

The Influence of Peer-to-Peer Accommodation on the Competitive Landscape of Star-Rated Hotels in Kenya

Abstract

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The hotel industry has been reshaped by peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation platforms, raising concerns about fairness, safety, and market dynamics, yet limited research exists on their impact. This study was aimed at exploring the Influence of Peer-to-Peer Accommodation on the Competitive Landscape of Star-Rated Hotels in Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives included investigating the impact of P2P platform costs, social interaction, and environmental commitment on hotel competitiveness, as well as the moderating role of customer reviews. Guided by the Theory of Disruptive Innovation and Five Forces, the study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The target population consisted of 288 top managers from both P2P accommodations and star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. Descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression were employed for data analysis. Findings showed that social interaction was the highest predictor of competitiveness, followed by environmental commitment and cost. Customer reviews positively moderated the relationship between P2P accommodation sharing platforms and hotel competitiveness. In conclusion, the study found a significant relationship between P2P accommodation sharing platforms and hotel competitiveness, recommending that star-rated hotels should monitor costs, foster social interactions, adopt sustainable practices, and manage customer feedback to remain competitive.

Keywords Peer-to-peer accommodation, cost, social interaction, environmental commitment, Star-rated hotels, Competitiveness

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Introduction

Decision-making related to tourism has become more difficult as a result of the quick expansion and diversity of lodging options, and the lodging industry is now more competitive (Kuhzady et al., 2020). Other lodging options that have surfaced from the sharing economy and internet marketplaces, such as Airbnb, are increasingly competing with one another (Guttentag, 2015). Peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation has been anticipated to disrupt conventional lodging models and transform the hospitality sector (Fang, 2016; Sigala, 2017). Since 2018, the number of P2P accommodations has grown significantly, making up as much as 7% of all accommodations worldwide. The World Bank Group (2018) projects that between 2013 and 2025, the worldwide P2P accommodation market will develop at an annual rate of 13%, which is six times faster than the growth rate of conventional hotels. In North America, Dogru & Pekin (2017) conducted a study where they found out that P2P accommodation sharing platforms guests place more value on space, cleanliness, number of photos, handicap accessibility, family friendliness, free breakfast, location, and unique experience. However, this study only focused on pricing determinants in P2P accommodation sharing platforms as a key drive of customers booking with them overlooking the other factors. Research conducted in Finland showed that social and economic appeals of P2P accommodation significantly affect expansion in destination selection, increase in travel frequency, length of stay and range of activities participated in tourism destinations (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2015). In Africa, Welsum (2016) noted that sharing economy platforms like Airbnb which is one of P2P accommodation sharing platform types are expanding their global reach due to technological advancements in the hotel business in Africa. Murage et al. (2020) conducted research in Nairobi County, Kenya where the findings showed that there exists a positive relationship between P2P accommodation and budget hotels competition. However, they are only focused on budgeted hotels making it difficult to generalize their results to all-star rated hotels. Despite the existence of studies that have investigated the influence of P2P accommodation sharing platforms there was less research focusing on hotel competitiveness key indicators such as market share, public image and customer retention.

Thus, the purpose of this study was to explore the Influence of Peer-to-Peer Accommodation on the Competitive Landscape of Star-Rated Hotels in Nairobi County, Kenya. The specific objectives were: To investigate the impact of the cost of peer-to-peer accommodation sharing platforms on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels; to determine the effects of social interaction of peer-to-peer accommodation sharing platforms on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels; to examine the impact of environmental commitment of peer-to-peer accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels; and to investigate the moderating influence of customer reviews on the relationship between peer-to-peer accommodation sharing platforms and competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County This research contribute towards deeper understanding of how P2P accommodation facilities influences the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. This study also seeks to fill a research gap by not only focusing on one category of star-rated hotels but also including all the star-rated hotels in Nairobi County making it easier to generalise the findings.



