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An Analysis of the Factors behind the Citizen's Attitude of Rejection towards Tourism in a Context of Overtourism and Economic Dependence on This Activity

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Abstract: New tourism trends, such as vacation rentals websites and low-cost tourism, have generated a new environment of interactions between tourism and the citizens. To this, we must add the fortuitous increase in demand in some touristic destinations. This has derived in situations of rejection in traditionally tourism-dependent environments. In this study, which is focused on the city of Barcelona, we use work-field data to analyze the elements that lie behind the popular aversion to tourism. Assuming a non-forced analysis that takes the Social Exchange Theory as a framework, we have determined that the negative economic effects derived from the increase in the number of accommodations destined for vacation rentals and in the demand lie behind this rejection. The main impacts that are perceived directly from these factors are: the increase in residential rentals prices and a shift from a traditional market to one oriented to the tourist with higher prices. It has also been determined that the most vulnerable population groups are those who manifest a stronger rejection, tenants of apartments in city centers, and citizens with a low/medium income, who perceive rises in the prices and a change in the market focus to a larger extent.

Keywords: social sustainability; tourism; sharing economy; economic impacts; overtourism; anti-tourism movements; tourism-phobia

1. Introduction

Tourism is considered to be one of the strategic sectors of the Spanish economy; in 2017, tourism accounted for 14.9% of the national GDP and directly supported 2.8 million jobs, more than any other sector in the economy [1]. The activities linked with tourism have played an important role in the recovery of the economic crisis that has affected the country since 2007. In 2016, tourism contributed in 1.0 points to the growth of the GDP, with the overall Spanish figure being 2.5%, and it was responsible for one out of seven work positions created that year. Worldwide, Spain ranked second in terms of international tourism receipts in 2017, generating USD 87 billion; a figure that is only lower than the United States' (USD 205.9 billion) and China's (USD 114 billion) [2]. The percentage of total jobs that is created by the tourism sector has remained above 10% in the period 2006–2015. Despite these data, a feeling of rejection towards tourism has emerged over the past few years in some tourist

areas. This feeling has manifested in the form of assaults to restaurants, businesses and yachts; attacks on tourist buses, bikes damaged in tourist spots, and other acts of vandalism. They have occurred mostly in Barcelona and surroundings, but also in The Balearic Islands [3]. These trends, which are also present in other European cities, have promoted the creation of the term tourism-phobia and movements of anti-tourism as a manifestation of that rejection.

There is speculation, even in the political spheres, regarding the main reasons behind this growing attitude. Changes in tourism industry, such as new models of organization, the very own increase in demand or awareness of the lack of public planning lie beneath this trend. This study analyzes citizen support for tourism and the factors that cause an attitude of rejection. However, we take a further step and analyze which of the impacts that are associated with changes in the tourism model provoke rejection. This research focuses on analyzing the factors fueling citizen's rejection towards tourism and their evaluation of the different impacts that are associated with those factors. Methodologically, we propose an analysis in two stages. It begins by identifying which factors have increased rejection and then continues with the analysis of which type of impacts are associated with those factors. When considering the ongoing news about the growing number of acts of vandalism linked to tourism rejection in Barcelona, Spain; the analysis focuses on this city, for which we have developed a specific fieldwork. The importance that tourism has had traditionally in Barcelona (the city ranked third in Europe as to number of tourist arrivals) is what grounds an analysis in this context. Hence, the main goal of the study is to assess a situation of rejection that has recently been associated to new tourism models in an environment that is dependent upon this activity. Barcelona's Tourism Activity Report, 2016 shows that the percentage of inhabitants that consider the city to have reached its limit of capacity went from a 25% in 2012 to a 48.9% in 2016, a fact that evidences a latent social conflict [4]. This trend has been developed in parallel with a great increase in the number of tourists arriving to the city. In 1990, 1.73 million tourists stayed in hotels, while in 2017, this figure rose to nine million tourists. By combining the number of visitors staying in different types of accommodation, the annual number of tourists reaches the 15.4 million [4]. The statistics on the apartments exchanged online do not provide the total number of transactions, which means that the number of tourists could be even higher.

This problem is not particular to Spain; conflicts that are associated with overtourism have also been noted in other European cities, like Berlin, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Venice, Rome, or Florence. Studies, such as that of Seraphin's et al. [5], raise awareness about the need to apply ambitious and imaginative policies able to guarantee a destination socially sustainable instead of just giving in to the demands of pressure groups that only ask for the reduction of the tourist activity. For years, Venice has suffered from a similar problem as the one described in Barcelona. The term "Venice Syndrome" is usually used to allude to the phenomena of overtourism and the depopulation of city centers. In this particular city, the combination of certain factors has resulted in a great rejection of tourism. The large number of arrivals is one of the main causes (more than 10 million arrivals every year), given that the historic quarter holds around 55,000 inhabitants. This has caused housing prices to increase greatly, making it the most expensive city in Italy at the present time, which only adds to the lack of housing derived from the substitution of residential rentals with tourist ones that are advertised via online platforms like AirBnB, resulting in a reduction of the population of the city [6].

The study begins with a literature review that is focused on analyzing the attitude of the citizens towards tourism, followed by an additional one that concerns the description of the impacts generated by this activity. Later, we describe and justify the methodology that is selected with a small contextualization of the studied area and the exposition of results. The study finishes with the explanation of conclusions and some direction for public policies.

2. Citizen's Attitude towards Tourism and the Role of the Perceived Tourism Impacts

The study of citizen's attitude towards tourism is a widespread topic in the academic research. They are mostly focused on developed countries, where tourism has evolved to a greater extent [7].

