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Social Responsibility and Airbnb Hosts: Voices from Northern Cyprus

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Abstract: This study examined relevant linkages between motivational factors to be the owner of P2P accommodation (Airbnb host) and being active in pro-environmental and pro-social actions in life practices using a qualitative research method. Our study contributes to the literature associating the motivations of being an Airbnb host and being active in sustainability issues under the framework of moral values. Furthermore, the study analyzed whether an individual awareness of sustainability practices by Airbnb hosts influences their motivations for social responsibility actions in their hosting practices. The key themes followed were 'Community Engagement and Pro-Social Practices', 'Environmental Consciousness and Pro-environmental Practices', 'Family Values on Moral Identity and Legal Compliance', and 'Restoration and Cultural Heritage'. Findings revealed that hosts stress the importance of the level of environmental consciousness that is gained from education in fostering social responsibility. Respondents believed that teaching cultural heritage, environmental awareness, and ethical values, especially to children, is crucial to building a responsible society. Additionally, participants expressed a sense of social responsibility through the restoration of idle and old houses, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage and historical structures. As a context of the moral identity issue of respondent hosts, the influence of family values on the development of moral identity was highlighted. The findings of the study showed that hosts work in a team to implement necessary projects for the benefit of society. The study ends with a discussion of the findings and relevant suggestions for the industry.

Keywords: moral identity; social responsibility; Airbnb hosts; pro-social; pro-environmental attitudes.

JEL Classification: Q01; Q56; M14; L83; Z32; R11.

Introduction

The expansion of the new approach to the sharing economy all over the globe has affected the tourism and hospitality sectors simultaneously. Scholars in the tourism and hospitality sector discussed the sharing economy platforms as a peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation model of hospitality (Dolnicar 2021; Karahan and Nergiz 2021; Kuhzady, *et al.* 2022; Mody *et al.* 2021). Airbnb is the most researched sharing economy case study in academia under different circumstances such as perceptions of guests and hosts in several academic disciplines (Barnes and Kirshner 2021; Gössling *et al.* 2021). Scholars also mentioned that Airbnb leads to socio-economic advantages for hosts and guests such as increasing social interaction, providing authentic travel experience, and extra income for individuals (Lalicic and Weismayer 2017; Mody, *et al.* 2019; Zhu *et al.* 2019). In contrast, other groups of scholars highlighted that Airbnb caused many negative socio and economic impacts on communities including unethical behaviors, and illegal economic operations (Cheng and Foley 2018; Farmaki *et al.* 2022).

Airbnb hosts' attitudes through morality principles provide a better understanding of either positive or negative concerns of sharing economy practices (Farmaki *et al.* 2022). Because self-regulation may alleviate regulatory challenges that can otherwise impede innovation elicited by the opportunities offered through P2P

exchanges, Airbnb hosts who aim to share local knowledge and experiences as responsible persons are key in the efforts to regulate the growing phenomenon (Farmaki and Kaniadakis 2018; Farmaki *et al.* 2022).

This study uses the theory of moral identity to understand the moral responsibility and norms of Airbnb hosts in their hosting practices of P2P accommodations. Following the purpose of the study, the moral identity theory was chosen to provide a better understanding regard as the social and environmental issues from the hosts' perspectives in the hospitality sector. Using a moral identity method is essential to investigate participants' opinions of environmental and civic action initiatives from the standpoint of their moral principles (Jia *et al.* 2017). In this regard, scholars identified that there is a close correlation between the moral identities and practices of Airbnb hosts in recent literature (Farmaki 2019; Kunwar 2020).

After a critical review of the recent literature on Airbnb as a sharing economy case in the tourism and hospitality sector, the authors realized that there is still a floor to do more research on sustainability issues, especially in the unique context of Northern Cyprus. Mainly, there is a gap in how Airbnb promotes eco-friendly and sustainable travel, as well as its effects on the environment and local communities (Ding *et al.* 2023). Secondly, recent studies outlined that scholars should use qualitative approaches to examine more sustainability-related issues (Molina *et al.* 2022). Lastly, more studies on the factors that encourage environmentally conscious behaviour changes among individuals in various contexts—like restaurants, hotels, or destinations—are needed by academia (Han 2021).

This study associates the motivations of being an Airbnb host and being active in sustainability issues under the framework of moral values. In this context, there are three main motivations of individuals to prefer to accommodate Airbnb options: sustainability (social and environmental aspects), community (socializing with locals), and economic advantages (low cost) (Tussyadiah and Zach 2015). Additionally, six general motivational factors affect individuals' attitudes toward being an environmental volunteer; contributing to the community; social interaction; personal development; learning about the environment; a general ethic of care for the environment, and an attachment to a particular place (Measham and Barnett 2008)

Academic studies on Airbnb hosts mostly focused on their online profiles including rental prices, discrimination attitudes, and psychological reasons for being hosts and most of the studies showed that individuals would like to become hosts mainly for financial benefits and social interactions (Cheng and Zhang 2019). Considering the main motivations defined in the literature; this study focused on examining relevant linkages between financial/non-financial motivational factors to be the owner of P2P accommodation (Airbnb host) and being active in pro-environmental and pro-social actions into the life practices. The main research question of the study is "what are the reasons for being an Airbnb host and being a proactive individual in sustainable issues." Moreover, the study observes if individuals' awareness of sustainability practices may influence their pro-environmental and pro-social actions in their hosting practices. These behaviors are said to be necessary for the well-being of people and the planet (Rezapouraghdam *et al.* 2023).

