

1                   **A greener way to stay: The role of perceived sustainability in**  
2                   **generating loyalty to Airbnb**

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22  
23 **Abstract**

24 The sustainability potential of peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation sharing will not be fully  
25 achieved until sustainability is fully understood as a motivating force. This study examines the  
26 influence of perceived sustainability and familiarity on loyalty intentions with platform trust  
27 and satisfaction as mediators and age as a moderator. An online survey with 507 UK Airbnb  
28 users found that perceived sustainability and familiarity are effective drivers of consumers’  
29 loyalty in relation to Airbnb, alongside the mediators of platform trust and satisfaction. In  
30 addition, the effect of perceived sustainability on platform trust is greater among younger users,  
31 which feeds further to satisfaction and consequently loyalty. This timely study adopts an  
32 integrative approach which recognises the interplay of sustainability, familiarity, trust and  
33 satisfaction in predicting loyalty intentions for P2P accommodation. This can, in turn, help to  
34 unlock the potential of P2P accommodation to deliver more sustainable outcomes for people,  
35 places and the planet.

36  
37 **Keywords:** Sustainability, Familiarity, Platform Trust, Sharing Economy, Airbnb, P2P  
38 Accommodation

39  
40 **Article Classification:** Research Paper

# **A greener way to stay: The role of perceived sustainability in generating loyalty to Airbnb**

## **1. Introduction**

The sharing economy (SE) has brought profound changes to the tourism and hospitality sector, particularly through the development of paid online peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation platforms (Lee and Kim, 2018; Park and Tussyadiah, 2019). Airbnb represents a major player in the accommodation sector with 4 million hosts and over 1 billion guest arrivals (Airbnb, 2021). Its annual revenue grew continuously from US\$0.4 billion in 2014 to US\$5.99 billion in 2021 (Statista, 2022).

Travellers are, meanwhile, becoming increasingly concerned about environmental issues, aiming to reduce their travel carbon footprint (Gupta et al., 2019; Guttentag et al., 2018; Tussyadiah, 2016). For example, 81% of global travellers intend to choose sustainable accommodation in the upcoming year (Booking.com, 2021). In the UK, nearly half of all Airbnb users consider climate change an important issue to be addressed (Statista, 2022). Recently, Airbnb has committed to becoming a ‘net zero’ company by 2030, which includes educating and encouraging hosts to embed sustainable practices, such as switching to renewables to reduce the carbon footprint of stays (Airbnb, 2021).

Environmental issues have also received heightened attention by academics with several studies exploring customers’ motivations and decision-making processes in choosing green hotels (e.g. Han et al., 2011; Martinez, 2015; Wang et al., 2018). These studies have consistently found that green image (i.e., consumers’ perception of a hotel’s commitment to sustainability) significantly affects loyalty intentions via green trust and satisfaction.

However, in the context of P2P accommodation, research on the motivators remains fragmented, focusing on prominent factors such as satisfaction (Tussyadiah, 2016), loyalty (e.g. Lee and Kim, 2018), and trust (e.g. Mao et al., 2020; Park and Tussyadiah, 2019). More recently, the emphasis has shifted to customer perceived value, including price, quality, self-gratification and social aspects (So et al., 2022; Tajeddini et al., 2022). Although green consumption behaviours play an even more important role in the SE (Hamari et al., 2016), the underlying mechanisms shaping the demand for Airbnb accommodation from a sustainability perspective are not well understood (Dolnicar, 2019; Gössling and Hall, 2019; Kuhzady et al., 2020).

This lack of attention paid to sustainability in the SE context is considered perplexing (Frenken, 2017), particularly given that many of its early supporters were proponents of the

74 alternative economy: a paradigm that adopts achieving a sustainability transition as a guiding  
75 principle. “The sharing economy can [be] considered, at least potentially, [to be] contributing to  
76 a sustainability transition” (Frenken, 2017, p.1), as the use of assets that would otherwise be  
77 lying idle (Curtis and Mont, 2020) should result in less resource and energy consumption, fewer  
78 pollution emissions and less waste (Gössling and Hall, 2019; Hamari et al., 2016; Mi and  
79 Coffman, 2019). A recent bibliometric analysis reveals that despite the phenomenal growth of  
80 articles and citations on sustainability in tourism and hospitality between 1994-2020, a  
81 comprehensive understanding of the relationship is still lacking and its effects is yet to be  
82 established (Molina-Collado et al., 2022). Molina-Collado et al. (2022, p.3048) critiqued the  
83 misinterpretation of sustainability in hospitality and tourism and stated that “[s]ustainability,  
84 therefore, must be understood as a key way forward for the differentiation of tourism businesses  
85 and the improvement of competitiveness towards more intelligent and responsible tourism.”

86 With sharing having such deep conceptual roots in sustainability thinking, it is surprising  
87 that so few SE studies have examined sustainability as a potential motivating force. Perhaps even  
88 more surprising is the observation that those studies that did include sustainability tended to find  
89 it not to be an effective driver of sharing. One reason could be that the limited number of studies  
90 in P2P accommodation have examined sustainability alongside other motivators such as trust,  
91 economic benefits, enjoyment, etc. (Hamari et al., 2016; Sung et al., 2018; Tripp et al., 2022;  
92 Tussyadiah, 2016). Whilst sustainability concerns may be an important initial determinant when  
93 considering P2P accommodation, these concerns might be ‘crowded-out’ by other factors such  
94 as value-for-money or reputation (Shin et al., 2020).

95 Furthermore, previous studies examining sustainability as an antecedent centred on  
96 satisfaction or attitude as key factors of loyalty intentions in P2P accommodation (e.g. Hamari  
97 et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2020; Tussyadiah, 2016; Ye et al., 2021). Recently,  
98 researchers proposed the use of trust-centred theoretical frameworks to explain Airbnb  
99 continuance intention (e.g. Li and Tsai, 2022; Yang et al., 2019; Ye et al., 2021). Trust-based  
100 frameworks (i.e., trust in the platform as a mediator) could complement traditional satisfaction-  
101 based models to provide a more comprehensive approach (Ye et al., 2021).

102 The current research adopts the self-determination theory (SDT) as an overarching  
103 framework (Deci and Ryan, 1985). The SDT considers consumers’ motivations as a key driver  
104 of loyalty and is frequently applied in P2P accommodation research (Hamari et al., 2016;  
105 Kuhzady et al., 2020; Tripp et al., 2022; Tussyadiah, 2016). This study explores how  
106 sustainability perceptions of P2P accommodation influence loyalty intentions via platform trust

107 and satisfaction. By doing so, we also respond to Tripp et al.'s (2022, p.17) call for research to  
108 examine "how motivation and trust constructs complement each other" in the context of SE.

109 Moreover, existing studies have indicated that young consumers are more concerned about  
110 environmental issues and willing to engage in green (P2P) accommodation (Agag, 2019; Han et  
111 al., 2011; Li and Wen, 2019). However, the extent to which age might influence the importance  
112 of sustainability perceptions as a driver for P2P accommodation has been mostly overlooked in  
113 the literature, in particular it is unknown how age moderates the relationship between  
114 sustainability perceptions, satisfaction and platform trust.

115 This study thus adopts an integrative approach to understanding the interplay of  
116 sustainability, familiarity, platform trust and satisfaction in determining loyalty intentions. It also  
117 examines how these relationships vary by users' age. We contribute to the literature by  
118 developing an improved understanding of the role of sustainability in consumer choice with  
119 respect to P2P accommodation. This can, in turn, help to unlock the potential of P2P  
120 accommodation to deliver more sustainable outcomes for people, places and the planet.

