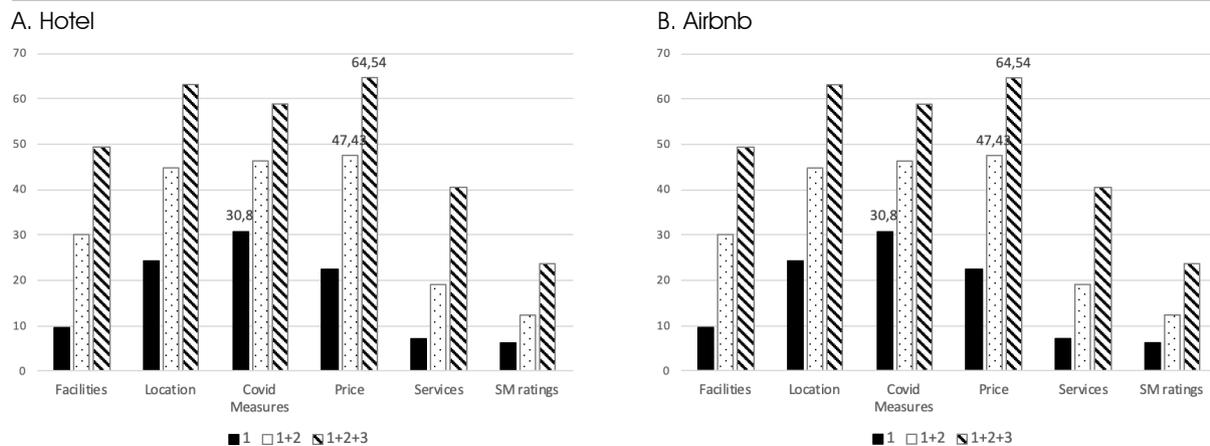
The less critical criteria for booking are the facilities of the property, services, and online ratings in social

media. The lowest relevance granted to social media deserves some explanations. Numerous studies state the importance of social media in choosing a tourist product (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). Individuals' motivations to engage with Airbnb are summarized in monetary and social reasons (Arvanitidis, Economou, Grigoriou, & Kollias, 2020). As far as social influence, social media's interpersonal influence comes from the number of reviews and the helpfulness of such comments (Ruiz-Mafé, Bigné & Currás-Perez, 2020). In the new context of the pandemic, these two issues do not show a high presence because the number of comments related to the pandemic period is scarce due to the mobility restrictions. Also, they are not always the most up to date. Therefore, it seems that the value of the online reviews or the comments are not valuable in the context of the agile decision-making of tourism accommodation during the pandemic. This reasoning highlights a need for updated and helpful online reviews related to periods of time. Indeed, the analysis of online ratings is becoming a topic of research interest analyzed by Bigné, William, and Soria-Olivas (2020). Further, negative online comments might exert some influence.

For the US sample, the results (Figure 3) illustrate that when US travelers are booking traveling accommodations through Airbnb they place the most value in online ratings. The second most important criteria to American travelers is that hosts follow anti-COVID-19 protocols, and third is the flexibility and level of hospitality of the host.

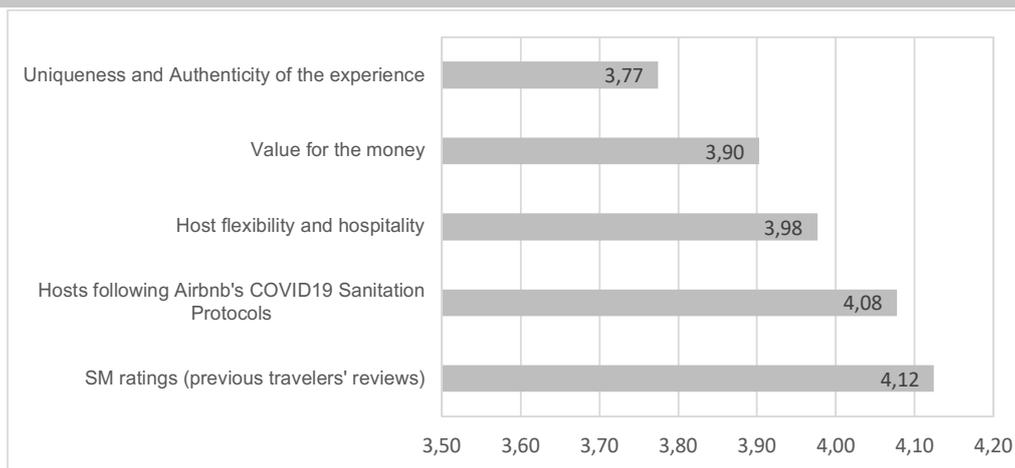
RQ3 aims to analyze what constructs influence consumers' purchase intentions towards Airbnb. As they were explained in the methodology, the constructs under review are Attitude towards Airbnb, Subjective norm, Attitudes towards health and sanitation, and Previous experience in booking travel accommodations through Airbnb. Table 3 shows the correlations between these constructs. The results point out the high correlation between Attitude towards Airbnb and Subjective norm in both samples. It seems that positive attitudes are highly related to the Subjective norm. In a nutshell,