Analyses like this have also been carried out in Spain, such as those proposed by Marrero [8] and Gutierrez [9] for the Canary Islands; Aguilo et al. [10] and Bujosa and Rosello [11] in the Balearic Islands; Royo and Ruiz [12] in Catalonia.; Huete [13] in Valencia; Vargas et al. [14,15]; and, Oviedo et al. [16] in Andalusia.

The conceptual basis for this study is extensive in the academic literature. Doxey proposed an index that was able to show the discontent among the local population. This index progresses as the degree of saturation increases and it is divided into different stages: euphoria, apathy, annoyance, and antagonism [17]. Butler [18] described five conditioning factors of the relationship between residents and tourists: number of visitors, visitors' length of stay, ethnic and economic characteristics, and visitors' activities. He also defined the five conditioning factors of the socioeconomic impacts: the role of tourism in the destination where it is developed, the economic situation of the region, the economic dependence on tourism, the spatial characteristics of the tourism model, and damage to the local culture, among other characteristics of the local population (religious beliefs, the dominant political ideology, etc.). Other authors, such as Upchurch and Teivane [19], have used the tourist area life cycle theory, as defined by Butler [20], to link the level of support of the local people to the degree of development of the destination. Therefore, we can establish a relation between the attitude of the local people and the degree of development of the tourist activity. A relation that is just a reflection of the impacts that are associated with a growing activity and goes through the following stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or renewal [21]. Other authors, like Ap and Crompton [22], have also worked to define a scale that is able to display the different attitudes towards tourism. They consider the next stages: embracement, tolerance, adjustment, and withdrawal. If tourism were to be planned in a sustainable way, the negative stages could be avoided. To do so, we must take into consideration the impacts that tourism has on every stakeholder that is involved in the process in order to minimize negative impacts [23]. There is still a great amount of work to do in this matter because the social benefits that the tourist activity brings to the communities are yet to be studied [24].

As Butler indicates, as the tourism demand increases in an area, the impacts on the local community become more obvious [20]. The way in which local people perceive tourism impacts is a highly accurate predictor of their support for tourism and their engagement in promoting sustainable tourism [24]. Thus, citizen's support for tourism depends on the positive and negative impacts perceived by the local people [25–27]. In line with this, this study tries to identify push factors and the impacts that are associated with them, namely rejection-driving forces. Residents' attitude has been the subject of many studies, with a particular focus on identifying the factors that influence or shape them [10]. In his model of constructive destruction, Mitchell [28] warned that the lack of planning in tourism development and the commodification of heritage would end up destroying the rural environment. This would be perceived negatively by the local people and provoke a strong feeling of rejection. Both elements, lack of planning and commodification, seem to be present in the city centers of many tourist destinations. The annual stability of the number of tourist arrivals involves a lower pressure on the environment and a better use of facilities and resources, which also affects the satisfaction of the tourist and the feeling of the citizens [29–31]. Academic literature has not paid as much attention to analyzing the factors that make citizens overestimate the negative impacts in contexts in which tourism is an obvious source of wealth and development.

In sum, it is logical to think that the degree of development of a tourist destination causes an increase in the interferences on the local lifestyle. The attitudes of rejection are conditioned upon the destination, tourists, or residents' own characteristics. The studies focused on this problem are of great importance, since the citizen collaboration is a key aspect that guarantees the success of the destination and long-term sustainability. However, the idea that links directly the number of arrivals with the increasing feeling of rejection seems to be quite limited. There is a multitude of groups involved in the tourism sector, each of them with their own interests, which sometimes, collide. That is why the analyses must consider the heterogeneity of interests, needs, and impacts.

3. Types of Impacts Generated by Tourist Activity

Developing tourist activity implies complex interactions that can result in positive and negative impacts on the local community. Both types of impacts are commonly known as “tourism impacts” [32]. Public planners and investors were the ones who first released analyses concerning tourism impacts. These would include the assessment of the positive aspects of new investment opportunities and the profitability, both economic and social, which are associated with them. Studies focused on the negative aspects of the tourist activity, which include ecologic and sociocultural impacts [33] appeared at a later date. Many positive tourism impacts have been described, such as the generation of employment [34], the improvement of the business network, the preservation of the local identity, the enhancement of the quality of life of the residents, the creation of new infrastructures, the interaction with foreign cultures, and the appraisal of natural and historical resources, among others [7,35,36]. Tourism generates impacts on other sectors that are related to sustainable development, such as the local agriculture [37].

The tourist activity generates negative impacts that can be classified into three categories: ecologic, sociocultural, and economic. The types of impacts that take place in each destination and their intensity are different depending on the destination, the context, the type of visitor, and the activities that they carry out. The impacts perceived to a larger extent by local citizens are the overcrowding of infrastructures and public spaces, the increasing prices or the substitution of local businesses with others more tourist-oriented, the disruption of the traditional lifestyle, noises and insecurity, drug and alcohol consumption, more waste generation, environmental deterioration, or overuse of resources, among others [7].

Some authors consider social impacts to be of greater importance given that they somehow influence the lives of the citizens, and thus, their attitude towards tourism [38]. Therefore, both the public and the private sector should join forces to promote the non-economic benefits of tourism by taking into consideration both the impact that they have on the attitude of the citizens and the necessary involvement of the population for tourism development [39,40]. Those impacts can be classified into two subgroups: socioeconomic and sociocultural impacts. The former includes aspects that are related to employment quality and wages, the standard of living, increasing property values, the home tenancy status, and even changes in the job market and the economic system itself. While the latter are related to disturbances and nuisance, cultural harm, loss of traditional lifestyles, and unwanted activities, among others. The assessment of non-economic impacts is more complex given that quantifying costs and benefits is more subjective [20]. This assessment depends on the attitude of each citizen, who compare the benefits and costs that tourism generates in their particular case.