1. Literature Review

1.1. Sharing Economy

The concept of a sharing economy is a very controversial issue in academia due to the positive and negative approaches from different scholars. Therefore, the sharing economy (SE), often a confusing concept used interchangeably with numerous other terms, is worthy of research (Cheng 2016; Keogh *et al.* 2022). The first SE' activities were projected for charitable ideals such as bicycle-sharing (name as Freecycle) and home-sharing (name as Couchsurfing) online platforms (Belk 2014). However, the platforms of Couchsurfing (sharing accommodation) and Freecycle (sharing bicycles) turned to a profit-based ideology (Belk 2014). Unlike Couchsurfing, which is a free network for room sharing- not an entire property (Altinay and Babak 2019), Airbnb is one example of an accommodation-sharing business that charges for the service (Corten *et al.* 2019). Over the past ten years, academics have begun to examine sharing economy services like Airbnb and Uber, and this trend is expected to continue given their rising popularity (Corten *et al.* 2019). Over the past ten years, academics have begun to examine sharing economy services like Airbnb and Uber, and this trend is expected to continue given their rising popularity. According to academics, the sharing economy can be broadly characterized by four principles: financial rewards, internet marketing platforms, mutualist persons, and product accession rather than possession (Belk 2014; Keogh *et. al.* 2022; Stephany 2015).

The most well-known example of the P2P accommodation model is Airbnb, which may be characterized as the most obvious business platform used by hosts and guests to maintain lodging services for tourists (Chuah *et al.* 2022; Karahan and Nergiz 2021; Nogalski and Agnieszka 2019). When it comes to sharing millions of housing possibilities with people worldwide, Airbnb was named the biggest sharing economy accommodation

platform in 2019. Over seven million individuals use it (Airbnb 2019; Keogh *et al.* 2022). Moreover, by communicating with locals through Airbnb, visitors can have an authentic experience (Molz 2013; Tussyadiah and Pesonen 2016), which helps people make money from creating and selling goods. As an illustration, activities like dining, painting, dancing, sightseeing, and so on can rise (Altinay and Babak 2019, Atsız *et al.* 2022). Therefore, the demand for the genuine local experience, distinctive character, and cozy atmosphere rather than financial income provided by P2P accommodations (home benefits) and for face-to-face interactions with hosts and local communities (social benefits) are driving the industry's rapid expansion (Kuhzady *et al.* 2022).

According to the CSR principles, Airbnb has projects to increase its reputation as being the biggest sharing economy platform. For example, it achieved collaboration with the 'Make-A-Wish' project, which is one of the world's leading children's charities, several projects completed and ongoing for homeless persons, and 'Open Homes' projects for people who are affected by COVID-19, dramatic natural disasters such as earthquake, fire etc. and 'Project Light House' for protecting human rights and in against any discrimination policies, supporting environmental sustainability programs for reducing carbon emissions, and guiding hosts and guest to be more careful for sustainable actions, projects for LGBT individuals (Airbnb 2023). Moreover, Airbnb concentrates on 'anti-discrimination' policies that restrict host's applications to choose their customers and it introduced a slogan that 'Airbnb for Everyone' (Farmaki and Kladou 2020).

1.2. Social Responsibility and Airbnb

Many tourism destinations and hospitality businesses have begun to give their CSR projects a top priority in the current volatile industry (*e.g.* Karatepe *et al.* 2024; Nourafkan *et al.* 2024). Responsibility in general, and social responsibility specifically is a very broad concept to define in a definite meaning simply, can be defined and categorized from one person to another. Responsibility is an important behavior that every individual should have. It can be defined as individual behavior and responsibilities of the event falling within the jurisdiction both morally and legally (Filiz and Demirhan 2018). Another definition of responsibility at the individual level is as follows; even in situations where there is nothing personally gained from such behavior, people who care about their fellow citizens, participate in group activities that promote shared interests, and feel accountable to society will be concerned about finding solutions to and ending difficulties for others (Rahimah *et al.* 2018). Self-selected objectives are simpler to accomplish, and people are more inclined to follow the road of justice when they are aware of the duty placed upon them (Takala and Pallab 2000).

In general, social responsibility refers to program practices that emphasize social challenges impacting modern, global cultures and communities as well as advocating for the needs of others (Coskun *et al.* 2023; Yetis and Aktas 2021). Human rights, social justice, and community involvement are among the humanitarian concepts that are seen to be intimately tied to social responsibility (Coskun *et al.* 2023; Yetis and Aktas 2021).

