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## **Issue arising in Short Term Rental Accommodation: A systematic literature review**

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### **Abstract**

Cheaper costs than hotel, increased community economic and business opportunities and allowing customers to live like locals are among the attributes that influence the high demand of Short-Term Rental Accommodation (STRA). Apart from the advantages, STRA operations have presented problems and difficulties. This gap in extant literature has motivated the present study, aiming to identify the problem arising from the STRA operation. A systematic literature review was conducted using an inductive approach from previous empirical studies. The analysis will be helpful for academics, practitioners and policymakers to develop potential solutions to solve the issue arising in STRA operation.

**Keywords:** Short-Term Rental Accommodation; Peer to Peer Accommodation; Airbnb; Systematic Literature Review

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### **1.0 Introduction**

Short Term Rental Accommodation (STRA) is becoming increasingly widespread worldwide due to the development of digital services and the transformation of the conventional method of accommodation reservation brought about by technological advancements. According to its excellent reputation across the globe, Airbnb is regarded as the hospitality industry's most successful accommodation business. According to Daud et al. (2021), travelers have expressed interest in STRA services because they offer them a different and distinctive travel experience made possible by the global expansion of internet connectivity.

Findings yielded by this strand of research suggest that Airbnb users are motivated by economic gains, the desire for authentic local experiences, unique character and the homely feel of the accommodation (home benefits), and social interactions with the hosts and local communities (social benefits) (Amaro, Andreu, & Huang, 2019; Guttentag, 2019). With operations in more than 100,000 locations across more than 220 nations and regions, Airbnb has grown to become the largest accommodation provider in the world.

Apart from providing chances for economic growth and productivity gains, STRA operations have presented problems and difficulties. According to Petruzzini et al. (2020), there are objections from homeowners and neighbors towards the operation of STRA, claiming public annoyance and safety issues. STRA in buildings may be forbidden because the constant influx of "guests" could be disruptive to the security of other residents. The increasing prevalence of Airbnb threatens the standard of living in nearby towns by

bringing in an unknown number of guests, raising noise and pollution levels, and reducing parking availability (Ho et al., 2020). The gap in extant literature has motivated the aims of this paper to identify the problem arising from the operation of STRA in general.

This study aims to identify the problem arising from the operation of STRA in residential units. A systematic literature review approach of research is adopted that involves the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses) as the guidance to run the systematic review.

## 2.0 Literature Review

The term "sharing economy" was subsequently popularized by innovative businesses such as Airbnb that allow people to make collaborative use of underutilized assets in exchange for fees or other forms of monetary compensation (Hati et al, 2021). STRA generally refers to tenants who rent for a single night, a week, or several months. STRA service is a business venture in which residential property owners or their representatives manage short-term rentals and promote their homes on online marketplaces like Airbnb, Agoda, Booking.com, etc. Airbnb, short-term rental accommodation, or the peer-to-peer accommodation rental platform, is a name that emerged over the past few years due to the advancement of technology transforming the traditional way people book accommodations.

Every dwelling or apartment listed on the Airbnb site differs in its location, style, furnishings, cost, and level of service. Compared to other hospitality providers, Airbnb is less vulnerable to competition because of its variety (Lin et al., 2019). Due to its positive reputation worldwide, Airbnb is said to be the most successful short-term rental accommodation model for the hospitality industry. Airbnb is a 'trusted community marketplace for people to list, discover, and book unique accommodation worldwide' (Airbnb, 2019). The popularity of STRA as a sharing economy platform has grown significantly in Malaysia. As the sharing economy continues to develop and grow, the impact of Airbnb on the hospitality industry in Malaysia can be seen when the number of Airbnb guest nights booked by Malaysian people traveling elsewhere has increased and the most popular destinations being Hong Kong, Paris, New York, London, and Tokyo. There are more than 5,000,000 listings in 81,000 cities and 191 countries, including Malaysia (Airbnb, 2019).