The local people’s support is therefore limited by the changes that take place in their residential environment, some being more beneficial than others [41]. Thus, it is of great importance to monitor and track the changes and how citizens perceive them, all with the aim of maintaining long-term support. Doing so should also help to define public policies that maximize the positive impacts of this activity and reduce the negative ones [42]. Apart from avoiding the citizen’s rejection, the positive impacts will also improve their engagement, which creates a more cohesive and vivid destination [43]. On the contrary, the perception of negative impacts will undermine citizen support for tourism development and their involvement in this activity. All of these behaviors have been studied while using the stakeholder theory [24].

4. Materials and Methods

This paper has the goal of analyzing the underlying factors that cause the rejection of tourism in environments that depend greatly upon this activity. It also intends to detail which impacts associated with each push factor citizens perceive. Selecting Barcelona as case study has been justified in the introduction and it will be reinforced below while we describe the evolution of tourist activity in this city. The bibliography on tourism impacts is rather large, but the different destinations, contexts, and the profiles of both tourist and locals make it necessary to continue studying this issue [21]. This paper uses a case study due to the fact that this methodology is very effective in cases where it is impossible

to differentiate the variables that are included in the study from the phenomenon itself [44]. The case study makes it possible to offer a wide description of the context combined with a full analysis of the phenomenon, while taking a certain theoretical framework as reference [45].

This study has been developed in a two-stage process, both being necessary to identify push factors (first stage) and analyze the impacts that are associated with each one of them (second phase). The first of the two was carried out by means of a fieldwork in April 2017. It consisted of 50 semi-structured face to face interviews to residents of the historical city center of Barcelona. The survey was limited to residents that had lived for more than five years in the city and were 25 years or older. We decided the number of interviewees according to the principle of purposeful (criterion based) sampling as the aim is not statistical generalization [46]. As Kvale indicates, qualitative semi-structured interviews is the junction of two social processes: daily conversation and investigation in social sciences [47]. In this case, different questions were designed with the aim of conducting conversations homogeneously and to assure that the key elements of the study received a response. What's your level of support for tourist activity in the city? Has it changed in the last five years? Do you think rejection of tourism has increased? Which changes in the sector have resulted in a higher level of rejection? Would you support tourism to a larger extent if push factors were properly dealt with?

Once the elements that increased the rejection of tourist activity in Barcelona have been detected, the second phase was carried out by means of a quantitative interview to 600 inhabitants of Barcelona via telephone. This survey, which took place in June 2017, was not limited to tourist areas but just as the semi-structured interview, it was limited to people that had been living for more than five years in the city and were older than 25 years. The methodological framework on which this process relies follows a non-forced approximation. According to Fennell, tourism impacts are measured from social, ecologic, and economic perspectives [48]. This study is focused particularly on analyzing socioeconomic impacts that are derived from each individual factor. Understanding social impacts is of great importance [49], given that the lack of community support would probably lead to the disappearing of tourism in specific areas [50–53].

There exists vast research on the attitude of citizens towards tourism, although no methodology has yet been chosen by the majority of the scientific community [53]. The cost-benefit analysis [41] is one of the most widespread. It compares the positive impacts derived from tourism (benefits) with the negative ones (costs). The limitation of this approach lays in the fact that it offers a picture of the situation that is already biased, given that the different impacts have previously been classified as positive or negative [54]. The evolution of the cost-benefit analysis is the domain related costs-benefits approach. This methodology also categorizes the different impacts as costs or benefits, but instead, it divides them into three areas, or domains (sociocultural, economic, and environmental). Both of these methodologies link the benefits of tourism to the level of support, and the costs to the level of rejection [55–57]. Moreover, they do not give the citizen the opportunity to classify impacts as positive or negative, according to their own perception [35]. This type of methodology has been enhanced through the implementation of others that follow a non-forced approach. This new approach is based on providing the citizens with neutral statements, so that it is they who decide whether an impact to the community is positive or negative and its particular intensity [35,58]. This methodology falls into line with the aim of this study, given that it makes possible to assess the impacts individually without an initial approach that is biased.

We have indicated some factors above that could influence the attitude of the citizens towards tourism and presented various theories that explain the way in which the local people shape their attitude. The first papers were too descriptive and did not offer proper explanations of how the citizens shaped their opinion in this matter [56], something that the new theories do offer. Among the theories that try to explain the way in which citizens shape their opinion, we can find Fishbein and Ajzen's theory [59], the Theory of Reasoned Action [55], the Social Representation Theory [60], the Doxey's Irridex [61], Butler's model of Intercultural Perception [62], or the Social Carrying Capacity Theory [63].

The Dialogical Self Theory or the Social Capital Theory can also be taken as useful frameworks in this field in order to explain how individuals shape their perceptions in light of changes in the environment. Even when the contributions that were made by these theories are interesting, they are not able to perform analysis of the same quality as the Social Exchange Theory (SET), which this paper takes as a reference.