A person's caring for others, keeping their word, engaging in society, putting others' needs first, and trying to make the world a better place are all examples of social responsibility (Filiz and Demirhan 2018). It is the moral duty of the many interest groups in society to work together to make strategic management decisions that will save the environment (Takala and Pallab 2000).

Figure 1. Caroll's Four-Part Definition of CSR

Source: Carroll and Shabana (2010).

The above-mentioned figure known as Carroll's pyramid for defining four main concepts of CSR, originally stated as follows: "Corporate social responsibility encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (philanthropic) expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time" (Carroll and Shabana 2010). As shown in Figure 1, the four main aspects and their effects on the society of CSR are summarized. Figure 1 introduces the cycle of CSR including what is desired and required from society (individuals) and how society (individuals) should act to achieve benefits gained from them. This list of four duties establishes a framework or infrastructure that aids in defining and characterizing the specific obligations that businesses have toward the society in which they operate (Carroll and Shabana 2010).

From another perspective, scholars created the 'Collective Social Responsibility Model' regards as to criticize the existing vision of CSR which includes three concepts, those are Individual Social Responsibility, Group Social Responsibility, and Corporate Social Responsibility as shown in Figure 2 (Socorro *et al.* 2022). The triangle shown in Figure 2 is the combination of acts that demonstrate a strong and high dedication to upholding ethical and legal commitments that are connected to a company's credibility and reputation.

Figure 2. Collective Social Responsibility Model

Source: Socorro *et al.* 2022

1.3. Moral Identity

The word 'moral' can be accepted as unique and its meaning can be introduced differently from one to another. For instance, there is a greater need and responsibility to act in accordance with one's moral concerns when morality plays a significant role in one's sense of self and identity (Aktürk 2021). According to the definition of "identity," which is a self-concept or self-definition, a moral identity is a particular type of identity that focuses on the moral elements of the individual (Reynolds and Ceranic 2007). Moral identity is a particular type of identity that centers around the moral aspects or immoral aspects of oneself (Reynolds and Ceranic 2007; Stets and Carter 2011). For instance, asserting a moral identity encompasses definitions that fall on both the moral and immoral ends of the spectrum (Stets and Carter 2011). For example, identity verification occurs when people's perceptions of who they are in certain circumstances align with their moral identity standard, regardless of whether the verification is on the moral or immoral end of the spectrum (Stets and Carter 2011). People are generally characterized as being principled, modest, selfless, courteous, fair, helpful, generous, and compassionate (Mumcu 2022). Furthermore, when the self-importance of moral identity is high, it undermines the effectiveness of moral disengagement mechanisms that rationalize harming others (Narvaez and Lapsley 2009).

From an overall perspective, one potential element of a person's social self-schema is their moral identity, which is based on a set of associations between moral traits like kindness, compassion, helpfulness, and caring (Aquino and Reed 2002).

2. Method

The study used qualitative research which explores and provides deeper insights into real-world problems (Akhshik *et al.* 2022; Tenny *et al.* 2017). The chosen research method fits well into the aim of the study to understand the level of sustainability knowledge and practices of owners of Airbnb. As an overview, a qualitative research approach is based on subjective rules for understanding the questions of the social world and human beings with its research methods while contributing to assisting in the fundamental quest for contextual depth (Chowdhury 2015).

This method allows researchers to conduct formal discussions and interviews to gain a deeper understanding of individual experiences by using qualitative designs and methods to investigate human experiences in depth (Alharahsheh and Pius 2020; Alipour *et al.* 2021). A semi-structured interview is one of the qualitative research methods that allows the researcher to understand the observed phenomenon comprehensively (Adams 2015; Kallio *et al.* 2016).

Data collection was completed in December 2023. Direct and face-to-face interaction and communication with hosts was a useful and appropriate method for making them more relaxed and sharing their thoughts objectively. The study applied the purposive sampling technique to reach the desirable outcomes of the primary data. The purposive sampling technique is used for discovering and choosing instances that will make the best use of the limited research resources by choosing respondents who are most likely to provide relevant and helpful information (Campbell 2020; Etikan 2016). This technique is often used in qualitative research, a relatively small and purposively selected sample may be employed to increase the depth of understanding where the researcher wants to gain detailed knowledge about a specific phenomenon rather than make statistical inferences (Campbell 2020; Obilor 2023).

3. Sample

There is a total 20 number of Airbnb properties active in Famagusta Walled Town in Northern Cyprus. The researcher contacted all of the hosts and explained the aim of the research. However, some hosts refused to attend interviews, so the data collection was completed with seventy-five percent of the total number of hosts. Overall, 15 hosts have been interviewed (Table 1).