While Malaysia saw a relatively late start to online short-term rental platforms such as Airbnb, its popularity has grown significantly in recent years due to aggressive marketing and existing knowledge of the brand from other regions. A look at this escalating figure shows that the business interest in this platform has been intense, and Airbnb describes Malaysia as an exciting growth market. However, the positive externalities of STRA outweigh the benefits. Due to the rapid advance of this concept, arguments are saying that Airbnb threatens to disrupt traditional hotel chains and entire communities as residential housing is turned into tourism lodging (Guttentag, 2019; Mody et al., 2021).

These undesirable changes have raised concerns about the legislation, regulatory, and taxation issues (Guttentag, 2019), social inequality (Hwang, 2019), and Airbnb's adverse impact on housing markets and the well-being of local communities (e.g., increased noise and trash, and reduced parking) (Caldicott et al., 2020; Nieuwland & Van Melik, 2020). Staying in an Airbnb accommodation also exposes consumers to a wide range of risks, including untrustworthy hosts/strangers, questionable safety and privacy, and unreliable customer service since the quality of service cannot be determined in advance (Del Chiappa, Pung, Atzeni, & Sini, 2021; Björk, 2019). According to Chen et al (2019), the increasing prevalence of Airbnb threatens the standard of living in nearby towns by bringing in an unknown number of guests, raising noise and pollution levels, and reducing parking availability.

Although both favorable and adverse evaluations are submitted jointly, it is more credible to discover negative feedback on Airbnb (Zhang, 2019). Most cities have highlighted that renting activities in private residences have conflicts with regulations. Recently in Malaysia, Majlis Bandaraya Pulau Pinang which is a local authority has taken aggressive steps to stop STRA operations in condominiums by summoning property owners who rent their residences for a short period on the charge of operating an illegal business (The Star, 2023)

Despite the ongoing debate, empirical studies on these negative aspects of the sharing economy are scarce and have remained mainly conceptual or perspective-oriented (Guttentag, 2019 & Hwang, 2019). In the following sections, we discuss the problem arising from the STRA operation, which could hinder the Airbnb platform's sustainability in the hospitality industry.

## 3.0 Methodology

This section discusses the method used to retrieve articles related to problems arising in STRA. The PRISMA Statement guided the systematic literature review. An in-depth examination of terms associated with issues that arise in STRA is made possible by the PRISMA Statement. The two primary journal databases used for the systematic literature search were Scopus and Web of Science (WoS). To maximize resources, enable comprehensive and efficient string searching, and manage journal quality, this study uses two databases: Scopus and Web of Science, as recommended by Xio and Watson (2019) and Younger (2010). Scopus is one of the most significant abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature from 11,678 publishers, of which 34,346 are peer-reviewed journals in top-level subject fields. WoS is a robust database of over 18,000 high-impact journals with over 100 years of comprehensive coverage. Having a comprehensive research question is essential in a Systematic Literature Review. The research question will drive the selection of articles, data extraction, and reporting (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Thus, the research question is, "What are the problems arising in short-term rental accommodation?"

The systematic review procedure consists of four steps. The systematic review procedure in February 2024 consists of four steps. Finding the search terms is the initial step in the procedure. Based on earlier research and a thesaurus, keywords associated with short-term rental accommodations, systematic literature reviews, and emerging issues were employed. The first search yielded the results displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. The Search String Used for the Systematic Review Process

Database	Keywords Used
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("Short*Term*Rental*Accommodation*" OR "Peer*to*Peer*Accommodation*" "Airbnb") AND "Problem" OR "Issues" OR "Challenges" OR "Restriction" OR "Limitation" OR "Negative*Externalities"))
Web of Science	TS= (("Short*Term*Rental*Accommodation*" OR "Peer*to*Peer*Accommodation*" "Airbnb") AND "Problem" OR "Issues" OR "Challenges" OR "Restriction" OR "Limitation" OR "Negative*Externalities"))

As depicted in Table 2, several inclusion and exclusion criteria are determined. Firstly, about the timeline, a period of five years is selected (between 2019 and 2023), an adequate period to see the evolution of existing studies and related publications. Secondly, regarding the literature type, only article journals are selected, which means review articles, books, book series, chapters in the book, conference proceedings, and reports are all excluded. Finally, to avoid any confusion and difficulty in translating, the search efforts excluded non-English publications and focused only on articles published in English.