SET is considered to be the most accepted theory to explain how citizens shape their perception towards tourism, given that it assumes the different visions based on experiential and psychological outcomes [42]. This theory relies on the idea that the attitude of the citizens is based on the assessment “of the expected benefits or costs obtained in return for the services they supply” [64]. Thus, if the citizens perceive more positive impacts than negative ones (benefit/cost), they will support the development of this activity [41]. The citizens put up with the negative impacts if they consider that they will experience a payoff that eclipses the costs that come with this activity. This payoff can manifest in the form of employment creation, improvements in the quality of life, and increasing wages or property values [65]. The SET is very useful to analyze the degree of citizen support for tourism development. Specially, it is useful to study the support of the local people for macroevents, if these were to generate both positive and negative effects. It usually takes into consideration three different dimensions of the assessment: economic, environmental, and socio-cultural benefits. The SET also assumes that there is a higher probability that individuals interact with tourism if they expect to obtain benefits without experiencing unacceptable costs. If the residents consider the tourist activity to be beneficial for them, the level of support will rise. The assessment of positive and negative impacts is done by determining whether certain conditions, such as rationality, satisficing benefits, and reciprocity are present or absent. In short, the SET can explain the perception of residents with regard to sociocultural, economic, and environmental impacts, as well as other aspects related to tourism development [60].

In line with the theoretical basis and the methodology here presented, this study takes SET as a reference in order to detect factors that residents esteem as an excessive cost in relation with the benefits. The open questionnaire of the interviews was written taking this idea into consideration. Once the factors of rejection are detected, we will analyze the socioeconomic impacts that are associated to each of them following a non-forced approach.

According to Churchill's formula [66], 400 copies of the questionnaire are required to reach the necessary size of the sample. In this case, we count with 200 extra questionnaires. The design of the questionnaire has made use of the items that were proposed by the bibliography on the aspects that need to be taken into account in the analysis of socioeconomic impacts [53,55–57,60,67], among others. In the first section of the questionnaire, following a non-forced approach, we phrased the items that will measure the impacts that are perceived by the citizens using neutral statements. The citizens are free to place their personal opinion in the scale, which is divided, as follows: 5 = strong positive, 1 = strong negative, 3 = no change. This way, the local people are able to show whether they consider a certain impact to be positive or negative [34,52,56,57,68]. The second section compiles basic data of the interviewee, such as age, sex, place of residence, length of residence in the city, type of ownership of the residence, level of education, income level of the household, and relation with tourist activity.

5. Area of Analysis

Barcelona is located in the northeast of Spain, with 1.609 million inhabitants [69] is the second city in terms of population of the country, although its metropolitan area has 5.5 million inhabitants. The city is the capital of one of the richest areas in Spain, in which tourist activity holds a significant position. Specifically, it is estimated that tourist activity in this city accounts for 15% of the GDP and 9% of the employment [4]. The economic impact is more intense in the center of the town, in which, for example, 61% of the sales of retailers correspond to visitors within the tourist areas of Paseo de Gràcia, plaza Catalunya, Portal de l'Àngel, Portaferrissa, and El Born neighborhood [70]. Altogether

in the city, the sales associated with tourists account for 18% of the total [4]. Thus, being the positive economic impact of tourism in the city evident.

The great leap of Barcelona into the tourist activity is consequence of the celebration of the Olympic Games in 1992. In 1990, 1.73 million tourists stayed in hotels of the city, whereas in 2016, the figure rose to nine million. Altogether with visitors staying in other types of establishments and excursionists who do not stay overnight, Barcelona hosts 30 million visitors each year [4]. At the present moment, Barcelona is the 12th most visited city of the world and Europe's third, after London and Paris. The tourist offer of Barcelona is based on a wide range of complementary tourist resources that are internationally recognized. These resources are able to generate sun and beach tourism, cultural tourism, sports tourism, congress and conventions tourism, language tourism, etc. According to data provided by the [1], in the last few years, the number of visitors has increased due to the activity that is generated by vacation rentals platforms, which have presumably doubled the accommodation capacity of the city. The expansion of low-cost international flights has also contributed to this situation. The El-Prat Airport has registered an average of five million passengers between 2005 and 2016; a figure that only in the last year grew by 8%. The combination of affordable accommodation and low-cost flights has increased the number of young visitors, who lean more towards party and alcohol consumption [71], a trend that has aroused controversy and problems in several parts of Spain.

According to a recent study that was carried out by the Ostelea School of Tourism and Hospitality, Berlin and Barcelona are the European cities that experienced a higher increase in the number of tourist accommodations [72]. Currently in Barcelona, there is a total of 115,535 beds in holiday flats and other short time accommodation [73], and 14,855 Airbnb listings [73]. According to Barcelona's Tourism Activity Report [74], only 50.5% of the visitors stayed in hotels or apart-hotels. Besides bed places in tourist accommodations, the number of hotel beds in Barcelona has also increased. From 1990 to 2017, the accommodation offer and the number of bed places have gone from 18,569 to 67,640. As for the number of hotels, in the last three decades they have gone from 118 hotels in 1990 to 408 in 2016. According to the latest data, Catalonia received almost 18 million overnight stays in 2016. Tourism intensity peaked in Barcelona with 9807 nights per 1000 residents, which is almost double the European Union (EU) average (5209 nights per 1000 inhabitants) [4]. One of the elements that have generated a great displeasure with respect to tourism development has a direct relation with the price of residential rentals, which have been mostly substituted by the more profitable vacation rentals. Between 2015 and 2016, the average price of house rentals in Barcelona has skyrocketed by 37.2%.