Table 1. Profile of Airbnb hosts and their accommodation type

Participation No.	Gender	Age	Occupation	Property Type
P1	Male	30	Owner of Snack Shop & PhD Student	Entire Property
P2	Female	45	Municipality Public Relations Officer	Entire Property
P3	Male	75	Retired District Governor	Bed & Breakfast Hotel
P4	Male	50	Mechanical Engineer	Bed & Breakfast Hotel
P5	Male	55	Doctor, Former Member of Parliament	Entire Property
P6	Male	34	Owner of Coffee Shop & PhD Student	Entire Property
P7	Male	29	Businessperson	Entire Property
P8	Female	52	Retired Engineer	Bed & Breakfast Hotel
P9	Male	70	Doctor	Entire Property
P10	Female	30	Owner of Bag Shop, Pharmacist	Entire Property
P11	Male	39	Owner of Customs Clearance Company	Entire Property
P12	Female	53	Owner of the Shipping Agency	Bed & Breakfast Hotel
P13	Female	63	Owner of Souvenir Shop	Entire Property
P14	Female	38	Accountant Officer & PhD Student	Entire Property
P15	Female	54	Professor of Architect	Entire Property

Source: Authors.

Participants' gender, age, occupation, and kind of property are displayed in Table 1. Out of all the participants, only four facilitate properties that offer bed and breakfast accommodations; the remaining members rent out their complete homes to Airbnb guests.

The interview questions of the study were adapted from previous literature (*e.g.*, Farmaki *et al.* 2022; Socorro *et al.* 2022). For example, we asked 'Why did you decide to be the host', 'Can you describe the meaning of CSR', 'Which moral traits do you think an Airbnb host must have' and so forth (Farmaki *et al.* 2022; Socorro *et*

al. 2022). Because the official language is not English in Cyprus, a back translation method was applied. All interviews were completed in Turkish and then answers were translated into English. After completion of interviews, interviewed hosts coded as 'Participant (P) 1, 2, 3' into the study.

4. Research Results and Discussion

The research focused on examining the relationship between being an Airbnb host and being a proactive individual on sustainable issues. Therefore, the hosts answered the question to define 'social responsibility' in their own understanding and words. Most of the interviews answer this question specifically thinking of their responsibilities for the Famagusta Walled City.

4.1 Motivational Factors of Airbnb Hosts

In accordance with these statements given from respondents about their reasons for becoming a host on the Airbnb platform, Table 2 is created under two main categories to understand whether they bought a new property or renovated the existing property to be a host. In this first theme, the motivational factors of Airbnb hosts will be discussed under the principles of the sharing economy and social responsibility approaches to examine its link to the motivational factors of Airbnb hosts.

Table 2. The main motivational factors of Airbnb hosts

Buying New Properties	*I bought an old factory building for myself, after I got divorced and since I am an architect, I wanted to turn it into a house and settle down, I decided to apply Airbnb platform to complete my renovation with the income I earned. (P2)*
	I decided to invest in tourism for the future of the island, so I got into this business and bought a property. (P1)
	We are here to gain qualified accommodation for the region and tourism. (P4)
Renovating Existed Properties	*We had two houses that we did not use, so we decided to rent those houses for tourists for the benefit of society. (P10)*
	This was a building inherited from my family, it was an old inn, we wanted to bring this value to life. (P12)
	After completing the restoration of our empty and idle house, we put it on its platform for the benefit of society. (P7)
	My children did not have a job, so we decided to transform our already existing garden into the hospitality sector. (P3)
	Since it is a family heirloom, we wanted to transform this structure, we wanted to bring it to the society, we wanted to bring it to the culture (P8)
	I wanted to renovate our old and unused house inherited from my family and I became a member of this platform. (P14)

Source: Authors.

The first group of respondents (P1, P2, P4) expressed that it is a strategic decision to invest in tourism as a means of contributing to the future of the island. They stated that they are entrepreneurs for future generations. Investment is viewed as a forward-looking approach to economic development and sustainability. Some of them shared that they preferred to be a host for community benefit and provide better or qualified accommodation options for a place. These findings can address an issue in the literature that is illustrated by some groups of scholars viewed the sharing economy as a new economic shape of consumption and entrepreneurship as well due to the emergence of the digital age so the sharing economy may introduce a new era for economic facilities through all around the world (Altinay and Babak 2019; Cohen 2016; Haq *et al.* 2020; Meilä 2018).

Within this context, the expansion of the use of digital platforms motivates individuals to invest in P2P accommodation sectors professionally as it is empirically evaluated in academia. In addition to the above-mentioned statements the first group of respondents, highlighted that their investment is not only financial

earnings, but also contributing to the benefit of society. Therefore, the decision to rent out houses for tourists is framed as a service to the community. Considering Carol's four principles of the CSR triangle, contribution to the community is accepted as one of the positive practices of CSR by an individual (Chuah *et al.* 2022).

