

# Gentle hosts. Hosts' attitude on Airbnb performance, a Sentiment Analysis

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Parole chiave: Airbnb, Reviews, consumer bias, kindness, sentiment analysis

- **Obiettivi;**

The rating system is at the core of many digital platforms. However, the quality of the personal interaction between buyers and sellers may bias to a large extent the ratings left by reviewers, and consequently the performance of the provided service. Does the seller's kinder attitude bias upwards the ratings? What is the effect of kindness on demand? Is a kinder behavior a rational strategy to substitute poor intrinsic quality?

- **Metodologia;**

We perform sentiment analysis on reviews left on the Airbnb platform in Barcelona in 2019.

- **Risultati;**

We find that the host's kinder attitude has a positive significant effect on ratings and, given the ratings, on occupancy rates. This effect is larger for low quality apartments, suggesting a strategic use of kindness by hosts to compensate low quality. Moreover, we find that the host's kinder attitude may bias upwards the rating.

- **Implicazioni.**

These results have important implications on the efficient functioning of the rating system, which is at the foundation of many digital platforms.