Literature review

Peer-to-peer (P2P) accommodation-sharing platforms, such as Airbnb, have significantly disrupted the traditional hospitality industry, particularly impacting the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. These platforms offer unique, personalized experiences, often at lower costs, appealing to a broad range of travelers. Research shows that the rise of P2P accommodations has led to a noticeable decrease in hotel revenues, especially in urban areas with a high density of Airbnb listings (Zervas et al., 2017). The cost advantage and diverse lodging options provided by P2P platforms enable them to capture market segments that were traditionally the domain of star-rated hotels, such as budget-conscious travelers and those seeking more authentic or local experiences (Guttentag, 2015). Moreover, the social interaction element inherent in P2P accommodations, where hosts provide personalized services and local insights, further enhances their appeal (Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2018). This has pressured hotels to innovate, improve service quality, and reconsider their pricing strategies to maintain competitiveness (Sigala, 2017). Environmental commitment also plays a role, as P2P platforms often promote sustainable practices, attracting environmentally conscious travelers, which adds another competitive dimension against hotels that may not prioritize eco-friendly operations (Belarmino & Koh, 2020). However, customer reviews on these platforms can moderate the competitive impact, as negative reviews may deter potential guests, thereby offering an opportunity for hotels to leverage their brand reputation and standardized service quality to remain competitive (Liang & Wang, 2019). Overall, the influence of P2P accommodation platforms on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels is multifaceted, compelling hotels to adapt to this evolving landscape to sustain their market position. The capacity of a firm to set itself apart from its rivals' offerings in terms of goods and services is known as competitiveness (Tussyadiah, 2016). The significance of digital methods in augmenting agility efficiency and customer-centricity advantage (Bughin et al., 2018). Organizations that can quickly adjust to changes in the market and apply creative solutions are better positioned to stay competitive (Teece, 2018). Strategic positioning is another way that organizations can obtain a competitive advantage (Gereffi & Wu, 2018). In addition, Porter & Kramer (2019) assert that achieving a long-term competitive advantage can be significantly aided by placing a strong emphasis on sustainability. By appreciating the value of talent management and helping their staff members advance their knowledge and abilities, managers may also increase the competitiveness of their firm (Wright et al., 2020).

Several important elements determine organizational competitiveness. Barney (2018), conducted a study that highlighted the importance of firm-specific resources and competencies, also referred to as the Resource-Based View (RBV). This viewpoint holds that distinctive and priceless assets like modern technology, intellectual property, and trained personnel help provide a firm with a competitive edge. A study by Tidd & Bessant, (2020) indicated that firms that actively invest in research and development, build a climate for creativity, and foster a culture of innovation are more likely to gain sustained competitive advantage. This study integrates Michael Porter's Five Forces Framework and Disruptive Innovation Theory to explore how P2P accommodations affect hotel competitiveness. By adapting Porter's framework to include factors like P2P accommodation costs, social interaction, and environmental commitment, the study examines their impact on market share, customer retention, and public image. Disruptive Innovation Theory initially focused on technology, is extended to address how P2P accommodations influence social and environmental aspects. This combined approach provides a comprehensive analysis of how these platforms alter competitive dynamics, leveraging Porter's framework to evaluate market factors and Disruptive Innovation Theory to assess customer perceptions and retention.

Data collection

The study was conducted in Nairobi County Kenya. The researchers applied a descriptive cross-sectional survey design using structured questionnaires to gather data from top-two managers of star-rated hotels and P2P accommodation facilities listed on the websites of the Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA) Kenya and (Tourism Fund, 2023) in Nairobi County. The hotel and P2P accommodation facilities managers were drawn by the use of census methods contacted through in order to participate in the survey. A total of 106 and 182 managers, respectively for star-rated hotels and P2P accommodation facilities participated in the survey. All measures in the current study were drawn from previous research and aligned with the conceptual aspects of each construct. The cost indicators adopted the scale used by Smith et al. (2020), Kim et al. (2019) & Wang et al. (2019). This scale had six items, and a five-point Likert-type scale was used to measure each item where 5 represented strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. Social interaction indicators adopted a scale used by Tussyadiah, (2016) where there were six items which were measured by a Likert-type scale of five points where 5 represented strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. For environmental commitment, the researcher developed also six items adapted from Hall & Lew (2018) the respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement where a five Likert scale was used 5 representing strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. Customer reviews as a moderating variable were adapted from Seegers et al. (2019) and were measured by use of five Likert scale where 5 represented strongly disagree and 1 strongly agree. Section F included measures of the competitiveness of hotels and adapted the measures used by Buxton & Minc (2022) where there were nine items which were measured by use of a points Likert scale where 5 represented strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. The IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to analyze the data. The researcher tested the reliability of the research instrument using Cronbach's alpha. additionally, carried out descriptive statistics of the socio-demographic information, cost of P2P accommodation sharing platforms, social interaction of P2P accommodation sharing platforms, environmental commitment of P2P accommodation sharing platforms, customer review and competitiveness. The researcher also conducted, the normality test, linearity test, multicollinearity test and direct and indirect effect model testing of each of the variables using Multiple linear regression.