The second group of respondents categorized under the motivation of the theme of transforming idle or empty properties into assets for the community is recurrent. Participants like P10, P7, P14, and P8 mention the decision to rent or restore houses that were not in use, turning them into accommodations for the broader society. This can be accepted as one of the important aims of the sharing economy. For instance, the existence of platforms in the sharing economy opens easy applications for unused products by individuals who start to rely less on their private ownership simultaneously (Zhang *et al.* 2022). Regarding the statements, the transformation of unused properties for usage by others is a significant motivation of respondents under the principles of a sharing economy. The second group of respondents added that there is a desire to preserve family heirlooms and contribute to the culture by transforming ancestral structures like P8. Therefore, there is decision to engage in the hospitality sector is tied to a broader goal of cultural preservation and sharing.

These factors collectively highlight a range of motivations, including economic considerations, family dynamics, community benefit, and a sense of cultural and historical responsibility. Those findings can be examined under the 'Collective Social Responsibility Model' that introduced that each positive behaviour of the individual is an added value to the society which creates wealth and promotes a sustainable community. As an aim of reaching a sustainable society, quality is prioritized over quantity which means individuals need to be made aware of the boundaries of self-interest and their moral obligations to the larger society in a world where individuality is valued highly (Takala and Pallab 2000). In this sense, each respondent brings a unique perspective to their involvement in the hospitality sector in FWC, reflecting a multifaceted approach to contributing to the broader societal context.

Quotations given in Table 2 counted as good practices of social responsibility. A person's caring for societal values and human beings, engaging in society, and trying to make the world a better place are all examples of social responsibility (Filiz and Demirhan 2018). In sum, from the provided statements from Airbnb hosts, it is evident that there are several recurring themes related to the reasons why individuals decided to invest in tourism or engage in the hospitality sector.

4.2 Restoration and Cultural Heritage

Participants express a sense of social responsibility through the restoration of idle and old houses, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage and historical structures. Some participants mentioned that the restoration of unused ancient properties is a part of social responsibility. For instance, ''*Social responsibility means the restoration of idle houses, it means the restoration of old houses. We do not earn a huge amount of the renovation costs that we invest in tourism, but we have a responsibility to this community* (P1).'' Moreover, P2 says that; *"Airbnb hosting is very important in means of social responsibility, many houses that are idle houses gained a value in the Famagusta Walled City due to practicing of Airbnb in Famagusta and I am very happy that they are being a part of this renovation, it makes a good contribution to this community."* In addition to these, P12 shared that *"Restoring a building without damaging its natural structure is one of the most important social responsibilities"*. Airbnb hosting is seen as a means of social responsibility, contributing to the value and renovation of idle houses in the community. Participants believe that this practice makes a positive contribution to the overall well-being of the community.

Some respondents commented that contributing to cultural heritage and sharing knowledge with visitors is a social responsibility. As noted by P6 *"I contribute to cultural heritage as a social responsibility because tourists visit historical places, I make suggestions and give information when they ask me."* This statement can be accepted as one of the socio-economic advantages of Airbnb, which provides good practices between hosts and guests. (Lalicic and Weismayer 2017; Mody *et al.* 2019). Another host argued that *"Our property is completely Ottoman Style,...We strive to introduce our values, tradition, culture, and history to our guests."* (P3)

According to the statements under this theme, Airbnb provides ground in terms of social interaction, authentic travel experience, and extra income for hosts (Zhu *et al.* 2019). Therefore, hosts view their role in providing necessary information and suggestions to tourists as a form of social responsibility. Findings thus contribute to the cultural heritage in terms of educating visitors about historical places to enhance their overall knowledge experience.

4.3 Family Values on Moral Identity and Legal Compliance

The study sought to understand the relationship between moral values (identities) and socially responsible individuals. Most of the respondents share that family values have a strong influence on the development of the moral identity of a person. When someone intentionally creates an identity centered on moral issues and feels strongly obligated and committed to living in accordance with those concerns, that person is said to have a moral identity (Aktürk 2021). In other words, individuals who possess a stronger sense of moral identity are more likely to make lasting moral commitments and act morally. In line with this argument, P9 stated that: *"My family values are very important, my parents were very attached to their children and the family structure, so our moral values were very high. In this respect, I am sensitive to the environment and society."* P8 added: *''Since I learned from my family, I am sensitive to society and I respect the rights of other people, I act according to the rules of nature and moral ethical values. What I learned from my mother, I try to teach my children that everything material and spiritual has a value and that we should not consume more than we need."*

As a context of the moral identity issue of respondent hosts, the influence of family values on the development of moral identity was highlighted. Respondents attributed their sensitivity to environmental and social issues to the values instilled by their families during their upbringing. Furthermore, hosts answered that moral values gained from education and their families, and it has a very strong link to being socially responsible individuals.

4.4 Environmental Consciousness and Pro-Environmental Practices

Some respondent hosts commented that the level of environmental consciousness and the importance of environmental issues is the primary social responsibility both for our community and the entire world. Within this context, P15 mentioned that *"I am an architect, I know that there is only one world, we are using more environmentally friendly products for the wellbeing of our community"* and P 14 stated that *"Especially after I learned that that is one real which is the 'Global Warming' I start to be more sensitive about my consumption such as while I am using water and electric because of thinking the future of the world for coming generation rather than its cost.".* Such comments demonstrate that there is a strong positive understanding of the ecological concerns of hosts.