The tourist pressure that some city centers suffer from has increased greatly after the expansion of the online vacation rental platforms. The intermediation of properties had been going on for a while in an informal manner, but the Internet, and particularly, the Web 2.0 have allowed for an unprecedented growth [75]. This type of transaction derives from the intermediation of under-utilized spaces, making them available to the community through the Internet [76], and it is usually coordinated by a company that obtains an economic benefit from doing so, for example, AirBnb. This implies a clear profit-making intention behind the coordinating company and the individuals offering the unused space. The higher profitability of this type of rental—usually rented on a per-day basis—in comparison with traditional ones has favored a change in the use of the apartments in the centers of numerous cities. The role of the intermediary is redefined by the online platforms, where both sides can make contact more easily, a system known as P2P (peer to peer). In the tourism industry, collaborative economy is referred to activities, such as house swapping, house renting, ridesharing, couch surfing, dinner hosting, and similar innovations that epitomize the collaborative economy [77]. These exchange processes are the result of changes in the technology, society, and even in the economy. This business model was born around 2008, meaning that the legislation on this matter must be yet adapted to a new reality, which, moreover, varies greatly from city to city. A common feature could be the large number of accommodations unregulated, or in other words, accommodations that are not officially registered or that do not fulfill the requirements that are imposed by the local authorities. This gives this type of

accommodation an unfair competitive advantage over regulated tourist establishments, like hotels or apart-hotels.

Barcelona, Berlin, and Venice are the European capitals leading tourist overcrowding. Overcrowding has provoked the rejection of the local population, which is not only due to the larger number of stays overnight, but because the price of housing has also increased greatly [72]. Since the 90's, Barcelona has increased both services and tourist products. This has made it one of the most popular urban destinations around the world [74]. But, its evolution has caused problems for infrastructures, its production system, and the preservation of the social and cultural identities. Because of this, the city has undergone certain transformations that otherwise would have not taken place [78]. Barcelona has suffered for more than a decade from the so-called pressure of tourism and the displeasure among the population is growing each passing day. Moreover, in the last Barcelona's biannual barometer released in 2017, tourism was pinpointed by the residents as the most severe problem in the city. According to Barcelona's Tourism Activity Report 2015 [4], the number of residents considering that tourist activity has peaked in the city went from a 25% in 2012 to a 48.9% in 2016.

6. Results

6.1. Underlying Push Factors

As previously exposed in the methodology section, during the initial phase of the analysis, we developed a qualitative fieldwork based on face to face interviews to residents in the historical city center of Barcelona. This approach allowed for us to identify the core problems increasing the citizen's attitude of rejection towards tourism (Table 1). The interviews have been studied in order to identify push factors and separate them from the impacts they generate. These impacts will be analyzed in the second phase.

The answers to the first question "What's your level of support for tourist activity in the city?" have been classified in five categories: fervent opponent, opponent, neutral, supportive, and greatly supportive. From analyzing the interviews, we can observe that a 10.2% of the interviewees are fervent opponents, plus an additional 28.4% that positioned as opponents. In total, a 38.6% of opponents to tourism, a high figure for a city traditionally open to tourism and greatly dependent upon this activity. The percentage of neutral citizens is very slim, 7% only. On the positive scale of the questionnaire, 40.2% is supportive, and 14.2% is greatly supportive. It is necessary to indicate that the answers of the interviewees fall in line with the current model of development of tourist activity, instead that with the activity itself. Asked if their support has decreased in the last few years, an 88.6% of the interviewees gave a positive answer. This alone, proves one of the first hypotheses of the study: citizen support has shifted. By the question "Do you think rejection of tourism has increased?", we wanted to analyze the global perception of the interviewees on tourism. 94% consider that rejection has grown across the board.

Table 1. Main data obtained from qualitative interviews.

What's Your Level of Support for Tourist Activity in the City?				
Fervent opponent 10.20%	Opponent 28.40%	Neutral 7.00%	Supportive 40.20%	Greatly supportive 14.20%
Has it changed in the last five years?				
Yes	88.60%		No	11.40%
Do you think rejection of tourism has increased?"				
Yes	94%		No	6%
Which changes in the sector have resulted in a higher level of rejection?				
	Platforms of vacation rentals			77%
	The increasing number of arrivals			61%
	Alcohol and party tourism			29%
	Other factors			7%

Source: own elaboration.

Even when data like these seem attractive, the main goal of the first phase is to identify push factors and detect changes in the perception of the citizens. This goal was covered with the question “Which changes in the sector have resulted in a higher level of rejection?” The factors that we detected in the answers of this group can be easily encapsulated. The following results being especially significant: a 77% of the interviewees pointed to “platforms of vacation rentals”, followed by “the increasing number of arrivals”, an opinion that is shared by 61% of the interviewees and relative to the first factor given that it has caused an increase of the capacity of accommodation of the city. In a second layer, we find factors, such as the tourist packages that sell “alcohol and party tourism” (29%).

The factors that have been stressed in this first phase as underlying causes of the citizen’s rejection have already been tackled in the literature on tourism. The perception about mass demand has been analyzed in previous studies [79–81], especially when it surpasses the carrying capacity and produces not only environmental effects, but also social. Others have been focused on the overcrowding of public spaces, derived from mass tourism [82,83]. There are also a multitude of papers relative to the expanding problems derived from alcohol and drug consumption in tourist spots [84–86] or the increasing prostitution [87].

Regarding vacation rentals platforms, these new types of tourism models have set a challenge for planners, policy-makers, and citizens in regions in which this trend of organization is imposed dominantly. Problems like disturbances in traditionally residential neighborhoods, more traffic, and appropriation of the public space and congestion have been associated to it. Recent studies link the increased economy activity of companies, like Airbnb, to problems, such as the increase of prices of residential housing, eviction of long-term tenants, and scarcity of residential housings in tourist areas [88], disturbances and noise in residential buildings, and loss of local cohesion [77]. Besides the effects on local communities, impacts on the society in general, such as tax evasion and unfair competition, have also been described [85]. Creating big companies that are capable of considerably elevating the flow of visitors implies a high power of influence on the definition of the legal framework [89]. From a market perspective, both businesses and public sector are threatened by the traditional tourism industry, upon which many job positions are dependent [77,89–92].