121

122

## 123 **2. Literature Review**

### 124 *2.1. Sustainability Impacts of P2P Accommodation Sharing*

125 The introduction of P2P platforms has fundamentally transformed the dynamics of the  
126 tourism accommodation sector (Kuhzady et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2017). This has stimulated much  
127 academic research, which has mostly focused on the complex issues relating to motivations and  
128 barriers, building trust in market exchange, and competition between the SE and the traditional  
129 economy (Dolnicar, 2019; Möhlmann, 2015; Tajeddini et al., 2022). Despite scholarly  
130 endeavours in identifying the effective determinants of P2P usage, the list of factors is diverse  
131 and no clear consensus has emerged (Barari et al., 2022).

132 In their recent meta-analysis of 192 studies, Barari et al. (2022) put forward a multilevel  
133 network for the SE considering three levels: micro (consumers and service providers), meso  
134 (platforms) and macro (e.g. cultural values). Their analysis found, that in addition to utilitarian  
135 and hedonic motivators, social and environmental values may have significant positive effects  
136 on trust and satisfaction.

137 However, work examining sustainability as a motivation for using P2P accommodation is  
138 rather limited (Gössling and Hall, 2019; Hossain, 2020; Kuhzady et al., 2020). Dolnicar's (2019)  
139 review of 122 academic articles concluded that while the social aspects of online P2P  
140 accommodation platforms have occasionally been studied, discussion of the environmental

141 aspects remains largely absent. The lack of research into the role of sustainability as a motivator  
142 to use P2P accommodation is remarkable given that the rationale for P2P sharing has often been  
143 framed in such terms (Palgan et al., 2017).

144 In the case of accommodation sharing, the potential benefits were considered to come  
145 mainly from reduced energy use, with small private homes often being more energy efficient  
146 than larger commercial buildings (Airbnb, 2017; Cheng et al., 2020; Skjelvik et al., 2017).  
147 According to Cheng et al. (2020), the carbon footprint (CF) of Airbnb accommodation and  
148 booking services ranges from 7.27 to 9.39kg CO<sub>2</sub>-e per room per night in the Greater Sydney  
149 region. Whilst this CF is significantly lower than the emissions per room per night for traditional  
150 hotels which range between 23.17 and 34.32kg CO<sub>2</sub>-e, it does not include the emissions related  
151 to the induced consumption of Airbnb hosts generated by the additional income (Cheng et al.,  
152 2020). Thus, whilst it is debatable whether P2P accommodation sharing overall leads to a  
153 significant reduction in CF, travellers still consider Airbnb as a sustainable alternative to  
154 traditional hotels (Airbnb, 2021).

155 It is also possible that the growth of the accommodation-sharing economy may forestall  
156 the need to build new hotels to meet growing demand, and hence avoid the environmental  
157 impacts associated with construction. However, such gains might be largely offset by so-called  
158 ‘rebound effects’, such as the additional transport impacts associated with the additional journeys  
159 made by people who can now afford to take trips due to the lower cost of P2P accommodation  
160 (Eckhardt et al., 2019).

161 It is important to note, however, that the studies exploring the relationship between P2P  
162 accommodation and sustainability have focused mainly on attempting to measure the  
163 sustainability impacts of the activity. This is not the same as examining the perception of  
164 sustainability in motivating participation in P2P accommodation. Indeed, a guest’s desire to be  
165 more sustainable through their choice of accommodation style may be strong, even if the  
166 outcome in terms of generating positive sustainability impacts might be relatively weak. If such  
167 impacts are achieved at scale, as may well be the case given the rising popularity of P2P  
168 accommodation platforms such as Airbnb, their significance may be substantial.

169

## 170 *2.2. Sustainability as a Motivation for P2P Accommodation Sharing*

171 The literature presents conflicting findings regarding sustainability as a motivator for  
172 renting P2P accommodation (Hossain, 2020; Ye et al., 2021). In addition, P2P sharing is likely  
173 to have both positive and negative sustainability impacts (Gössling and Hall, 2019). It would be  
174 plausible that some people may be more motivated to choose P2P accommodation for its

175 sustainability credentials because they consider such impacts to be positive and important (e.g.  
176 Dann et al., 2019; Guttentag et al., 2018). Others, meanwhile, may be less motivated by the  
177 sustainability credentials, or perhaps even hold the belief that P2P accommodation is antagonistic  
178 to sustainable development.

179 Our overarching theoretical framework is based on the SDT (Deci and Ryan, 1985)  
180 According to the SDT, individuals' behaviours can be directed by intrinsic and extrinsic  
181 motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). The former explains how individuals are energised, from  
182 within, due to interest, inner pleasure and satisfaction, e.g., with regard to making more  
183 sustainable consumption choices. The latter is associated by external factors, such as economic  
184 benefits. Earlier work (Hamari et al., 2016) found that extrinsic motivations more strongly  
185 influence consumers' participation in the SE than intrinsic motivations.

186 More recent evidence suggests, however, that intrinsic motivations are becoming more  
187 important as drivers to explain SE behaviours (e.g. Balaji et al., 2022; Li and Wen, 2019; Ye et  
188 al., 2021). Ye et al. (2021), for example, reported a positive indirect effect of perceived  
189 enjoyment on reuse intention through satisfaction in P2P accommodations. Sung et al. (2018)  
190 found that Airbnb users in South Korea sought factors such as enjoyment, enhanced opportunities  
191 and the diversity offered by the platform, but were not influenced by sustainability as a rationale.

192 In contrast, Li and Tsai (2022) found that environmental benefits had the largest significant  
193 effect on consumers' trust in Airbnb, whilst economic benefits did not influence trusting beliefs.  
194 This suggests that even though some consumers might be aware of the sustainability credentials  
195 of P2P accommodation sharing, these are not yet effectively driving their decision-making  
196 directly. It is possible that users have not sufficiently internalised the sustainability credentials  
197 of P2P sharing to transfer awareness to actual behaviour (Hamari et al., 2016). Thus, examining  
198 environmental aspects of sustainability from the micro perspective remains as valid goal (Balaji  
199 et al., 2022).

200 In summary, the literature review suggests that there is presently little agreement about  
201 how sustainability may serve as a motivation for the use of P2P accommodation. This remains a  
202 gap in the literature that this paper intends to fill. In this study we explore the role of the intrinsic  
203 motivator – sustainability perceptions of Airbnb – in building trust in the platform, leading to  
204 satisfaction with their stay and consequently leading to loyalty intentions. Similar frameworks  
205 examined the role of green image, trust, satisfaction on loyalty in the context of green hotels (e.g.  
206 Martinez, 2015; Wang et al., 2018). Applications in the context of P2P accommodation,  
207 however, remain strictly limited.

208

209

### 210 **3. Hypotheses Development**

#### 211 *3.1. Perceived Sustainability*

212       Dann et al.'s (2019) review of 118 research papers suggests that sustainability is frequently  
213 theorised as a motivation for using Airbnb. However, empirical studies show conflicting  
214 findings. Hamari et al. (2016) found that perceived sustainability significantly influenced attitude  
215 but not behavioural intention, even though a small indirect effect through attitude was found.  
216 Shin et al.'s (2020) meta-analysis, meanwhile, found a small effect of sustainability on  
217 satisfaction but no direct significant effect on loyalty. Sustainability had a direct effect on  
218 satisfaction and indirectly influenced return intention through satisfaction for users of a Chinese  
219 domestic P2P platform (Ye et al., 2021). However, the effect of sustainability on satisfaction for  
220 Airbnb users was not confirmed. This could possibly be explained by the relative unfamiliarity  
221 with Airbnb in comparison to the Chinese domestic platforms (Ye et al., 2021). However, in the  
222 context of hotels, previous studies have consistently identified a significant link from green  
223 image to trust, satisfaction and consequently loyalty intentions (e.g. Martinez, 2015; Wang et al.,  
224 2018).

225       Möhlmann (2015), meanwhile, found no significant effect from environmental benefits  
226 either on satisfaction or re-use intentions. Tussyadiah (2016) also found that among those who  
227 stayed in entire homes/apartments, sustainability did not have a significant impact on satisfaction  
228 or their future intention of using P2P accommodation.