The second stage was screening, where 3,785 out of 3,835 articles eligible to be reviewed were removed. The third stage is eligibility; the full papers are accessed. A total of 33 articles were excluded as they did not concentrate on the problem arising in STRA. The final stage of the systematic review resulted in a total of 17 articles that were used for the assessment and analysis. The data were extracted by reading through the abstracts and then the full articles (in-depth) to identify and classify the appropriate major domains related to problems arising in STRA.

Table 2. The Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Literature type	Empirical paper	Journal (systematic review), book series, books, chapter in book, conference proceeding
Language	English	Non – English
Timeline	2019-2023	< 2018

#### 4.0 Findings

A total of 17 peer-reviewed journal articles that reported the problems arising in STRA were included in this review. Each journal article was classified according to the publication year, main study design, empirical paper, and scope of research related to problems arising in STRA. This study relied on qualitative synthesis of qualitative and extracting the relevant data from the selected articles. Data extraction was done by comprehensively examining the abstract, results, and findings of each of the 17 selected articles. Data from the selected articles were extracted if they fulfilled several conditions. First, it can answer the determined research questions, and second, if it is related to the study's objective. The summary of 17 articles is shown in Table 3.

The study reveals the factors contributing to the problems arising in STRA. Based on extracting the relevant data from the selected articles, it is expected that the problem arising from STRA operation, including legal, regulatory, and taxation issues, social inequality, safety and privacy concerns, and other economic and societal issues, may result in the loss of stakeholder interest which involve in the accommodation industry. On this basis, we propose 15 problems of STRA, and Table 4 shows the summary of problems arising in STRA based on an extensive literature review and opinions from various authors. The following is an explanation of the 15 issues arising in STRA:

##### *Problem 1: Discrimination issues*

Airbnb has also created a problem with the unequal distribution of wealth and income. These issues involve instances where hosts discriminate against guests based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.

##### *Problem 2: Changes in the sociocultural level*

Touristification refers to the process of transforming urban spaces into tourist areas through the activities and practices of visitors. Airbnb's growth leads to gentrification, pushing up property values and displacing residents. This may result in changes to a neighborhood's social fabric and identity.

##### *Problem 3: Nuisance to the neighborhoods*

Airbnb services may contribute to crowding in the neighborhoods, as they can increase the number of visitors and tourists in residential areas, which may lead to competition for parking lots and the use of other common areas. Short-term tenants may strain local facilities like parking, public transportation, and other facilities. Residents' perspectives indicate that one of the factors that could result in adverse effects on Airbnb is the rise in noise complaints. Locals in well-known tourist locations frequently lament traffic jams, issues with rubbish disposal, and excessive noise produced by Airbnb hosts (such as rowdy parties and inebriated conduct).

##### *Problem 4: Increase in property prices*

Property prices have been affected by the growth of vacation rentals and the conversion of housing into accommodation for visitors. The rise in rent prices has made it difficult for long-term residents to find affordable accommodation, contributing to the displacement of middle and working-class residents. The conversion of residential properties into short-term rentals can reduce the availability of housing for long-term residents. This can contribute to rising housing costs and make it more challenging for residents to find affordable housing.

*Problem 5: Lack of regulations*

The absence of alignment between regional and municipal regulations can lead to substantial consequences in overseeing tourist accommodations. In some areas, there may be a lack of adequate regulations to manage the impact of short-term rentals. This can make it difficult for local authorities to address issues related to overcrowding and other negative consequences. For example, unregistered Airbnb properties refrain from paying taxes and failing to comply with strict safety and security standards.

*Problem 6: Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel*

The increasing popularity of sharing accommodation platforms like Airbnb has had a noticeable impact on the traditional hotel industry, with some notable consequences for hotel revenues. Airbnb listings often provide a range of accommodation options at various price points, appealing to travelers seeking more affordable alternatives to traditional hotels. To stay competitive, hotels may have to reduce their room rates due to this price war. Due to Airbnb's sharp decline in hotel revenue, some establishments have had to change their pricing policies.