FIGURE 2
IMPORTANCE OF BOOKING CRITERIA (SPANISH SAMPLE, N= 434)



Source: Authors

FIGURE 3
PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF AIRBNB ATTRIBUTES (US SAMPLE, N= 297)



Source: Authors

TABLE 3
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS

	Spanish sample					US sample				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1. Booking intention in Airbnb	1					1				
2. Attitude towards Airbnb	0,401***	1				0,710***	1			
3. Subjective norm	0,344***	0,735***	1			0,669***	0,806***	1		
4. Attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb(1)	0,155***	0,338***	0,361***	1		0,133**	0,077*	0,065	1	
5. Previous experience with Airbnb	0,423***	0,184***	0,167***	n.s.	1	0,324***	0,388***	0,412***	0,169***	1

Notes: *** Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (1-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the 0,05 level (1-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0,10 level (1-tailed). (1) For the Spanish sample, only 2 items have been considered.

Source: Authors

TABLE 4
LINEAR REGRESSION OF BOOKING INTENTION IN AIRBNB (SPANISH AND US SAMPLES)

	Spanish sample		US sample	
	β	Sig.	β	Sig.
Attitude towards Airbnb	0,300	0,000	0,482	0,000
Subjective norm	0,140	0,019	0,270	0,000
Attitude toward health and sanitation in Airbnb	-0,210	0,000	0,076	0,063
Previous use of Airbnb	0,333	0,000	0,013	0,764
Adjusted R-square	0,323		0,537	
Durbin-Watson	1,928		1,878	

Source: Authors

the travelers who have a positive attitude towards Airbnb grant value to the opinion of their groups of reference.

The relationship between attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb and the rest of the constructs shows a medium or low correlation. Our interpretation of this finding should be made in relation to Table 2. Consumers show high concern on the measures of preventing COVID-19, but at the same time, there is no high-level correlation with the rest of the constructs under study. Therefore, consumers are worried about the type of measures adopted by Airbnb, but this is not highly impacting their attitudes towards Airbnb in Spain and even less in the US.

In order to analyze the joint influence of such constructs on booking intentions, we regressed the constructs of interest on booking intention. As Table 4 shows, in both samples the constructs of the TRA (attitude towards Airbnb and subjective norm) influence the booking intention. Furthermore, the relationship between attitude toward health and sanitation in Airbnb and purchase intention is different for each sample. For the US sample, there is no effect between attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb and purchase intentions ($\beta = 0,076$, $p = 0,063$; $p > 0,05$). For the Spanish sample, results reveal a negative relationship with the outcome variable ($\beta = -0,210$, $p = 0,000$; $p < 0,05$), i.e. when attitude towards health and sanitation increased, the purchase intention towards Airbnb would negatively decrease.

CONCLUSION

Peer-to-peer platforms are growing in multiple domains, including tourism. Examples such as Airbnb, HomeAway, Sabbaticalhomes for accommodation, Uber, Carpool, and others in transport, are becoming more popular in the circular economy. Initially intended for developing Customer-to-Customer (C2C) relationships, its use has been expanded as a commercial activity that competes with other providers in the same market. As a result, travelers are increasingly adopting these types of platforms for booking their accommodation.