Two of the main online vacation rental platforms are AirBnB and Couchsurfing. In 2011, Couchsurfing was converted from non-profit to for-profit. Airbnb was founded in 2008 and developed an online platform that allows for users to share unoccupied space, such as rooms or full apartments with other interested people. Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) estimates that Airbnb received 155 million guests in 2014, a 22% more than Hilton Worldwide, which accommodated 127 million people that same year. Merrill Lynch estimates that AirBnB accounts for 1.2% of the tourist accommodations worldwide and that in 2020, that figure will rise between 3.6% and 4.3%. This analysis reveals the role of a new element like vacation rentals platforms, which by means of a less planned offer and the increase of demand generate a rejection that is perceived through diverse impacts. In the second phase of the study, we have analyzed these impacts quantitatively, as a complement to the qualitative analysis.

6.2. Assessment of Impacts Derived from the Tourist Activity

In the first phase of the studio, we isolated two fundamental push factors: vacation rentals platforms and the increase of demand. The goal of this second phase is to determine which impacts that are perceived by residents are linked to these factors. This will help shed some light on the nature of the interferences produced by push factors in the inhabitants’ lives. Implementing the questionnaire has made possible to reach this aim by differentiating the impacts perceived by the citizens for each of the factors, which means that every interviewee has performed two different assessments.

We have used an independent *t*-test to analyze the results of the survey. The *t*-test results show that all the questions included in the questionnaire reached levels of significance that were necessary for discrimination. In this paper, we have also used Cronbach’s Alpha (test) to measure internal reliability. We have taken the criterion suggested by Cooper and Schindler as a reference, which indicates that

a value above 0.8 offers high reliability [93]. Cronbach's coefficient alpha values of 0.913 have been obtained when analyzing impacts derived from vacation rentals platforms and values of 0.864 when analyzing impacts that are derived from the increase of demand. To ensure the legitimacy of the results obtained, we applied a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. The validity of this questionnaire was found to be in the acceptable range, with KMO values of 0.899 for the analysis of the impacts derived from vacation rentals platforms and values of 0.812 for the analysis of impacts derived from the increase of demand, which indicate high construct validity [94]. The values of the Cronbach's coefficient alpha and KMO show that the questionnaire had relatively high reliability and validity, which means that the data gathered in the survey are useful for the analysis.

This study uses descriptive statistical methods to calculate the average and standard deviation for the answers of each question (Table 2). With respect to impacts that are derived from the activity of vacation rentals platforms, the average of social impacts is of 3.41 (3 being lack of impacts and 5 being strong negative impacts). An average that is higher than for the impacts that are derived from the increase in the number of arrivals (3.07). As we continue the analysis, we can see that for some impacts, answers come close to 5: Urban sprawl and population growth (4.84), Conflicts over zoning/land use (4.21), The availability of retail shops (4.11), Crowding and congestion (4.03), Peace and quietness (4.02), and Drug and alcohol abuse (4.01). The most negative factors when assessing the increase of the number of arrivals are (including social impacts): My personal life quality (4.61), Peace and quietness (4.61), and the preservation of my way of life (4.18). The fact that urban tourism is more stable throughout the year as opposite to other types of tourism [27,29] makes it impossible for the local communities to count with a period to rest. Comparing both groups of answers shows that impacts derived from the increase in the number of arrivals make reference to abstract interferences, overall related to quality of life. While vacation rentals platforms are thought to have more tangible effects, such as loss of population, standoffs over the use of public spaces, and the loss of traditional business stores.

Table 2. Local residents' perception of the impacts derived from vacation rentals platforms and the increase in demand.

	Vacation Rentals Platforms		Increase of Demand	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Average social impacts	3.41		3.07	
The preservation of cultural/historical sites	2.45	1.01	2.12	1.11
Peace and quite	4.02	1.89	4.61	1.78
Litter	3.01	1.25	2.01	1.12
Traffic	2.12	0.87	2.01	0.99
Crowding and congestion	4.03	1.47	3.74	1.49
Drug and alcohol abuse	4.01	1.63	2.01	1.78
Urban sprawl and population growth	4.84	0.99	3.29	0.87
Conflicts over zoning/land use	4.21	1.14	3.41	1.07
The preservation of my way of life	2.48	1.69	4.18	1.91
My personal life quality	3.13	1.88	4.61	1.75
The availability of retail shops	4.11	1.41	3.66	1.31
Prestige and image of the city	2.45	0.97	1.22	1.12
Average economic impacts	3.97		3.37	
Tax revenue	4.35	1.12	2.87	1.11
The value of my house and/or land	4.21	1.34	3.78	1.82
Stores and restaurants owned by local residents	2.87	1.78	2.55	1.67
Enough good jobs for residents	4.11	0.84	3.68	1.47
The strength and diversity of the local economy	4.61	1.87	4.26	0.89
Increase of residents' income	2.91	0.79	2.07	0.98
The price of real estate is rising	4.78	1.69	3.87	1.55
The job options for young people	3.31	1.88	3.01	1.79
Opportunities for small and medium enterprises	3.21	1.8	2.87	1.71
Fair prices for goods and services	4.51	1.2	4.11	1.35
Fair price for apartments rentals	4.85	1.99	4.01	1.94

Source: own elaboration. Items extracted from Martin, 2019 [95].