Findings and discussion

Reliability analysis for the research instrument

Table 1 shows reliability statistics for the variables demonstrating varying levels of internal consistency. The high alpha scores for Cost Factors (0.89), Social Interaction (0.88), and Environmental Commitment (0.87) indicate that these scales are highly reliable, suggesting that the items within each of these categories are well-aligned and consistently measure their respective constructs. This high level of reliability enhances the validity of the data collected on these variables, indicating that respondents' answers consistently capture their views on cost factors, social interaction, and environmental commitment. Also, competitiveness, with an alpha score of .70, shows acceptable but comparatively lower reliability. While this score is still within the acceptable range, it suggests there is some variability in how respondents interpret or respond to the items related to competitiveness. According to Pallant (2021), the alpha coefficient should be greater than 0.70 for it to be acceptable thus the research instruments were considered suitable for the study.

Table 1: Questionnaires reliability statistics

Variable	No. of items	Alpha score(α)	Comment
Cost factors	6	0.89	Reliable
Social interaction	6	0.88	Reliable
Environmental commitment	6	0.87	Reliable
Competitiveness	9	0.70	Reliable

Mean scores

Table 2 shows the means and standard deviations of the study variables. The majority of the variables had higher means indicating that they were highly rated by the respondents. Table 2 indicates that respondents view Customer Reviews most positively, with a mean of 4.03 and the lowest standard deviation of 1.05, suggesting strong and consistent approval. Cost scores a mean of 3.58, reflecting a generally favorable view, but the standard deviation of 1.26 shows moderate variability in opinions. Social Interaction and Environmental Commitment both have mean scores near neutral (3.49 and 3.50), with standard deviations of 1.30 and 1.29, respectively, indicating diverse perspectives on these factors. Competitiveness has the lowest mean at 3.38 and the highest standard deviation of 1.31, signifying a wide range of opinions and a less favorable view compared to other aspects.

Table 2: Means score of study variables

Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cost of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	234	1.00	5.00	3.58	1.26
Social interaction of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	234	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.30
Environmental commitment of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	234	1.00	5.00	3.50	1.29
Customer review	234	1.00	5.00	4.03	1.05
Competitiveness	234	1.00	5.00	3.48	1.31
Valid N (listwise)	234				

Direct relationship: Influence of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County

Table 3 presents the model summary for examining the influence of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. The correlation coefficient (R) of 0.54 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the predictors (Cost factors, Social interaction, and Environmental commitment) and the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The R-squared value of 0.29 shows that approximately 29% of the variability in hotel competitiveness can be explained by these predictors. The adjusted R-squared of 0.28, which accounts for the number of predictors in the model, is close to the R-squared value, suggesting that the model is reasonably well-suited to the data. The standard error of 0.58 indicates the average distance between the observed values and the predicted values, reflecting the model's precision. The F Change statistic of 31.57 with a significance level of 0.00 confirms that the model is statistically significant, meaning that the predictors collectively have a significant impact on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels.