Moreover, changing people's attitudes toward ecological and consciousness, individual social responsibility will increase people's concern for confronting and resolving ecological catastrophes (Rahimah *et al.* 2018). Respondent hosts shared that awareness of social responsibility can be increased during childhood time and with a good education such as P5 *"It is very important that children are taught about environmental issues and culture by teachers, and it will be very important for children to touch nature and textures of historical building".* A subset of hosts identified themselves as knowledgeable and experienced in pro-environmental practices since they had lived and studied overseas. A few quotations from these instances are included below. P1 mentioned; *"When I was living abroad, I had experience and awareness of waste separation (recycling), but it does not happen in this country. If I could, I would do it, I did it in Germany."* Moreover, P14 stated that *"I have attended several volunteer actives in Europe to understand the importance of being an active citizen for contributing to the sustainable world."*

The study pursued to discover how individual social responsibility influences the hosting practices of Airbnb hosts. All participants focused on the level of their consumption such as water, electricity, fresh products, and so forth. While answering related questions those are accepted as pro-environmental actions of hosts. For instance, *"There is no food waste, etc., we give the leftover bread from breakfast to the fish, tomatoes, cucumbers, turtles, most of the time the guests eat with the turtles".* P3 and *"I take the plastic bottles left by the guests for recycling to the factories. I take the food waste to my mother's chickens and our dog."* P2. Additionally, all participants highlighted the importance of the consumption of water and electricity based on the sustainable environment and its costs. These arguments are illustrated in the excerpts below. P6 argued that; *"I always say that water is life, and I use electricity sparingly in order not to consume the natural resources of the world ... We do this both financially and as a general consumption of the country".*

Findings as mentioned above demonstrate that hosts stress the importance of the level of environmental consciousness that is gained from education in fostering social responsibility. They believe that teaching cultural heritage, environmental awareness, and ethical values, especially to children, is a crucial aspect of building a responsible society. Additionally, given quotations indicated that hosts owing environmental sensitivity and leading pro-environmental practices in their Airbnb practices.

4.5 Community Engagement and Pro - Social Practices

Engaging with communities and pursuing pro-social behaviors are developed from the analysis of study findings. One of the reasons for choosing Airbnb accommodation consists of social sustainability that leads to an advantage in community well-being (Tussyadiah and Zach 2015). In this framework, supporting local businesses and products can be demonstrated through the benefit of the community. The P2P accommodation, a peer-to-peer sharing model where one of the sharing parties shares their assets, is where most sharing economy activities related to collaborative consumption occur (Karahan and Nergiz 2021).

Respondent hosts who are facilitating bed and breakfast types of accommodation mentioned that the P2P accommodation industry supports local businesses and products in society. This can be accepted as collective sharing with other stakeholders. For instance, P4 stated *"I always try to buy and use domestic products, we give priority to people who do small-scale business, which is a social responsibility."* In this regard, the sharing economy practices including P2P open a new way of earning for locals such as producing and selling their local foods while providing traditional experiences (Molz 2013; Zhang *et al.* 2022).

Additionally, hosts argued that using local products in their P2P accommodations affects guests' rebuy intentions. For instance, P8 *"I use domestic products to show that there is production in the country and quality products are produced. And if they are interested in it, I will help my guests to visit producing places of those products"*. Such comments interpret that respondent hosts shared that social responsibility is reflected in the preference for domestic products and support for small-scale businesses. Respondents actively choose to buy and use local products, contributing to the local economy and emphasizing responsible consumption.

On the other hand, contributing to the community; social interaction; personal development; and an attachment to a particular place are approaches to social responsibility (Measham and Barnett 2008) In this regard, hosts identified good practices of pro-social behaviors with the guest-oriented practices. Some examples of these viewpoints are the statements that follow. For instance, P10 declared; *"We always ask our guests if they would like to socialize with us, and if they want we prefer to go local places with them to give them a chance to taste local products."* P14 asserted; *"When I welcome my guests, I always tell them they should be free when they need anything about me including emergency and socializing issues."* P8 discussed; *"Socializing with my guests is particularly important to me, I like to hear their stories and share my stories as well. I continued to stay in contact with some of my guests. I became a friend with some of my guests and visited them in their countries too."*

On the other hand, more than half of hosts are regularly active in civil society institutions in their private lives. Findings illustrated that hosts pay attention to personal development and knowledge sharing with others. Moreover, hosts demonstrate place attachment is a crucially crucial factor for community wellbeing. While majority of hosts are a member of a civil society association named MASDER which is *"...working on issues such as protecting the historical texture of FMC and preventing inappropriate interventions into this area."* (P4) and *"I am a board member of MASDER and we aim to protect FWC from all kinds of harmful applications to destroy its historical texture."* Moreover, some of them are members of 'Famagusta City Museum' association *"We are doing projects to highlight the memory of the city, to highlight the urban culture, to integrate the past and future of the city"* and *"We are trying to collect our culture from the past to the present, let's open a city museum."* (P1) Those two associations focused on creating projects for the well-being of FWC.