*Problem 7: The problem of information asymmetry*

Information asymmetry refers to the unequal distribution of information between hosts and consumers in sharing accommodation platforms like Airbnb. Hosts hold most of the information and determine what information is posted on the platform, making it difficult for consumers to differentiate between reliable hosts and less trustworthy ones based on limited information.

*Problem 8: Poor reputation of the host*

Tourists should take precautions to ensure their safety, such as researching the reputation of hosts, reading reviews from previous guests, and communicating with hosts to address any concerns or questions. Complaints from tourists about being cheated in homestay programs and dissatisfaction with the quality of service at homestay premises have been reported. Fake reviews are a growing problem across all platforms, but they are especially dangerous for STRA businesses because they may permanently harm their reputation by deceiving readers.

*Problem 9: Safety issues*

Concerns about the reliability and security of the online platform can contribute to safety issues. Negative reviews or experiences shared by other users can create doubts and decrease trust in the system. Lack of familiarity with the STRA system and its workings can lead to a lack of trust. Frequent turnover of guests may raise security concerns for neighbors who need to familiarize themselves with the individuals staying in nearby short-term rentals. This can impact the overall sense of safety in the neighborhoods. There have been reports of incidents such as theft, property damage, misuse of personal information, and even assault in some cases.

*Problem 10: Rising cost of living*

The neighborhood community believed that the presence of Airbnb accommodations increased costs, which may drive up prices for goods and services in the local economy. As more visitors seek accommodation, restaurants, shops, and other businesses may adjust their pricing to capitalize on the growing demand.

*Problem 11: Losing authenticity and traditions*

Frequent turnover of short-term renters can affect the sense of community in a neighborhood. It becomes harder for residents to establish relationships and a sense of belonging when there is a constant influx of new people. Residents perceive that Airbnb has caused a change in the local culture, which may represent a threat of losing authenticity and traditions.

*Problem 12: Negative past experiences*

These concerns include drunken hosts intruding on the room while the guest is sleeping, unprepared rooms without cleaning, and hosts unilaterally canceling the room at the last minute. These negative experiences have led to guests' negative emotions and regret, influencing users' future purchase decisions.

*Problem 13: Liability issues*

These issues include concerns about accidents or damages occurring in Airbnb accommodations and the responsibility of hosts and the company for such incidents. Frequent turnover of guests in short-term rentals increases the likelihood of incidents and accidents. With a new set of guests arriving regularly, the chances of property damage may be higher compared to long-term rentals. Property owners may need help closely monitoring guests' behavior in some cases, leading to situations where guests may not exercise the same care and responsibility as long-term tenants.

*Problem 14: Environmental pollution*

Residents and tourists alike may be impacted by environmental pollution resulting from increased tourism activities. Short-term rentals, especially those in popular tourist destinations, may experience higher energy and water consumption due to the constant turnover of guests. Frequent cleaning, laundry, and other operational activities can increase resource usage.

*Problem 15: Violating the existing law*

Airbnb needs to comply with the legislation, which has resulted in court cases in multiple cities related to advertising illegal properties, violating orders, and refusing to pay taxes on STRA.