229       Despite these conflicting findings, there is some tentative evidence to support a positive  
230 link between sustainability perceptions of P2P accommodation and satisfaction/loyalty  
231 intentions. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

232       H1. Perceived sustainability has a significant positive effect on satisfaction.

233       H2. Perceived sustainability has a significant positive effect on loyalty.

234

#### 235 *3.2. Trust in Platform*

236       In the P2P accommodation sharing context, trust can be viewed as an essential pre-requisite  
237 for exchange because of the potential risks involved (Ert et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2019), when  
238 unknown individuals (e.g. hosts/guests) and/or entities (e.g. Airbnb as an intermediary platform)  
239 interact (Park and Tussyadiah, 2019).

240       Both consumers and hosts will need to assess the levels of trust in the SE platform to  
241 effectively facilitate the process of exchange (Li and Wang, 2020). If trust in the platform is  
242 sufficient, a trusting belief can be transferred to the host (Stewart, 2003). Following trust transfer



243 theory (Stewart, 2003) and its previous explanatory efficacy in P2P accommodation sharing  
244 research (e.g. Park and Tussyadiah, 2019), the present paper holds that trust in the platform is a  
245 prime judgement in using Airbnb, which feeds to interpersonal trust. The former occurs at the  
246 institutional level (e.g. Airbnb as an intermediary) and can be affected by factors such as  
247 familiarity with the intermediary, the platform's reputation, assurances and information quality  
248 (Mao et al., 2020). Interpersonal trust (such as trust in host) is embedded in institutional trust  
249 which helps building structural assurance by strengthening underpinning norms, rules,  
250 principles, policies, or procedures.

251 The literature investigating sustainability perceptions and trust in SE contexts remains  
252 relatively limited (Hawlitsek et al., 2018; Tripp et al., 2022). In the context of hotels, Gupta et  
253 al. (2019) found a strong relationship between perceived green service encounters (e.g., low-  
254 energy lighting, recycling bins) and trust. A recent study of Airbnb consumers found that  
255 environmental benefits positively affect their trusting beliefs in the platform (Li and Tsai, 2022).  
256 When consumers believe in Airbnb's environmental claims, they are more likely to place high  
257 trust in the platform. This implies some degree of 'transference', which is in line with previous  
258 work suggesting a positive effect of green image/green service encounters on trust in the context  
259 of green hotels (Gupta et al., 2019; Martinez, 2015; Wang et al., 2018).

260 Previous work often shows that both trust and motivations are important determinants of  
261 the SE growth (Tripp et al., 2022). Despite the complementary connection between trust and  
262 motivations within SE contexts, they are often studied in isolation. Tripp et al. (2022) advocate  
263 for a combined model, arguing that motivations involve assessment of a SE service's benefits  
264 (e.g. through sustainability), whilst trust relates to how others behave in a vulnerable situation.  
265 The proposed combined model appears to be superior to examining the constructs individually.  
266 Hawlitsek et al. (2018) also include sustainability and trust to develop a comprehensive model  
267 of consumer motivations for P2P sharing activities. Both sustainability and trust were found key  
268 drivers of sharing activities, including the sharing of apartments, cars, rides, and so on. However,  
269 the sharing activities are not specific to particular platforms (e.g., Airbnb), which the current  
270 study attempts to address.

271 Studying the interplay between sustainability (as a motivation) and trust thus has merit, in  
272 advancing the limited evidence found previously (Hawlitsek et al., 2018; Li and Tsai, 2022;  
273 Tripp et al., 2022). The present research begins to address this call by assessing the link from  
274 sustainability to trust. Given the above, it is therefore hypothesised that:

275 H3. Perceived sustainability has a significant positive effect on trust in platform.

276

### 277 3.5. Familiarity

278 Familiarity is a precondition for trust (Gefen, 2000) and relates to an individual's record  
279 of interactions with a particular entity (Mao and Lyu, 2017). As such, familiarity can be primarily  
280 platform-based as the consumer builds up their experience, confidence and knowledge when  
281 using the platform. Familiarity reflects the extent to which a consumer comprehends the  
282 platform's interface and procedures, e.g. knowing how to use the platform for accommodation  
283 booking. In P2P sharing contexts, Möhlmann (2015) argues that trust cannot exist in an  
284 unfamiliar environment and thus increased familiarity builds trust in a cumulative manner.

285 Previous research consistently indicates support for a positive relationship between  
286 familiarity, satisfaction and P2P accommodation loyalty (Mao and Lyu, 2017; Möhlmann, 2015;  
287 Shin et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2019). As consumers become more familiar with the mode of  
288 exchange, they are more likely to trust the process and use it preferentially (Mao and Lyu, 2017),  
289 thus reducing transaction costs (Möhlmann, 2015). Yang et al. (2019) report that familiarity has  
290 a significant indirect positive influence on consumers' continuous intention to use Airbnb via  
291 trust in the host and subsequent attachment to Airbnb. Given the above considerations, the  
292 following hypotheses are put forward:

293 H4. Familiarity has a significant positive effect on platform trust.

294 H5. Familiarity has a significant positive effect on satisfaction.

295 H6. Familiarity has a significant positive effect on loyalty.

296

### 297 3.7. Satisfaction and Loyalty

298 In our study context, satisfaction can be defined as "the post-consumption evaluation of  
299 P2P accommodation service that draws overall responses to the P2P accommodation experience"  
300 (Shin et al., 2020, p. 3). Trust can thus be seen as an antecedent of satisfaction with their current  
301 or most-recent stay (Möhlmann, 2015).

302 Previous studies have sought to explain loyalty intentions using various measures of trust  
303 (e.g. Liang et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2020). However, the findings are inconsistent. For example,  
304 Dann et al. (2019) argue that trust can be an important variable not only in consumers' choice of  
305 P2P accommodation for the first time but also in developing loyalty to that mode of exchange.  
306 Yang et al. (2019) found that consumers intention to reuse Airbnb was related to trust in the  
307 platform, mediated through attachment to the platform. Similarly, Kim and Kim (2020) reported  
308 a positive effect of trust in the platform on loyalty intentions. Kim (2019) found that both trust  
309 and satisfaction had a significant positive impact upon loyalty, but did not test the link between  
310 trust and satisfaction. Shin et al. (2020), meanwhile, found that trust had a significant positive

311 impact of satisfaction but not on loyalty. Möhlmann's (2015) study reached a similar conclusion.  
312 Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

313 H7. Trust in the platform has a significant positive effect on satisfaction.

314 H8. Trust in the platform has a significant positive effect on loyalty.

315  
316 The relationship between satisfaction and loyalty intentions has been frequently examined  
317 in P2P accommodation research. For example, studies show that satisfaction is a significant  
318 positive determinant of future intentions (Kim, 2019; Lee and Kim, 2018; Möhlmann, 2015; Shin  
319 et al., 2020; Tussyadiah, 2016). Future intention usually includes the intention to provide positive  
320 word-of-mouth (WOM) and/or the intention to reuse the platform in the future (Li et al., 2021;  
321 Priporas et al., 2017). Both are thought to be particularly important in the tourism and hospitality  
322 sector, and the strong link between loyalty and profitability is well-recognised (Priporas et al.,  
323 2017). Given the findings noted above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

324 H9. Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on loyalty.

325

### 326 *3.9. Indirect Effects*

327 The development of the hypotheses so far indicates a complex picture based on inconsistent  
328 findings in the context of P2P accommodation. The foregoing literature does not tend to specify  
329 particular indirect or mediating effects that should be investigated to more fully explain the  
330 relationships involved (e.g. Möhlmann, 2015; Tussyadiah, 2016; Ye et al., 2021). This lack of  
331 clarity can mask the understanding of how these key constructs affect consumers. To address  
332 this, the current paper examines the mediating effects of platform trust and satisfaction, followed  
333 by testing the sequential mediation effects of them to loyalty. The following hypotheses are  
334 adopted:

335 H10. Perceived sustainability has a positive indirect effect on loyalty via (a) platform trust,  
336 (b) satisfaction and (c) platform trust and satisfaction.