Additionally, some participants mentioned that they are very active in civil societies that are implementing green activities such as increasing consciousness of the environment and charity activities for disadvantaged individuals. Findings illustrated that hosts choose to be active in pro-social behaviors such as civic actions for community well-being. The statements below support this view. P2; *"I am on the board of directors of the Green Famagusta Association, and we care for the cleaning of our city such as beaches, green areas of town, etc."* P 14; *"I am a board member of Famagusta Lions Club, we are working on collecting charities and creating projects for the benefit of individuals such as donating school bags, shoes, and medical support for kids of the completed projects."* The findings of the study showed that hosts work in a team to implement necessary projects for the benefit of society. Within this view, hosts can take responsibility on a collective level through community engagement and pro-social activities.

Conclusion and Further Research

According to the results of the study, hosts emphasized that they naturally take actions to safeguard the environment and contribute to the sustainable growth of the Famagusta Walled City. Their social responsibility is presented under three classes such as restoration of idle houses, sharing knowledge with visitors, and using local products. The study's objective was to comprehend the knowledge and awareness of social responsibilities

before examining moral values' attachment to them. In this regard, the meaning of 'social responsibility' can be summed up so that hosts can continue their social responsibilities emphatically at the individual level. For instance, as they are a host, their social responsibilities can grow from individual level to different gatherings of people including people from their own local area, and people from unfamiliar networks. Airbnb hosts are respected through principles of moral identities, such as the 'discretion system', 'acting of advantage of human prosperity', and 'legitimate and moral responsibilities'. Respondents stated that they control their utilization for thinking about the eventual fate of the world and sustainable environment. Hosts demonstrated values and characters can be gained from education and families at early ages and this has a significant influence on an individual's entire life to be delicate on sensitive social responsibility issues.

Furthermore, there are areas of strength for environmental responsibility, with respondents utilizing harmless to the ecosystem items, being aware of water and power utilization, and effectively following recycling practices. Solar panels are one sustainable energy option that some of the participants have adopted. A strong commitment to environmental awareness and sustainable practices can be seen in the statements provided. For instance, statements by and large delineate a guarantee to ecological consciousness, gaining from international experiences, taking part in volunteer exercises for positive global effect, and coordinating manageability into scholarly pursuits. On a personal and academic level, these people demonstrate a proactive approach to comprehending and addressing environmental issues.

The study results demonstrate that Airbnb hosts endeavor to introduce local values, history, and socio-cultural personality to visitors. This incorporates exhibiting traditional designs, acquainting visitors with local products, and creations, and sharing data about the town. For example, some of the respondents take the initiative rather than the necessary responsibilities of being hosts and they participate in favorable social activities with their guests, like taking them to neighborhood places, acquainting them with homegrown and local creation offices, and effectively partaking in local area occasions. Moreover, respondents noticed that purchasing nearby items for their P2P offices is a sort of liability through supporting neighborhood economy.

As hosts expressed that they are touchy in tightening support of pro-social behaviors into their hosting practices. One of Airbnb's emerging concepts is sustainability and community issues, as stated in the study's literature section. Consequently, the practices of hosts are genuine models' of social association with visitors and being members of civil society institutions for carrying out volunteer activities with place attachment awareness. Even though hosts have for various reasons, they are constantly spurred by a similar fundamental objective, which is to advance and present Famagusta Walled City's rich social heritage. In particular, the study has shown that respondents who are facilitating Airbnb host practices in the Famagusta Walled City have significant efforts to pursue pro-environmental and pro-social behaviors in terms of social responsibility aspects. Although this study provides results from a single case which includes respondents from the Famagusta Walled City district of the northern part of Cyprus, it added value to the literature based on social responsibility issues in the hospitality sector.

Furthermore, this study bridges a gap in the literature by examining the relationships between the motivational variables that lead people to become Airbnb hosts and their participation in pro-environmental and pro-social behaviors in Northern Cyprus. The study provides a distinctive viewpoint on how individual motives interact with more general social responsibility issues by investigating these connections. Additionally, the study used the 'moral identity' theory while discussing the results of respondents under the emerged themes, which contribute to the advancement of the subject, by framing Airbnb hosts' motivations and their acts of social responsibility within the framework of moral values. According to this framework, owner of P2P accommodations can gain a better knowledge of the underlying values that influence their actions and decision-making, as well as the ethical implications of sustainability practices in the travel and tourism sector. Conclusively, this research presents fresh perspectives on the incentives and social responsibility behaviors of Airbnb hosts, contextualized within a framework of moral principles.

