A motivation-based segmentation of Italian Airbnb users: an exploratory mixed method approach

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Abstract

Existing studies applying a motivation-based segmentation of Airbnb users are still limited and mainly concentrated in the US; even less are studies applied in the European context. This paper applies an exploratory mixed method approach in Italy, where no study has been published around this research area so far. A qualitative study based on 26 in-depth interviews was carried out to verify if Italians are driven by the same motivations that have been identified by existing literature. Qualitative findings were then used to inform, complemented with a review of the existing literature, to design a survey instrument to collect data. Hence, a factor-cluster analysis was run to profile a sample of 247 Italians based on their motivations to use Airbnb, and a series of chi-square tests was run to investigate whether significant differences exist among clusters based on socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, marital status, level of education, employment status, and annual income). Three clusters were identified ("Enthusiastic Airbnb lovers", "Pragmatic Airbnb users" e "Pragmatic authenticity seekers") with significant differences only based on marital status, level of education and employment status. Contributions to the body of knowledge and managerial implications are discussed and suggestions for further research are given.

Keywords
:
Airbnb; motivations; socio-demographic characteristics; segmentation; mixed method,Italy

Citation

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Del Chiappa, G., Sini, L. and Atzeni, M. (2020). A motivation-based segmentation of Italian Airbnb users: an exploratory mixed method approach. *European Journal of Tourism Research* 25, 2505.