337 H11. Familiarity has a positive indirect effect on loyalty via (a) platform trust, (b) satisfaction  
338 and (c) platform trust and satisfaction.

339

### 340 *3.10. Moderating Effects of Age*

341 Airbnb more broadly appeals to younger generation (Amaro et al., 2019). Younger, more  
342 liberal and highly-educated consumers are more likely to embrace pro-environmental or  
343 sustainable consumption (White et al., 2019), as well as P2P-SE platforms such as second-hand  
344 clothing (Styvén and Mariani, 2020). In the context of green hotels, age has been found to

345 moderate the relationship between green image, trust, satisfaction and WOM intentions (Wang  
346 et al., 2018). The authors discovered stronger effects of green image on green satisfaction and  
347 green trust for Millennials in contrast to non-Millennials. Dimara et al. (2017) found that younger  
348 hotel guests were more willing to pay extra for towel reuse programmes.

349 Likewise, within P2P accommodation contexts, there is evidence indicating that younger  
350 generations appear to be more concerned about sustainability issues, choose sustainable brands,  
351 practices, and willing to engage in green (P2P) accommodation (e.g. Agag, 2019; First Insight,  
352 2021; Han et al., 2011; Li and Wen, 2019). Agag (2019) found that age moderates the  
353 relationship between attitudes and intentions to use green P2P accommodation with a higher  
354 impact for younger guests. In addition, Del Chiappa et al. (2021) and Mahadevan (2018) found  
355 that the SE philosophy, i.e., benefits associated with collaborative consumption such as  
356 ecological and social aspects were more important for younger travellers and the effect on  
357 satisfaction was also stronger for the younger generations.

358 Extending this view to the current research, the focus on age as a moderator enables us to  
359 develop a more in-depth understanding to provide guidance on how to encourage Airbnb guests  
360 to engage more sustainable accommodation bookings. The extent to which age might influence  
361 the importance of sustainability perceptions as a driver for P2P accommodation has been mostly  
362 overlooked in the literature. It is less clear how age exactly moderates the relationship between  
363 sustainability perceptions, satisfaction and platform trust. Given the consistent expectation that  
364 young generations are more motivated to choose P2P accommodation based on ecological factors  
365 (Agag, 2019; Li and Wen, 2019) or sustainability more broadly (White et al., 2019), it is  
366 reasonable to anticipate a negative moderation effect:

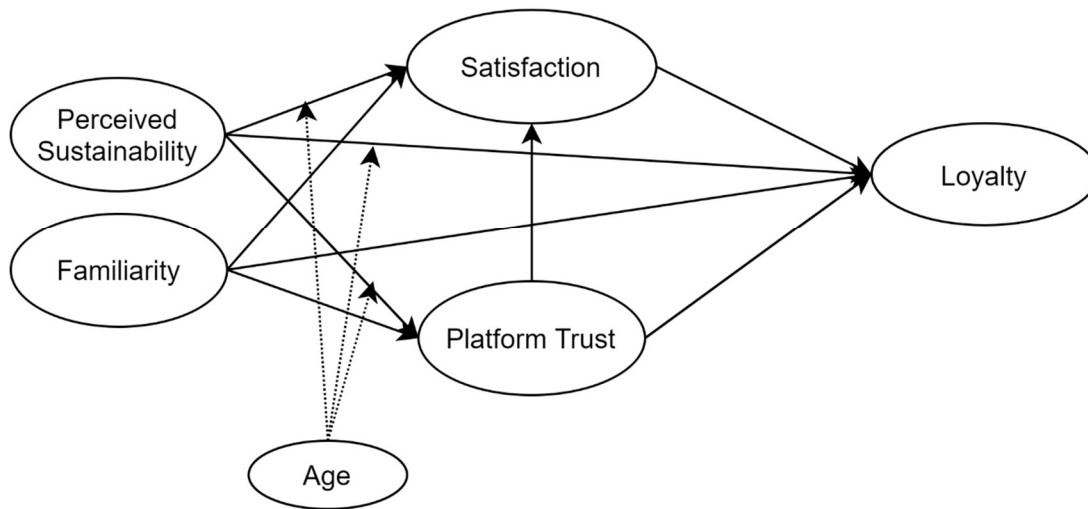
367 H12. Age negatively moderates the positive effect of perceived sustainability on platform  
368 trust.

369 H13. Age negatively moderates the positive effect of perceived sustainability on satisfaction.

370 H14. Age negatively moderates the positive effect of perceived sustainability on loyalty.

371

372 Figure 1 displays the hypothesised relationships.



373

374 Figure 1: Conceptual Model

375

376

377 **4. Methods**

378 *4.1. Sample and Data Collection*

379 Data were collected via an online survey hosted by a market research company (Dynata).  
 380 Quota sampling was employed to obtain a gender-balanced sample of qualified customers (i.e.,  
 381 individuals over 18-year-old, living in the UK, stayed in Airbnb accommodation at least once in  
 382 the past 12 months). Respondents who failed to meet the criteria were eliminated from the  
 383 sample. Dynata distributed the survey to their panel members in late March 2020 and the required  
 384 number of completions was reached within seven days. Respondent authentication and data-  
 385 quality checks (e.g., missing values, speeders, ‘straight-line’ responses, attention-check  
 386 questions) were undertaken. All ineligible data were excluded from the subsequent analysis. The  
 387 final sample consisted of 507 completed responses. Table 1 shows the sample profile.

388

389

390 **Table 1. Sample Profile**

| <b>Characteristics</b>                    |  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>%</b> |
|---|--|------------------|----------|
| <b>Gender</b>                             | Male   | 254              | 50.1     |
|   | Female   | 253              | 49.9     |
| <b>Age<sup>1</sup></b>                    | 18-24  | 40               | 7.9      |
|   | 25-34  | 99               | 19.5     |
|   | 35-44  | 101              | 19.9     |
|   | 45-54  | 83               | 16.4     |
|   | 55-64  | 103              | 20.3     |
|   | 65+  | 81               | 16.0     |
| <b>Education</b>                          | Secondary school or less                                 | 85               | 16.8     |
|   | College of further education                             | 112              | 22.1     |
|   | College of higher education/University bachelor's degree | 207              | 40.8     |
|   | Master's degree or higher                                | 103              | 20.3     |
| <b>Annual household income before tax</b> | Under £20,000  | 54               | 10.7     |
|   | £20,000 - £39,999  | 162              | 32.0     |
|   | £40,000 - £59,999  | 119              | 23.5     |
|   | £60,000 - £79,999  | 60               | 11.8     |
|   | £80,000 or above   | 91               | 18.0     |
|   | Prefer not to answer                                     | 21               | 4.1      |
| <b>Type of Airbnb accommodations</b>      | Entire property  | 348              | 68.6     |
|   | Private room(s) for self/family                          | 156              | 30.8     |
|   | Room shared with other people                            | 3                | 0.6      |

391 *Note: <sup>1</sup>Ranged from 18-79; recoded into 6 groups for presentation purpose.*

392

393

394 *4.2. Measures and Analyses Methods*

395 Scales measuring the hypothesised determinants to Airbnb satisfaction and loyalty were  
 396 derived from previous studies. Trust in platform was measured by six items (Yang et al., 2019).  
 397 Familiarity was operationalised using four items (Bhattacharjee, 2002; Möhlmann, 2021).  
 398 Perceived sustainability consisted of four items adopted from Tussyadiah (2016). Four items on  
 399 satisfaction with Airbnb were adopted (Tussyadiah, 2016) whilst loyalty consisted of six items  
 400 relating to repurchase intention and WOM recommendations (Maxham and Netemeyer, 2002)  
 401 (see Appendix).