Economic impacts are assessed more negatively than social ones, which evidences that economic losses perceived by citizens might be behind the rejection. Within the scope of the assessment of vacation rentals platforms, the most noteworthy impacts are related to a Fair price for apartments rentals (4.85), The price of real estate is rising (4.78), The strength and diversity of the local economy (4.61), and Fair prices for goods and services (4.51). Thus, the impacts of vacation rentals platforms are associated to a rise in the cost of living for the citizens. This is complementary to previous impacts, which are focused on the loss of traditional business stores and loss of population. The assessment of economic effects that are related to the increase in the number of arrivals is friendlier. They are mostly focused on the cost of living in tourist areas, while the increase in the number of arrivals is not thought to be responsible for the rise of house prices: Fair prices for goods and services (4.11), the strength and diversity of the local economy (4.26), and Fair price for apartment rentals (4.01).

In short, the perception of negative impacts is associated to a larger extent with vacation rentals platforms instead that with the rise in demand. This is consistent with the results that were obtained in the first phase, in which interviews did not really emphasize a problem with tourism growing but with the model. Specifically, the problem seems to be limited to the increase in the cost of living because businesses focus on tourists and the prices of rentals and properties rise. Assuming SET as a theoretical framework, it is the cost that tourism has for the residents and not the decrease of the benefits expected that results in a negative perception. Some studies endorse the perception of negative impacts that are derived from vacation rentals platforms. “The impact of regulatory approaches targeting collaborative economy in the tourism accommodation sector”, a study focused on Barcelona, Paris, and Berlin, shows that the increasing number of vacation rentals may have aggravated these conditions in particular in centrally located districts [73]. The emergence of companies that are devoted to the online intermediation of tourist accommodations has occurred at the same time that problems related to the lack of housing in tourist areas [73,96].

Besides the lack of residential housing, problems such as disturbances in the neighborhood, increasing property prices and rentals, less community cohesion, and misuse of public spaces have also been described. Abril-Sellarés point to the effects that this kind of accommodation has on the local people in terms of increasing rental prices and deterioration of life quality [71]. The problem of increasing prices has been tackled in other studies in relation with tourism instead that with the effect of vacation rentals platforms [97]. Substituting shops and traditional activities for others more expensive and aimed at tourists is particularly noted [97]. In Barcelona [71], described the increase of rentals as a consequence of substituting residential apartments with tourist ones. The same authors noted that business owners perceive tourist arrivals as benefits, while residents mainly notice the increasing prices of the shopping baskets [71]. As far as the increase in demand is concerned, Morant indicates that Spain has followed the same tourism model for years: attracting the largest number of tourists possible for the longest time and having them spend money on goods and services, while reducing fixed operating costs [98]. This would increase the business profits in detriment to the existing social classes. Now that the concept of sustainability is being taken into consideration in the analysis of the effects of the tourist activity, it is not right to just assess tourism in terms of economic impacts, since social ones must also be considered [99]. The two aforementioned factors are interrelated due to the fact that the expansion of collaborative economy takes place in a context in which several European cities are experiencing the impacts of years of pro-growth strategies, which have been boosted by the consolidation of low-cost airlines [75]. Recent studies have linked the impacts that tourism has on the quality of life, how citizens perceive this relationship, and their relation to the support for tourism. Studies like those of Kathleen et al., Croes, or Ridderstaat et al., address this relationship [35,100,101].

We have carried out two tests to determine whether the perception of tourism impacts is influenced by personal characteristics of the inhabitant: T-test and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). T-test has been applied to socio-demographic variables that are measured on a dichotomous scale. These include area of residency (1 = tourist area, 2 = non-tourist area), home tenancy status (1 = owner, 2 = tenant), and relation to tourist activity (1 = job directly related to tourism industry, 2 = job not

directly related to tourism industry). Other features of the resident, such as age, level of education, or the annual household income were measured along interval scale differences, which were sought through one-way analysis of variance. Table 3 shows the average answers to impacts based on these variables. T-test shows a significant link between the area of residency, the relation to tourism, and the home tenancy status. ANOVA test has also found differences regarding age groups and income. People younger than 35 years perceive impacts more intensely, as well as people with a lower income. A link relative to the level of education were not found.

These results are consistent in comparison with previous studies' results given that there is a direct relation between the perception of impacts and the costs that must be endured by the citizen. People that reside in tourist areas and live in a rented house are more sensitive to impacts. Moreover, the youth and people with a lower income are more vulnerable to the substitution of traditional businesses with tourist-oriented ones. Thus, we can appreciate a strong economic factor in the citizen's attitude of rejection towards tourism. Perception of economic impacts by inhabitants of tourist areas is one point above compared to inhabitants of other parts of the city (3.65–2.61). The difference, although lower, is also significant for the perception of social impacts (3.80–3.51). When talking about the home tenancy status, the differences in the assessment of the impacts is significant, especially the outstanding difference in the assessment of economic impacts: 2.26 for those that are living in a property of their own and 4.13 for those that are living in a rented house. However, these two groups assess social impacts more homogeneously (3.7 and 4.1). The assessment of impacts also shows significant differences subject to the relation with tourist activity. Residents with no ties to the sector in question reached higher scores: 3.82 as compared to 2.12 for economic impacts and 2.92 when compared to 4.22 in the case of social impacts. The age group that assessed economic impacts more negatively corresponds to the group younger than 35. They scored 3.67 as compared to the assessment of the group older than 54 with a score of 2.54. This rating scheme is repeated for social impacts.

Table 3. Difference in the perception of impacts.