Table 3. Summary of Previous Studies Findings

Studies	Year	Problems arising
Petruzzi et al.	2020	Overcrowding in the neighbourhoods Traffic congestion Changes in sociocultural level Nuisance to the neighbourhoods Increase in the property prices Environmental pollution
Garcia- Amaya et al.	2021	Nuisance to the neighbourhoods Lack of regulations Poor reputation of host
<a href="#">Zhao et al.</a>	2020	Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel The problem of information asymmetry Safety issues Liability issues
Chen et al.	2021	Nuisance to the neighbourhoods Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel Safety issues
<a href="#">Alrawadieh et al.</a>	2019	Safety issues Nuisance to the neighbourhoods
Yeon et al.	2022	Rising cost of living Increase in the property prices Changes in sociocultural level Safety issues Lack of regulations Nuisance to the neighbourhoods
Arevalo et al.	2023	Increase in the property prices Rising cost of living Changes in sociocultural level Environmental pollution
Lee et al.	2023	Nuisance to the neighbourhoods Liability issues Negative past experiences
Nor et al	2019	Lack of regulations Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel Nuisance to the neighbourhoods
Farmaki et al	2023	Overcrowding in the neighbourhoods Nuisance to the neighbourhoods Changes in sociocultural level Lack of regulations
Furukawa & Onuki	2019	Nuisance to the neighbourhoods
Mondal & Samaddar	2020	Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel Lack of regulations
Destefanis et al	2020	Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel
Gomez-Martin et al	2021	Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel Lack of regulations Increase in the property prices Environmental pollution
Negi & Tripathi	2022	Poor reputation of host Liability issues
Huang & Huang	2023	Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel
Chuah, S.H.W et al.	2022	Violating the existing law Safety issues

Table 4. The summary of problems arising in Short Term Rental Accommodation

Problem arising in STRA	Authors
Discrimination issues	Jaeger et al., 2019
Changes in sociocultural level	Yeon J et al., 2022
	Miah & Nadda, 2019
	Guttentag, 2019
Nuisance to the neighbourhoods	García-Amaya et al., 2021
	Petruzzi et al., 2020
	Guttentag, 2019
	Knezevic et al., 2021
	Moleiro et al., 2021
	Namberger et al., 2019
	Guttentag, 2019
Increase in the property prices	Knezevic et al., 2021
	Petruzzi et al., 2020
Lack of regulations	García-Amaya et al., 2021
	Mao et al., 2020
Decline in the revenue of traditional hotel	Zaid Alrawadieh et al., 2019
	Yeon et al., 2022
The problem of information asymmetry	Zhao, 2020
Poor reputation of host	Mohamad et al., 2019
	Tiamiyu et al., 2022
	Chen & Jusvadijah, 2021
	Dubinsky, 2019
Safety issues	Lu and Tabari, 2019
	Bort, 2022
	Cheng & Jin, 2019
	Wu & Cheng, 2019
	Zhu et al., 2021
Rising cost of living	Knezevic et al., 2021
	Petruzzi et al., 2020
Losing authenticity and traditions	Petruzzi et al., 2020
Negative past experiences	Meza, 2022
Liability issues	Porges, 2022
	Ozanne and Prayag, 2022
Environmental pollution	Petruzzi et al., 2020
Violating the existing law	Carville et al., 2020

## 5.0 Discussion

We conclude and explain the implications based on our results, followed by limitations and suggestions for future research. According to Petruzzi et al. (2020) and Hwang (2019), despite the positive impact of Airbnb's presence in the communities, it has also generated a negative impact, as shown in Table 3. This paper answered the following question: What problems arise in short-term rental accommodation? Based on the literature review, we found that there are 15 problems arising in STRA in general.

The above discussion leads to the following future research directions. Our study has several limitations that can pave the way for future research. First, the generalizability of our findings is limited by the fact that only two central journal databases – Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) were undertaken. Future researchers should include more journal databases to identify more STRA problems. Second, the problems arising from STRA were analyzed in a general context. Future research should examine the problems arising from different perspectives of stakeholders involved in the STRA industry, such as hosts, tourists, residents, authorities, and management corporations. Third, we found mixed results regarding the problems arising in STRA economically and socially regarding community and environmental sustainability. Thus, comparative and comprehensive research is needed to examine the problems arising according to each segmentation.

## 6.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings yielded by the present study can guide Airbnb policy-makers in strategizing their repairing efforts to shape opinions, create policies, and implement changes to ensure Airbnb's presence positively impacts all stakeholders. It benefits the accommodation industry and contributes to the economy. Wegmann and Jiao (2017) justified that negative issues created by Airbnb's presence in the neighborhoods must be overcome via government intervention, as Airbnb seems less proactive in finding its own solutions to such negative externalities.

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