402 Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 25 was conducted to assess scale  
 403 reliability and validity. The hypothesised direct and indirect effects were tested with a serial  
 404 mediator model using Hayes' Process Syntax v3.5 in SPSS (Model 6, 10,000 bootstrap samples),  
 405 whilst the moderated mediation was tested with Model 85 (Hayes, 2018), both employing bias-  
 406 corrected 95% confidence intervals. The PROCESS macro estimates both mediation and  
 407 interaction effects with bootstrapping samples that can increase a model's predictive validity and  
 408 does not require normality assumptions. Furthermore, it enables the estimation of the direct and

409 indirect effects at various values of the moderating variable (Hayes, 2018). Several studies  
 410 recently published in this journal have used a similar approach to test mediation and moderation  
 411 (e.g. Balaji et al., 2022; Chen and Eyoum, 2021; Wei et al., 2021). Mean scores for each construct  
 412 were used as input for the PROCESS models.

413

414

## 415 5. Results

### 416 5.1. Scale Evaluations

417 The goodness-of-fit indicators of the CFA measurement model were within the  
 418 recommended ranges demonstrating that the model fits the data well ( $\chi^2$  is 651.1,  $p < .000$ ,  
 419  $\chi^2/df = 2.987$ , CFI = .953, TLI = .945, SRMR = .052, RMSEA = .063). Composite reliabilities (CR)  
 420 were above .7 for all constructs confirming adequate reliability. Estimated factor loadings were  
 421 significant ( $p < .001$ ) for all indicators (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988) and the average variance  
 422 extracted (AVE) scores were above .5, supporting convergent validity. The square root of all  
 423 AVE scores exceeded their corresponding inter-construct correlation estimates confirming  
 424 discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (see Table 2). As the data for this study was  
 425 derived from one single source, common method bias (CMB) could arise. The following  
 426 procedural techniques were applied to address this: randomised order of scale items, separation  
 427 of predictor and criterion items, variation of scales and response labels (Podsakoff et al., 2012).  
 428 In addition, Harman's one-factor test showed that a single factor accounted for 32.76% of  
 429 variance which is below the threshold of 50%, demonstrating that one factor would not  
 430 adequately represent the data (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Only high levels of common method  
 431 variance potentially confound actual relationships (Fuller et al., 2016). Thus, the above suggests  
 432 that CMB is not a serious concern in this study.

433

434 **Table 2. Means, Reliability, Correlations and Discriminant Validity of the Constructs**

| Construct | Mean (SD)   | AVE  | CR   | Sust        | Fam         | Sat         | Trust       | Loy         |
|-----------|-------------|------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Sust      | 4.82 (1.20) | .705 | .905 | <b>.840</b> |             |             |             |             |
| Fam       | 5.63 (1.12) | .740 | .919 | .341        | <b>.860</b> |             |             |             |
| Sat       | 4.04 (.70)  | .641 | .877 | .350        | .446        | <b>.801</b> |             |             |
| Trust     | 5.09 (.98)  | .605 | .901 | .634        | .480        | .641        | <b>.778</b> |             |
| Loy       | 5.46 (1.14) | .714 | .926 | .559        | .550        | .776        | .766        | <b>.845</b> |

435 *Note: Square root of AVE scores in the diagonal. (Sust=Perceived Sustainability; Fam=Familiarity;*  
 436 *Sat=Satisfaction; Trust = Platform Trust; Loy=Loyalty)*

437

438

439 5.2. Testing of Hypothesised Relationships

440 Hypotheses were tested with a serial mediation model (Model 6, 10,000 bootstrap samples)  
441 (full results in Table 3). Gender, age, education levels, usage frequency and property type  
442 (shared/private room vs entire property) were included as control variables as these could  
443 confound the results<sup>1</sup>. The model explained 68% of the variation in Airbnb loyalty.

444 Perceived sustainability had no significant effect on the satisfaction with the Airbnb stay,  
445 thus not supporting H1 ( $a_{12}=.004, p=.869$ ). However, a significant direct impact of sustainability  
446 on loyalty to Airbnb was found ( $c'_{1}=.149, p<.001$ ), supporting H2. Perceived sustainability also  
447 significantly increased trust in the Airbnb platform ( $a_{11}=.438, p<.001$ ), supporting H3. Thus, the  
448 more Airbnb users perceived that they could have a positive environmental impact by using  
449 Airbnb accommodation, the more likely they were to recommend and reuse Airbnb and place  
450 trust in the platform.

451 Familiarity with Airbnb had a significant positive effect on platform trust ( $a_{21}=.211,$   
452  $p<.001$ ), satisfaction ( $a_{22}=.121, p<.001$ ) and loyalty ( $c'_{2}=.168, p<.001$ ), supporting H4, H5 and  
453 H6. Thus, the more familiar Airbnb users become with the processes and the platform in general,  
454 the higher is their trust in the platform, satisfaction with their stay and loyalty intentions. As  
455 hypothesised, higher trust in the platform also significantly increased satisfaction ( $d_{12}=.351,$   
456  $p<.001$ ), supporting H7. Thus, the more (less) users trust in the Airbnb platform, the more (less)  
457 they were satisfied with their stay. In addition, platform trust had a positive significant  
458 association with loyalty intentions towards the platform ( $b_{1}=.340, p<.001$ ), providing support for  
459 H8. The well-established link between satisfaction with Airbnb stays and loyalty intentions to  
460 the platform was confirmed in this study ( $b_{2}=.680, p<.001$ ), supporting H9. Platform trust and  
461 satisfaction were thus major drivers of loyalty intentions, followed by familiarity and perceived  
462 sustainability. The control variables revealed that older travellers and those renting the entire  
463 property were more satisfied, whilst females and those with lower education showed higher  
464 loyalty intentions.

465

466

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<sup>1</sup> Control variables were measured as follows: gender (dummy, 1=female), age (continuous variable), education (1– less than secondary school to 5 – Master degree or higher), usage frequency (continuous variable), property type (dummy, 1=entire property)



467 **Table 3. Model Coefficients for the Mediation Effects of Trust and Satisfaction:**  
 468 **Unstandardised Direct and Indirect Effects**