Variables	Economic Impacts				Social Impacts			
	Mean	Sdt. D.	Test Statistic	p-Value	Mean	Sdt. D.	Test Statistic	p-Value
Area of residency								
Residing in tourist area	3.65	1.2	<i>t</i> -test	0.000 **	3.80	1.11	<i>t</i> -test	0.031 *
Not residing in tourist area	2.61	1.1	3.88		3.51	1.35	4.01	
Home tenancy status								
Owner	2.26	1.38	<i>t</i> -test	0.005 *	4.0	1.21	<i>t</i> -test	0.001 **
Tenant	4.13	1.24	2.11		4.1	1.41	3.33	
Relation with tourism								
Direct relation within the household	2.12	1.01	<i>t</i> -test	0.000 *	2.92	1.41	<i>t</i> -test	0.004 *
Without direct relation within the household	3.85	1.23	2.11		4.22	1.19	2.81	
Age								
<35 years	3.67	1.24	ANOVA	0.037 *	4.21	1.22	ANOVA	0.001 **
35–54	3.1	1.13	1.12		3.81	1.23	1.09	
>54 years	2.54	1.37			3.12	1.17		
Level of education								
Primary studies or no studies at all	3.12	0.41	ANOVA	0.099	3.64	0.44	ANOVA	0.091
Secondary education	2.88	1.11	2.231		3.67	1.1	2.39	
Higher education	2.78	1.32			3.65	1.3		
Income level of the household								
<1500 € monthly	3.66	1.12	ANOVA	0.000 **	3.99	1.11	ANOVA	0.000 *
1500 €–3000 €	3.12	1.11	9.91		3.45	1.03	9.12	
>3000 €	2.54	0.95			3.11	1.11		

Source: own elaboration. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

7. Conclusions and Discussion

The importance of tourism in Barcelona justifies an analysis in this context if we consider that the intention of the study is to analyze an escalating situation of rejection that is associated to new tourism models in an environment that economically depends upon this activity. Barcelona is an example of recent changes in its tourism model. These changes are caused by the increasing offer of

both, hotel rooms and rooms outside of hotels, the increasing demand and the rise in low-cost tourism. The increase of demand has been a widely studied topic in the bibliography on tourism. There are many evidences connecting the increasing number of tourists with the problems that are generated within local communities, even though impacts derived from the activity of vacation rentals platforms had not been addressed as extensively, at least from the point of view of the impacts perceived by residents.

This study has revealed an economic ground behind the worsening of the attitude towards tourism. The assessment of economic impacts is more negative than the one concerning social impacts. Assuming the SET's approach, we can draw the conclusion that the citizen's perception of costs derived from the increasing tourist arrivals and the effect of vacation rentals platforms has reduced the citizen's support for tourism; the latter being more intense. The analysis of impacts particularly associated with the underlying factors proves that the focus of the negative perception is on the cost of living, affected to a large extent by the rise of rental and goods prices.

Bibliography on citizen's attitude towards tourism had already pointed to factors, like years living in the city, location of the house, or economic dependence upon tourism as influential on the perception of the citizens. This research has also confirmed the influence of these factors on the citizen's perception, while adding an extra one: the home tenancy status; given that the residents living in rented apartments show a more negative perception that has been influenced by the increasing rental prices.

The results that are presented in this paper indicate the urgent need of defining public policies that decrease socioeconomic impacts derived from tourism growth in residential areas. The attitude of the locals is necessary to sustain tourist products as well as the preservation of local communities, which are the cultural essence of the city. Currently, the heterogeneous legislation on tourist accommodations does not help to build a context in which impacts can be controlled. The rising tourist arrivals has produced a great economic boost in the same way that platforms of intermediation of tourist accommodations have invigorated urban areas and increased the income of individuals. In both cases a better spatial planning of tourism is required and also a better reflection on the carrying capacity of residential areas.

This study is limited by its sole application to Barcelona, the only city where it has been carried out. It would be of great interest to carry out similar studies in cities suffering from the same problems of overtourism and tourism-phobia, such as Venice, Amsterdam, Berlin, Rome, or Paris. A comparative study of the results that were obtained in each of these cities could offer a fuller picture of the problem that is addressed in this paper. Thus, making it the main line of future research that derives from this paper. As a suggestion for future studies, we have highlighted how important it is to count with the opinion of every stakeholder involved in this new type of tourism model. The methodology that is proposed in this study, which is carried out in two phases, seems to have shed some light on the perceptions of the local residents.

The proposal of public policies set out from the premise that it is important to define strategies that do not only seek to increase the number of arrivals. The combination of both, the increasing number of tourists and the lack of planning concerning online intermediation platforms, generate negative impacts and a feeling of rejection towards tourism. The tourist activity creates numerous interactions with groups that pursue different interests [102]. The Stakeholder Theory that was proposed by Freenman serves as a good model to improve the organization of the activity derived from the collaborative economy within the tourism industry, given that in order to reduce the negative impacts derived from the interactions, it is necessary to keep in mind the interests of each group and encourage their engagement [103]. Thus, from the point of view of the public policy-makers and the private sector, it is important to identify the stakeholders, get to know the way they interact with each other, and the potential conflicts in order to work jointly in the planning process [104].

The findings of this paper contribute to the understanding of the interactions that take place between the aforementioned stakeholders, even when future research should keep on gathering evidence. As exposed above, the citizens do not refuse the growth of the tourist activity but the lack

of planning and the economic costs this brings to their lives. This thought should be taken as the starting point of the planning processes in the city centers suffering from overtourism. Particularly, the needs of the most vulnerable groups and the impacts that affect them to a greater extent should be paid special attention, as this paper proposes. The citizens are essential for the development of any tourist destination, which is why their support is key to guarantee the sustainability of the said destination. The type of impacts derived from tourism and the way that the population perceives them should be under continuous examination. The public sector should make an effort to define policies that maximize social benefits that are derived from the tourist activity at the same time that they restrain the impacts that affect the lives of the citizens negatively.

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