Table 3: Model summary of the influence of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotel in Nairobi County

Model summary					
R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	F Change	Sig.
0.54	0.29	0.28	.58	31.57	.00

Dependent variable: Competitiveness of star-rated hotels
 Predictors: (Constant), Cost factors, Social interaction and Environmental commitment

Table 4: Multiple regression coefficient of influence of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels

P2P Accommodation Sharing Platforms	B	S.E.	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Cost of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	0.08	0.05	0.10	1.79	0.00
Social interaction of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	0.24	0.05	0.35	5.16	0.01
Environmental commitment of P2P accommodation sharing platforms	0.18	0.05	0.25	3.66	0.00

Dependent Variable: Competitiveness

Table 4 displays the multiple regression coefficients for the impact of various P2P accommodation sharing platform factors on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The regression coefficients (β) for Cost ($\beta=0.08$), Social Interaction ($\beta=0.24$), and Environmental Commitment ($\beta=0.18$) indicate the change in competitiveness associated with each unit increase in these factors. Social Interaction has the highest Beta coefficient (0.35) and t-value (5.16), suggesting it has the strongest positive influence



on competitiveness among the predictors. Environmental Commitment follows with a Beta of 0.25 and a t-value of 3.66, also showing a significant positive impact. Cost has a Beta of 0.10 and a t-value of 1.79, indicating a positive but weaker influence compared to the other factors. All predictors are statistically significant, with p-values of 0.00 or 0.01, demonstrating that these factors significantly affect the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The first objective is to examine the effects of Cost of P2P Accommodation Sharing Platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi county. The findings in Table 4 show that there it has a coefficient (β) of 0.08, with a Beta value of 0.10, suggesting a modest positive impact on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The t-value of 1.79 indicates that while this factor has a statistically significant effect on competitiveness, its influence is weaker compared to other predictors. The significance level of 0.00 confirms that this effect is statistically robust. This implies that while cost factors do contribute to competitiveness, their role is less pronounced than that of social interaction and environmental commitment. The second objective to investigate the effects of social interaction on competitiveness in star-rated hotels in Nairobi county. Table 4 revealed the existence of a coefficient of 0.24 and a Beta of 0.35, which is the highest among the predictors. The t-value of 5.16 further underscores its significant positive impact on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels. The significance level of 0.01 indicates that this effect is highly significant statistically. This suggests that enhanced social interaction through P2P platforms strongly influences hotel competitiveness, making it a crucial factor for improving competitive positioning in the market. Environmental Commitment of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi county is the third objective. Results in Table 4 show a coefficient of 0.18 and a Beta of 0.25, highlighting a significant positive relationship between the environmental commitment of P2P accommodation sharing platforms and hotel competitiveness. The t-value of 3.66 reinforces the importance of this factor, with a significance level of 0.00 confirming its statistical significance. This indicates that environmental commitment has a substantial and meaningful effect on competitiveness, suggesting that hotels with stronger environmental initiatives through P2P platforms are likely to be more competitive. The moderating effect of customer review on the relationship between P2P accommodation sharing platforms and competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County, Kenya. Table 5 displays the regression coefficients for the indirect relationship model involving P2P accommodation sharing platforms and competitiveness. The constant has a coefficient of 1.27 and a t-value of 5.17, highlighting a significant effect. The computed P2P Accommodation Sharing Platforms Indicators exhibit a substantial coefficient of 0.54 and a (β) of 0.51, demonstrating a strong and statistically significant positive effect on the dependent variable, supported by a high t-value of 9.07. customer review has a small positive impact with a coefficient of 0.05 and a Beta of 0.08, though it is statistically significant with a t-value of 0.33. The moderated factor shows a coefficient of 0.09, a Beta of 0.61, and a significant t-value of 1.35, indicating a moderate effect. In summary, the P2P accommodation sharing platforms indicators have the most substantial influence, followed by the moderated factor. The P value of the moderating factor was 0.01 which was less than 0.05 which is the significance level. This observation meant that the moderating factor had a significant effect on competitiveness since all the p-values were less than 0.05. It also has a significant effect on P2P accommodation sharing platforms since the p-value was less than 0.05.