|                          | M <sub>1</sub> Trust   |                      |   | Consequent             |                 |                      | Y Loy        |                         |          |                      |        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------|----------------------|--------|
|                          |                        |                      |   | M <sub>2</sub> Sat     |                 |                      |              |                         |          |                      |        |
| <i>Antecedents</i>       |                        |                      |   |                        |                 |                      |              |                         |          |                      |        |
| <i>Direct effects</i>    | <b>Coeff</b>           | <b>SE</b>            | <b>p</b>  | <b>Coeff</b>           | <b>SE</b>       | <b>p</b>             | <b>Coeff</b> | <b>SE</b>               | <b>P</b> |                      |        |
| X <sub>1</sub> Sust      | <i>a</i> <sub>11</sub> | .438                 | < .001  | <i>a</i> <sub>12</sub> | .004            | .027                 | .869         | <i>c</i> ' <sub>1</sub> | .149     | .032                 | < .001 |
| X <sub>2</sub> Fam       | <i>a</i> <sub>21</sub> | .211                 | < .001  | <i>a</i> <sub>22</sub> | .121            | .025                 | < .001       | <i>c</i> ' <sub>2</sub> | .168     | .030                 | < .001 |
| M <sub>1</sub> Trust     |                        |                      |   | <i>d</i> <sub>12</sub> | .351            | .033                 | < .001       | <i>b</i> <sub>1</sub>   | .340     | .044                 | < .001 |
| M <sub>2</sub> Sat       |                        |                      |   |                        |                 |                      |              | <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub>   | .680     | .053                 | < .001 |
| Constant                 | <i>i</i> <sub>M1</sub> | 1.733                | < .001  | <i>i</i> <sub>M2</sub> | 1.222           | .206                 | < .001       | <i>i</i> <sub>Y</sub>   | -.473    | .251                 | .060   |
| Gender                   | <i>c</i> <sub>11</sub> | .084                 | .209  | <i>c</i> <sub>12</sub> | .012            | .050                 | .810         | <i>c</i> <sub>13</sub>  | .145     | .059                 | .014   |
| Age                      | <i>c</i> <sub>21</sub> | .002                 | .332  | <i>c</i> <sub>22</sub> | .006            | .002                 | < .001       | <i>c</i> <sub>23</sub>  | -.001    | .002                 | .544   |
| Education                | <i>c</i> <sub>31</sub> | -.032                | .345  | <i>c</i> <sub>32</sub> | -.009           | .025                 | .712         | <i>c</i> <sub>33</sub>  | -.068    | .030                 | .023   |
| Frequency                | <i>c</i> <sub>41</sub> | .003                 | .510  | <i>c</i> <sub>42</sub> | -.001           | .004                 | .773         | <i>c</i> <sub>43</sub>  | .008     | .005                 | .073   |
| Prop Type                | <i>c</i> <sub>51</sub> | .006                 | .930  | <i>c</i> <sub>52</sub> | .144            | .054                 | .008         | <i>c</i> <sub>53</sub>  | -.049    | .064                 | .441   |
|                          |                        | R <sup>2</sup> =.434 |   |                        |                 | R <sup>2</sup> =.381 |              |                         |          | R <sup>2</sup> =.679 |        |
|                          |                        | F(7,499) = 54.695,   |   |                        |                 | F(8,498) = 38.312,   |              |                         |          | F(9,497) = 117.047,  |        |
|                          |                        | <i>p</i> < .001      |   |                        |                 | <i>p</i> < .001      |              |                         |          | <i>p</i> < .001      |        |
| <i>Indirect effects</i>  |                        |                      | <b>Effect</b>   | <b>BootSE</b>          | <b>BootLLCI</b> | <b>BootULCI</b>      |              |                         |          |                      |        |
| Sust → Trust → Loy       |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>11</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>1</sub>                        | .149                   | .024            | .104                 | .197         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Sust → Sat → Loy         |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>12</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub>                        | .003                   | .019            | -.034                | .043         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Sust → Trust → Sat → Loy |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>11</sub> <i>d</i> <sub>12</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub> | .104                   | .020            | .069                 | .146         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Total indirect effect    |                        |                      |   | .257                   | .034            | .191                 | .326         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Fam → Trust → Loy        |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>21</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub>                        | .072                   | .015            | .046                 | .104         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Fam → Sat → Loy          |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>22</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub>                        | .082                   | .024            | .038                 | .129         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Fam → Trust → Sat → Loy  |                        |                      | <i>a</i> <sub>21</sub> <i>d</i> <sub>12</sub> <i>b</i> <sub>2</sub> | .050                   | .013            | .029                 | .078         |                         |          |                      |        |
| Total indirect effect    |                        |                      |   | .204                   | .035            | .141                 | .278         |                         |          |                      |        |

469  
 470  
 471 The indirect effect of perceived sustainability on Airbnb loyalty via platform trust  
 472 (*a*<sub>11</sub>*b*<sub>1</sub>=.149) based on 10,000 bootstrapped samples was significant as the 95% bias-corrected  
 473 confidence interval was entirely above zero (95% CI Lower Limit (LLCI)=.104 and Upper Limit  
 474 (ULCI)=.197), supporting H10a. However, the indirect effect via satisfaction was not significant  
 475 as the confidence interval included a zero (*a*<sub>12</sub>*b*<sub>2</sub>=.003, LLCI=-.034, ULCI=.043). No support for  
 476 H10b was found. The indirect effect of perceived sustainability via platform trust and satisfaction  
 477 is significant (*a*<sub>11</sub>*d*<sub>12</sub>*b*<sub>2</sub>=.104, LLCI=.069, ULCI=.146), supporting H10c. This shows that higher  
 478 perceived sustainability benefits will lead to higher platform trust which in turn increases  
 479 satisfaction with Airbnb stays and consequently increases future repurchase and  
 480 recommendation behaviour.

481 Familiarity with Airbnb had a significant indirect effect on loyalty via trust ( $a_{21}b_1=.072$ ,  
482 LLCI=.046, ULCI=.104), satisfaction ( $a_{22}b_2=.082$ , LLCI=.038, ULCI=.129) and via trust and  
483 satisfaction ( $a_{21}d_{12}b_2=.050$ , LLCI=.029, ULCI=.078), supporting H11a-c.<sup>2</sup>

484 Hypotheses 12 to 14 were assessed with a moderated serial mediation model (Model 85,  
485 10,000 bootstrap samples). It was hypothesised that the strength of the link between perceived  
486 sustainability on platform trust, satisfaction and loyalty varies with age in that the links are  
487 stronger for younger Airbnb users. The model controlled for gender, education, usage frequency,  
488 property type and used familiarity as a covariate. Similar results were found in that those renting  
489 the entire property showed higher satisfaction levels, whilst females and those with lower  
490 education backgrounds demonstrated higher loyalty intentions.

491 The results for the moderated serial mediation model confirmed a significant negative  
492 interaction effect of age and perceived sustainability on platform trust (Interaction= -.009,  
493  $p<.001$ , LLCI: -.012, ULCI: -.005), confirming H12. Thus, whilst the impact of perceived  
494 sustainability on platform trust is positive and significant, this effect significantly decreases with  
495 age. For example, the effect of perceived sustainability on platform trust for an 18-year-old user  
496 was  $a_{11}=.692$  (SE=.059,  $p<.001$ ), whilst for a 48.5-year-old user that decreases to  $a_{11}=.421$   
497 (SE=.030,  $p<.001$ ), and for a 79-year-old user the effect was only  $a_{11}=.150$  (SE=.065,  $p<.001$ ).  
498 In addition, a significant moderated mediation effect of age was found. The index of the  
499 moderated mediation via trust (Sust→Trust→Loy, Index: -.003, LLCI: -.005, ULCI: -.002) and  
500 the moderated serial mediation effect via trust and satisfaction (Sust→Trust→Sat→Loy, Index:  
501 -.002, LLCI: -.003, ULCI: -.001) was negative and significant. Thus, with increasing age the  
502 mediated effect of perceived sustainability via platform trust and satisfaction on loyalty also  
503 decreases. No support for H13 and H14 was found as the interaction effect of age and perceived  
504 sustainability on satisfaction and loyalty was not significant. Table 4 exhibits a summary of the  
505 results.

506

507

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<sup>2</sup> Whilst PROCESS is an OLS-based regression analysis approach, comparable results (i.e., standardised coefficients for direct and indirect effects tested with a bootstrapping procedure) obtained with covariance-based structural equation modelling (CB-SEM) in AMOS which takes account of measurement errors (Model fit  $\chi^2=826.09$ ,  $\chi^2/df=2.68$ , CFI=.945, TLI=.945, SRMR=.047, RMSEA=.058;).