This study analyzes customers' purchase intentions in shared accommodation derived from the COVID-19 pandemic. The new scenario of the COVID-19 has forced governments to enforce travel restrictions, and some hotel chains have closed their properties. In such a context, Airbnb has become an alternative in the accommodation or just a preferred option for those who wish to keep away from social interaction. Beyond the current situation derived from the pandemic, it is also crucial to analyze the future of this peer-to-peer type of accommodation. Therefore, this study examines the current situation and the consumers' intention to book Airbnb in two countries, the US and Spain, through online surveys.

The studies' main conclusions are as follows: first, Airbnb is becoming more relevant in tourists' booking accommodation choices. Although hotels are still the most preferred option, Airbnb has seen a drastic increase in popularity and acceptance. The data shows that 85% of the Spaniards have used Airbnb during the last year, and 74,1% of Americans have used it during the pandemic. As stated earlier in this paper, these results need to be considered with caution because they might be attributed to multiple causes.

Second, the Spanish travelers rank anti-COVID-19 protection measures as the first factor in importance for booking accommodation. The US travelers rank Airbnb health protocols as a second important factor for booking this P2P accommodation. This finding is clearly affected by a high concern on the threat of the frightening disease that has changed dramatically the traditional criteria used by the consumers in choosing accommodation. Indeed, tourist literature had suggested that under typical normality, tourists tend to grant importance to other factors such as location, price, facilities, services, and online reviews from social media. In our study, the location and price are ranked as the second and third factors in importance, respectively, while facilities, services, and online reviews are ranked with less importance. These results were similar for hotel bookings. In fact, in hotels, the anti-COVID-19 measures are also ranked as the first factor in importance. However, when we accumulate the first, second, and third factors of importance, we find that price is the most relevant factor, followed by

location and anti-COVID-19 measures. This suggests that the anti-COVID-19 measures are granted high importance in both accommodation types, but its importance is higher in Airbnb than in hotels. This might be attributed to a higher level of trust in hotels than in Airbnb. Extending this view, maybe travelers rely more on established options, such as hotels, than on peer-to-peer providers.

Third, by looking at the future intentions of booking through Airbnb, the results of this study show that in both countries the attitude towards Airbnb and subjective norm have influence on future booking intentions in Airbnb. The attitude towards health and sanitation in Airbnb has a negative impact in Spain or a very low impact in the US sample, and previous use of Airbnb is only relevant for the Spanish sample, but not significant for the US sample.

Organizations in the hospitality industry must adapt quickly and efficiently to rebuild trust and excitement in consumers. With revenue losses in the billions across the globe, fear at an all-time high, and the economy at an all-time low, the challenges facing the tourism industry are astounding. Findings from this study confirm that consumers prioritize cleaning and sanitation when traveling and are acutely focused on the cleanliness of their surroundings. Airbnb put a strong foot forward when they promptly released their cleaning protocols handbook and integrated a badge into hosts' homepage marketing the commitment to cleanliness by those hosts. Results from this study prove that Airbnb and other organizations in the peer-to-peer and the hospitality industries should focus attention on marketing hygiene and sanitation protocols followed to ensure guest safety. This should lead consumers to feel an increase in the level of trust from customer-to-customer interactions. Given the critical importance of online reviews, hosts are encouraged to take extra steps to mitigate the impacts of undesirable reviews and ratings on their webpages through service recovery systems.

The conclusions of these two studies are subject to some limitations. First, despite the similar results obtained from both countries in some of the constructs under investigation, results should be used with caution because of the sample composition and the differences in both study contexts. In this sense, the US sample is younger than the Spanish sample. When it comes to Airbnb studies, market penetration in the US is higher than in Spain. Indeed, the US has the highest number of listings of any country in the world. Second, this study has not explicitly addressed the type of destination. It might be possible to find some differences based on destinations based on rural versus urban areas. Lastly, the booking time might influence some of the results because during the last months, the pandemic situation has evolved drastically each week and different locations are affected in different ways. Future studies should address both the type of destination and time-series analysis to monitor changes over time.

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