Table 5: Regression coefficients for indirect relationship model

P2P Accommodation Sharing Platforms	B	S.E.	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.27	0.25		5.17	0.00
Computed P2P accommodation sharing platforms indicators	0.54	0.06	0.51	9.07	0.00
Customer review	0.05	0.04	0.08	0.33	0.00
Moderated factor	0.09	0.06	0.61	1.35	0.01

Implications

The first objective was to assess the impact of the cost of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels the findings provided valuable insights into how various cost factors of P2P accommodation sharing platforms affect the competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. The findings indicate that while cost has a positive impact on competitiveness ($\beta = 0.08$, $p = 0.10$), its effect is relatively minor compared to social interaction and environmental commitment. This modest influence suggests that cost management alone is insufficient for achieving a competitive edge in the hospitality industry. Research supports this view, noting that a more holistic approach incorporating factors such as service quality and guest experience is crucial for competitive success (Chen et al., 2019; Kim & Lee, 2021). Therefore, hotels should view cost factors as just one element of a broader competitive strategy. On social Interaction of P2P accommodation sharing platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi county. The results demonstrate the most significant positive effect on competitiveness ($\beta = 0.24$, Beta = 0.35), with a notably high t-value (5.16). This strong impact emphasizes the importance of customer engagement and interaction in enhancing a hotel's competitive positioning. Recent studies support this, indicating that fostering meaningful social interactions through P2P accommodation sharing platforms can strengthen guest relationships and boost loyalty and positive word-of-mouth, which are crucial for maintaining a competitive edge (Li & Huang, 2020; Park & Kim, 2022). Thus, hotels should focus on creating and nurturing opportunities for guest interaction to leverage these platforms effectively. Another objective of the study was to examine the impacts of the environmental commitment of P2P accommodation platforms on competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi county. The findings show a significant positive relationship with competitiveness ($\beta = 0.18$, Beta = 0.25). The t-value of 3.66 underlines the importance of sustainability initiatives in boosting competitiveness. This finding aligns with the increasing importance of environmental sustainability in the hospitality industry. Research has shown that hotels with strong environmental practices can attract eco-conscious consumers and differentiate themselves in the market (Jones et al., 2021; Lee & Han, 2023). Consequently, investing in and promoting environmental initiatives can enhance a hotel's market appeal and competitive stance.



The last objective was to investigate the moderating influence of customer reviews on the relationship between P2P accommodation sharing platforms and competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County. The results reveal that customer reviews have a small but statistically significant impact ($\beta = 0.05$, Beta = 0.08) on the relationship between P2P accommodation sharing platforms and competitiveness. The moderated factor shows a moderate effect ($\beta = 0.09$, Beta = 0.61), suggesting that while customer reviews may not be the most significant factor, they still play an important role in shaping perceptions of competitiveness. This finding is supported by literature on the influence of online reviews on consumer behavior and hotel performance (Smith & Hsu, 2020; Wang et al., 2022). Therefore, hotels should actively manage and respond to customer feedback to positively influence their competitive positioning.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the analysis of the cost of P2P accommodation sharing platforms reveals that while cost factors have a statistically significant effect on the competitiveness of star-rated hotels in Nairobi County, their impact is relatively modest. Although the effect is statistically robust, the influence of cost alone is weaker compared to other factors. This suggests that while cost considerations are relevant, they are not the primary drivers of competitiveness. Hotels should therefore incorporate cost factors as part of a broader competitive strategy, rather than relying on them as the main lever for gaining market advantage. On the other hand, social interaction through P2P accommodation platforms has a notably stronger impact on hotel competitiveness. This factor demonstrates a significant positive effect, emphasizing the importance of engaging with guests through social interactions such as reviews and networking opportunities. Effective management of these social interactions can greatly enhance a hotel's visibility and appeal, thus improving its competitive positioning. Star-rated hotels should focus on leveraging social platforms to build and maintain strong customer relationships, which can be pivotal for standing out in a competitive market. Environmental commitment also plays a crucial role in determining competitiveness. The positive relationship between environmental initiatives and hotel competitiveness underscores the growing importance of sustainability. As travelers increasingly prioritize eco-friendly practices, hotels that actively adopt and promote environmental initiatives can attract a segment of environmentally-conscious consumers. Therefore, integrating robust environmental practices into hotel operations not only aligns with consumer values but also provides a competitive edge in a market that increasingly values sustainability.

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