508 **Table 4. Overview of Results**

| <b>Hypothesized paths</b> |                          | <b>Result</b>     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>H1</i>                 | <i>Sust → Sat</i>        | <i>No Support</i> |
| H2                        | Sust → Loy               | Supported         |
| H3                        | Sust → Trust             | Supported         |
| H4                        | Fam → Trust              | Supported         |
| H5                        | Fam → Sat                | Supported         |
| H6                        | Fam → Loy                | Supported         |
| H7                        | Trust → Sat              | Supported         |
| H8                        | Trust → Loy              | Supported         |
| H9                        | Sat → Loy                | Supported         |
| H10a                      | Sust → Trust → Loy       | Supported         |
| <i>H10b</i>               | <i>Sust → Sat → Loy</i>  | <i>No support</i> |
| H10c                      | Sust → Trust → Sat → Loy | Supported         |
| H11a                      | Fam → Trust → Loy        | Supported         |
| H11b                      | Fam → Sat → Loy          | Supported         |
| H11c                      | Fam → Trust → Sat → Loy  | Supported         |
| H12                       | Age * Sust → Trust       | Supported         |
| <i>H13</i>                | <i>Age * Sust → Sat</i>  | <i>No support</i> |
| <i>H14</i>                | <i>Age * Sust → Loy</i>  | <i>No support</i> |

509

510

511 **6. Discussion**

512 This study contributes to an improved understanding of the role of perceived sustainability  
 513 in P2P accommodation. Sustainability and familiarity are effective drivers of consumers’ loyalty,  
 514 alongside the mediators of trust and satisfaction. Furthermore, the effect of perceived  
 515 sustainability on platform trust decreases with age. These findings provide important theoretical  
 516 and timely practical implications to hospitality marketers.

517

518 *6.1 Role of Perceived Sustainability*

519 Similar to the work of Möhlmann (2015) and Tussyadiah (2016), the present study did not  
 520 find a direct influence of sustainability on satisfaction. A possible explanation for the  
 521 insignificant link is that the relationship is complex. The respondents felt strong forces from  
 522 within which feed to platform trust and loyalty. According to SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2000),  
 523 motivations should regulate goal-oriented behaviours and enable individuals to be satisfactory  
 524 with their goals. In addition, our study found that sustainability had a significant influence on  
 525 loyalty via platform trust and satisfaction. This suggests that the effect of sustainability on  
 526 satisfaction might be ‘crowded-out’ by the stronger effect on platform trust (Shin et al., 2020).  
 527 Guests thus might translate sustainability perceptions to higher trust in the platform before  
 528 making the link to satisfaction with their stay. This is also supported by the evidence that the

529 effect from sustainability to trust was larger ( $a_{11}=.438, p<.001$ ) than that of sustainability to  
530 loyalty intentions ( $c'=.149, p<.001$ ).

531 Perceived sustainability, familiarity, platform trust and satisfaction are effective direct  
532 determinants to loyalty. The positive direct link between sustainability and loyalty is of great  
533 interest as this indicates that consumers' loyalty towards Airbnb is motivated by their perceived  
534 sustainability/environmental benefits associated with P2P accommodation. Whilst this  
535 contradicts earlier studies (e.g. Hamari et al., 2016; Möhlmann, 2015; Tripp et al., 2022; Ye et  
536 al., 2021); the present study provides new empirical evidence that perceived sustainability is an  
537 important motivator supporting previous work in the context of P2P accommodation (e.g.,  
538 Martinez, 2015; Dann et al 2019; Hawlitscheck et al. 2018, Guttentag et al. 2018). As expected,  
539 satisfaction had a positive effect on loyalty in line with previous research (Kim, 2019; Lee and  
540 Kim, 2018; Möhlmann, 2015; Shin et al., 2020; Tussyadiah, 2016). Furthermore, platform trust  
541 significantly influenced satisfaction and loyalty intentions, supporting previous research (Kim  
542 and Kim, 2020; Möhlmann, 2015; Shin et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2019).

543 The more users perceive sustainability benefits by using Airbnb accommodation, the  
544 greater their trust in the platform and the more likely they are to recommend and reuse Airbnb  
545 in the future. This study contributes to the limited literature on sustainability and trust –  
546 confirming previous findings (e.g. Gupta et al., 2019; Li and Tsai, 2022; Tripp et al., 2022; Wang  
547 et al., 2018) in P2P accommodation contexts.

548 The mediation analysis further uncovers the complex relationships among the constructs  
549 and behavioural outcomes. As discussed above, platform trust can effectively mediate the link  
550 between sustainability and satisfaction which then feeds to loyalty. This extends previous  
551 research in the context of green hotels (e.g. Martinez, 2015; Wang et al., 2018) and the findings  
552 by Hamari et al. (2016) and Hawlitschek et al. (2018), who found a significant link from  
553 sustainability to intention via attitudes in P2P sharing.

554 Age significantly moderates the relationship between perceived sustainability and platform  
555 trust, meaning that whilst sustainability positively influences platform trust, such effect decreases  
556 with age. This finding gives fresh evidence to support recent research (e.g. Agag, 2019; Li and  
557 Wen, 2019; Wang et al., 2018) and demonstrates that attitudinal changes are taking place among  
558 younger consumers with respect to environmental issues (Styvén and Mariani, 2020).  
559 Environmental benefits are thus important drivers for younger consumers to engage with P2P  
560 accommodation.

561  
562

## 563 6.2 Role of Familiarity, Satisfaction and Loyalty

564 As expected, the research found that familiarity has direct links to satisfaction, platform  
565 trust and loyalty, thus supporting previous work (Mao and Lyu, 2017; Möhlmann, 2015; Shin et  
566 al., 2020; Yang et al., 2019). Extending Gefen's (2000) proposition, familiarity can be considered  
567 a precondition for trust to Airbnb, thus adding further evidence to the literature (Möhlmann,  
568 2015; Yang et al., 2019). As individuals' positive experience and engagement with the  
569 intermediary increase, so will their knowledge and trust in the platform.

570 Furthermore, the effect of familiarity to loyalty is mediated by trust in the platform and  
571 satisfaction. In particular, the sequential mediation shows that familiarity feeds to trust in  
572 platform which goes on to satisfaction and ultimately loyalty. The results show that for Airbnb  
573 as an intermediary, trust in platform occurs at the institutional level and has a profound effect on  
574 consumers' loyalty behaviours. This is in line with previous research which also found a positive  
575 link between trust in platforms and intention (Mao et al., 2020; Park and Tussyadiah, 2019). As  
576 expected, the positive link between satisfaction and loyalty is confirmed and supporting previous  
577 work (e.g. Kim, 2019; Lee and Kim, 2018; Möhlmann, 2015; Priporas et al., 2017; Shin et al.,  
578 2020; Tussyadiah, 2016).

579

580

## 581 7. Conclusions

582 There are expectations that Airbnb can take a pioneer role in leading the SE and helping it  
583 to make its full contribution to sustainable development. It is expected that P2P sharing can be  
584 more sustainable than traditional market-based accommodation (Frenken, 2017; Gössling and  
585 Hall, 2019; Hamari et al., 2016; Mi and Coffman, 2019). Given the vast scale of the P2P  
586 accommodation sharing sector globally, the potential contributions to sustainable development  
587 associated with P2P accommodation may be considerable. Such advances are surely to be  
588 welcomed in an industry where other sustainability gains can be difficult to achieve. This  
589 research argues that sustainability is an essential precursor of platform trust and loyalty to P2P  
590 accommodation sharing and that this link is stronger for younger consumers.

591

### 592 7.1. Theoretical Contributions

593 This research makes several theoretical contributions. First, the paper clarifies the  
594 relationships between sustainability and loyalty in the P2P accommodation context by  
595 considering not only direct but also indirect effects. In common with several prior studies  
596 (Möhlmann, 2015; Tussyadiah, 2016), the present research also did not find a significant

597 relationship between perceived sustainability and satisfaction. Consequently, satisfaction was  
598 not found to serve as a mediator of perceived sustainability and loyalty in the present study.

599 The relationship between perceived sustainability and loyalty was, however, mediated by  
600 platform trust, as well as satisfaction preceded by platform trust. This accords with the findings  
601 of recent studies by Gupta et al. (2019), Li and Tsai (2022), Martinez (2015), and Wang et al.  
602 (2018), which all found strong positive relationships between green credentials and trust in a  
603 wider hospitality context. This reinforces the importance of building platform trust in the P2P  
604 accommodation market as a precursor to developing strong perceptions of satisfaction and  
605 loyalty intentions (Ert et al., 2016; Park and Tussyadiah, 2019; Yang et al., 2019). This research  
606 thus extends the current theoretical understanding of the role of trust in mediating the link  
607 between sustainability and loyalty intentions to the context of P2P accommodation.