Additionally, our study offers region-specific insights into the social responsibility practices and motives of hosts. This regional viewpoint broadens and deepens our comprehension of sustainable tourism approaches at cultural heritage site of the countries. For instance, this study offers novel insights and significant scientific knowledge shaped under the framework of moral values document for policymakers, heritage conservationists, and tourism stakeholders who are seeking to leverage the potential of P2P accommodations like Airbnb to promote sustainable tourism and preserve the unique cultural heritage of the Famagusta Walled City and beyond.

The study collected data from a single country and single area, so the study can be repeated by focusing on cross-country or cross-cultural approaches to make deeper discussions in the future. Furthermore, the study collected data from a cultural heritage side of the country, this could be a reason that the study results highlighted

that Airbnb hosts who are facilitating in Famagusta Walled City have a high sensitivity on social responsibility issues.

Future research could, for example, compare hosts who are doing their practices in cultural or historical heritage sites of cities such as old towns, etc. and other parts of cities. Finally, mixed method research techniques including qualitative and quantitative can provide different types of investigations and results for understanding social responsibility approaches by Airbnb hosts and customers.

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Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

Fetine Bayraktar: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Data Collection, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft.
Hamed Rezapouraghdam: Supervision, Data curation, Validation, Writing – review and editing.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Declaration of use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies

The authors declare that they have not used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies during the preparation of this work.
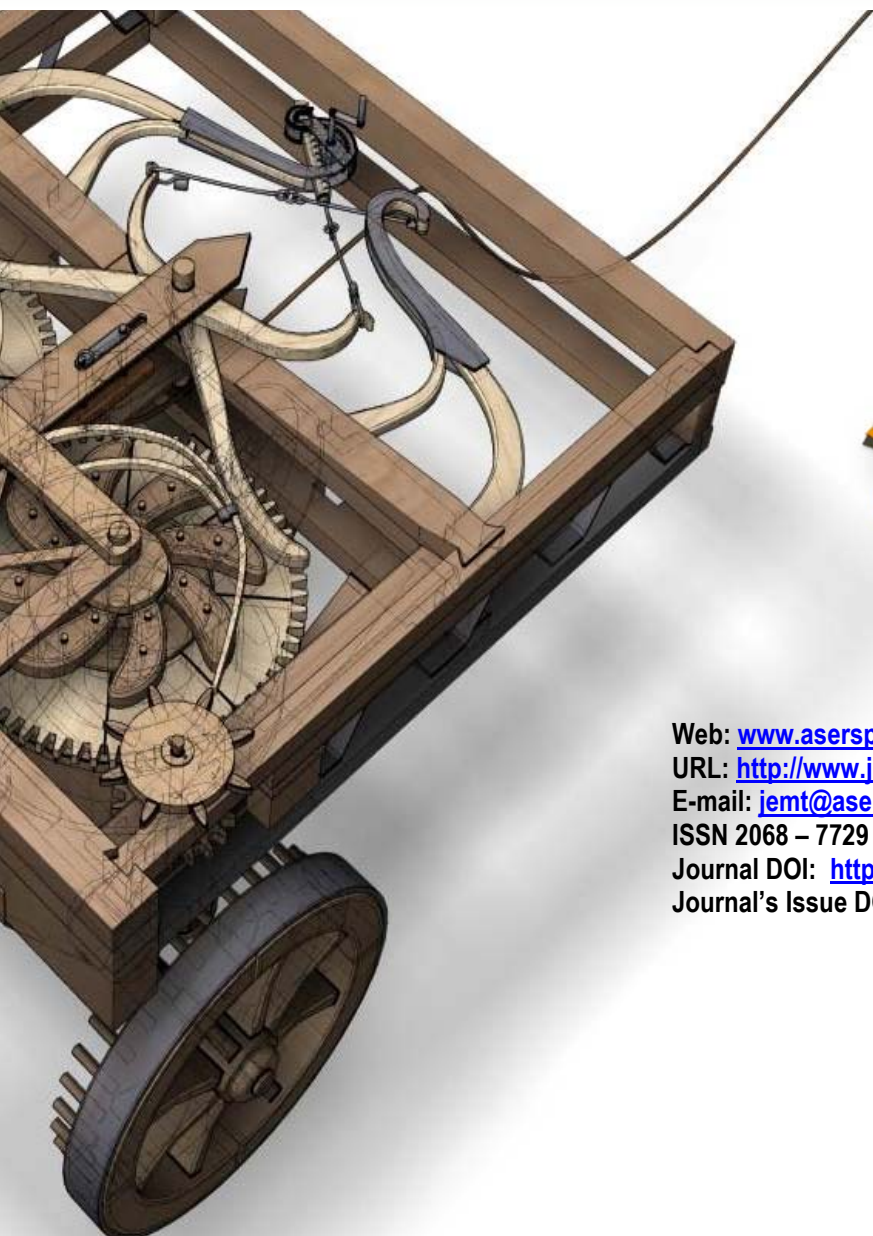
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