608 In terms of SDT, the results suggest that users of P2P platforms may not be transitioning  
609 a dominance of extrinsic rather than intrinsic motivations as some studies suggest (Balaji et al.,  
610 2022; Li and Wen, 2019; Ye et al., 2021) and that the latter remain important in understanding  
611 customers' satisfaction and loyalty in the SE. Second, this study suggests that the effect of  
612 perceived sustainability is negatively moderated by age, thus promoting sustainability benefits  
613 to younger users appears to be an effective step forward to building trust and loyalty. Previous  
614 research shows that the SE appeals to younger generations for motivations such as economic  
615 benefits (Amaro et al., 2019) and the use of new technology (Tussyadiah, 2016). The present  
616 study adds to this knowledge arguing that this also applies to environmental benefits. Two  
617 possible explanations can help understand this. First, it is reasonable to expect that young  
618 consumers are more ready to respond to sustainability calls and accept behavioural changes.  
619 Secondly, as consumers evolve during their interactions with the marketplace, their self-  
620 identities also evolve and so do their consumption practices (Hamilton and Price, 2019). For  
621 example, the emergence of the SE has encouraged a shift in consumption modes and business  
622 models (Curtis and Mont, 2020). The shift may have been driven by economic benefits at first  
623 but is now driven by social and environmental considerations. Perhaps younger consumers  
624 consider using P2P accommodation as a more sustainable form of consumption: a green way to  
625 align their consumptions with their identities, values and inner satisfaction. Thus, sustainability  
626 acts as a powerful intrinsic motivation.

627

## 628 *7.2. Managerial Implications*

629 The findings have important implications for Airbnb and its hosts. Given the direct and  
630 indirect effects of sustainability found in this study, Airbnb should adopt an outside-in-approach

631 taking consumers' sustainability motivations to the core of their strategies. Airbnb should  
632 encourage its hosts to more clearly promote and communicate sustainability (especially the  
633 environmental benefits) to consumers as these can effectively drive trust and, through this,  
634 satisfaction, and loyalty intentions. This study suggests that such a strategy may be most effective  
635 among younger consumer segments.

636 When consumers decide whether or not to recommend or reuse Airbnb in future, building  
637 trust in the platform is crucial as it effectively mediates the positive impact of sustainability on  
638 satisfaction and loyalty. Airbnb should fully commit to sustainability and trust-building across  
639 its full range of touchpoints with consumers. For example, users should be informed of how  
640 Airbnb keeps its promises and delivers environmental benefits throughout the consumer journey.  
641 Placing emphasis on how competent Airbnb is and putting consumers' interest first may also  
642 help Airbnb to grow trust among its consumers.

643 Thus, extending the notion of consumer journeys (Hamilton and Price, 2019) to the current  
644 study, embedding trust in the platform and satisfaction across all touchpoints in the consumer  
645 journey should boost the effect of sustainability on loyalty. The establishment of touchpoints is  
646 an ongoing process as consumers interact with and have new experiences of Airbnb and its hosts.  
647 The emphasis of sustainability/environmental benefits should not just be appearing ('saying') in  
648 communication and promotion messages but also actions ('doing') – being seen in actual  
649 operations and practices of Airbnb. It seems reasonable to question the efficacy of 'saying'  
650 tactics, as they can erode trust if promises fail to be delivered. The element of 'doing', however,  
651 should feed trust in platform which can be transferred to Airbnb hosts.

652

### 653 *7.3. Limitations and Final Observations*

654 Despite the advances in understanding this paper presents, there are several limitations of  
655 which the reader should be aware. Firstly, the research was based on a cross-sectional design  
656 with a self-completed survey. While this was helpful to capture a snapshot of the research context  
657 at a point of time, the sequential effects should be validated to establish confidence in  
658 generalisability of the results. To overcome this limitation, future research should examine the  
659 effects with other sharing practices. Secondly, the moderated mediation results provide a useful  
660 foundation for exploring the age effect. This paper therefore calls for more work to investigate  
661 how age interacts with sustainability/environmental benefits and loyalty behaviours in other  
662 sharing contexts. Ideally, consideration of different sociocultural cohorts would be a fruitful area  
663 for extending the knowledge base.

664

665 *Note on Covid-19*

666 The research was conducted in late March 2020 when the UK went into its first national  
667 lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is reasonable to believe, however, that respondents'  
668 experiences with and perceptions of Airbnb were largely unaffected by the pandemic at the point  
669 of data-collection.

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891 **Appendix. Measurement Scales and Descriptives**

| Variable  | Mean | SD   |
|---|------|------|
| <i>Perceived Sustainability<sup>1</sup></i>   |      |      |
| Staying in accommodation booked through Airbnb ...  |      |      |
| ... is a more sustainable way for me to travel.   | 4.90 | 1.29 |
| ... helps me reduce the negative impacts of travel on the environment.                                      | 4.79 | 1.38 |
| ... helps me reduce the consumption of energy and other resources while travelling.                         | 4.75 | 1.42 |
| ... allows me to be a more socially responsible traveller.  | 4.84 | 1.38 |
| <i>Familiarity<sup>1</sup></i>  |      |      |
| I am familiar with the processes on Airbnb.   | 5.45 | 1.39 |
| I am familiar with making a booking through Airbnb.   | 5.69 | 1.20 |
| I am familiar with the process of reviewing ratings on Airbnb.  | 5.64 | 1.23 |
| Overall, I am familiar with Airbnb.   | 5.75 | 1.17 |
| <i>Trust in Airbnb<sup>1</sup></i>  |      |      |
| Based on my own experience, I believe that ...  |      |      |
| ... Airbnb is honest.   | 5.11 | 1.12 |
| ... Airbnb keeps its promises.  | 5.23 | 1.09 |
| ... Airbnb puts customers' interests before its own.  | 4.75 | 1.37 |
| ... Airbnb demonstrates its belief that "the customer is always right".                                     | 4.78 | 1.26 |
| ... Airbnb is competent in carrying out its online accommodation booking transactions.                      | 5.30 | 1.15 |
| ... Airbnb knows how to provide an excellent online accommodation booking service.                          | 5.35 | 1.14 |
| <i>Satisfaction<sup>2</sup></i>   |      |      |
| Overall, I am generally satisfied with the stays I have had.  | 4.03 | 0.84 |
| When compared with my expectations, I am generally satisfied with the stays I have had.                     | 4.02 | 0.81 |
| When considering the time and effort, I am satisfied with the stays I have had.                             | 4.04 | 0.82 |
| When considering the money I spent, I am satisfied with the stays I have had.                               | 4.08 | 0.79 |
| <i>Loyalty<sup>3</sup></i>  |      |      |
| In the future, I intend to use booking services from Airbnb.  | 5.50 | 1.29 |
| If I am looking for accommodation in the future, I am likely to use one of the properties listed on Airbnb. | 5.47 | 1.26 |
| In the near future, I will not use Airbnb as my accommodation provider. <sup>4</sup>                        | 3.60 | 2.04 |
| I am likely to spread positive word-of-mouth about Airbnb as an accommodation booking website.              | 5.36 | 1.36 |
| I would recommend Airbnb's accommodation-booking website to my friends.                                     | 5.49 | 1.28 |
| If my friends were looking for an accommodation booking website, I would tell them to try Airbnb.           | 5.49 | 1.31 |

892 *Note: <sup>1</sup> Items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree). <sup>2</sup> Items measured on*  
 893 *a 5-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). <sup>3</sup> Items measured on a 7-point scale (1=very*  
 894 *unlikely to 7=very likely). <sup>4</sup>Item being removed from the model.*

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