

## **ANALYSIS OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF MEMORABLE TOURISM EXPERIENCES (MTE) ON AIRBNB**

*ANÁLISE DOS ATRIBUTOS DAS EXPERIÊNCIAS DE TURISMO MEMORÁVEIS (ETM) NO AIRBNB*

*ANÁLISIS DE ATRIBUTOS DE EXPERIENCIAS TURÍSTICAS MEMORABLES (ETM) EN AIRBNB*

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### **Keywords:**

Memorable experiences;  
Airbnb; welcoming;  
hospitality; MTE.

### **Abstract:**

This work aims to analyze and identify the attributes present in Airbnb Experiences. For this, it considered the seven attributes of Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTE) proposed by Kim & Ritchie (2014): hedonism, refreshment, meaningfulness, novelty, local culture, knowledge, and involvement. With a qualitative and quantitative approach, the method comprising the collection of 500 reviews from 100 experiences offered in the two biggest cities in Brazil generated a corpus of 25,742 words. The content analysis technique (Bardin, 2011) was applied to identify those attributes of the MTE based on categories defined a priori and then show the descriptive statistics of the frequencies of the identified attributes and the crossings between the variables. A new attribute was identified, named "welcoming", referring to the attitude of the "host" who offers the experience; being the most evidenced by users in 351 reviews as a positive aspect of the experience.

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**Palavras-chave:**

Experiências memoráveis;  
Airbnb; acolhimento;  
anfitrião; ETM.

**Resumo:**

Este trabalho tem como objetivo analisar e identificar os atributos presentes nas Experiências da plataforma Airbnb. Para isso, considerou os sete atributos das Experiências de Turismo Memoráveis (ETM) propostas por Kim & Ritchie (2014): hedonismo, refresco, significado, novidade, cultura local, conhecimento e envolvimento. Com abordagem qualitativa e quantitativa, o método que compreendeu a coleta de 500 comentários de 100 experiências, oferecidas nas duas maiores cidades do Brasil, gerou um *corpus* de 25.742 palavras. A técnica de análise de conteúdo (Bardin, 2011) foi aplicada para identificar os atributos das ETM que foram baseados em categorias definidas *a priori* e, a seguir, mostrar a estatística descritiva das frequências dos atributos identificados e os cruzamentos entre as variáveis. Foi identificado um novo atributo denominado “acolhimento”, referente à atitude do “anfitrião” que oferece a experiência; sendo este o fator mais evidenciado pelos usuários em 351 avaliações como aspecto positivo da experiência.

**Palabras clave:**

Experiencias memorables;  
Airbnb; acogida; anfitrión;  
ETM.

**Resumen**

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar e identificar los atributos presentes en las Experiencias de la plataforma Airbnb. Para ello, consideró los siete atributos de las Experiencias Turísticas Memorables (ETM) propuestos por Kim & Ritchie (2014): hedonismo, refresco, significado, novedad, cultura local, conocimiento e involucramiento. Con enfoque cualitativo y cuantitativo, el método que comprendió la recolección de 500 comentarios de 100 experiencias, ofrecidas en las dos mayores ciudades de Brasil, generó un *corpus* de 25.742 palabras. Se aplicó la técnica de análisis de contenido (Bardin, 2011) para identificar los atributos de las ETM que se basaron en categorías definidas *a priori* y, luego, mostrar las estadísticas descriptivas de las frecuencias de los atributos identificados y las intersecciones entre las variables. Se identificó un nuevo atributo denominado “acogida”, referido a la actitud del “anfitrión” que ofrece la experiencia; siendo este el factor más destacado por los usuarios en 351 valoraciones como un aspecto positivo de la experiencia.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Kim & Ritchie (2014) identified seven dimensions in order to establish the cross-cultural validity of memorable tourism experiences (MTE). These are: hedonism, renewal, significance, novelty, local culture, knowledge, and engagement. This finding served as a basis for the present study, whose objective was to identify which of these attributes are most related to satisfaction after the experience, relating them to the tourists' qualifications and the literature. The study is justified by understanding tourist behavior in order to meet market demands, assist the management of tourist experiences and contribute to its improvement, as well as to the academic literature.

In an economy of experiences (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999) and facing the vastness of possibilities and segmentation, one of the concerns of the tourism sector is to offer equal products to consumers who have different expectations and desires (Lohmann & Panosso Netto, 2012), in order to consider the diverse needs of individuals, often with scarce means to meet them (Santos & Kadota, 2012). Despite this diverse complexity, consumer tastes are linked to varied travel motivations (Santos & Kadota, 2012) which, in turn, have links to attributes identified in this study.

The focus of the study is the Airbnb platform that, in addition to accommodation, also seeks to offer tourism experiences by its registered hosts, provided they are involved in an activity in which they have special connection or expertise, so they can provide consumers a unique perspective. After the experience, these consumers, called guests by the platform, are invited to leave their impressions about their experience (Airbnb, 2022b). Virtual reviews form a system of active community participation, which helps determine their involvement and can encourage other members to participate, even without strong social connections to each other and with only temporary interest in the activity (Solomon, 2002).

In 2016 Airbnb expanded its line of business to encompass tourism experiences as well. Taking into account the relatively recent insertion of Experience Tourism in Airbnb (2016), empirical research is still on the rise. We can observe that, technological innovation has changed consumer behavior and, consequently, the way we acquire products and services (Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002). People seek to acquire tourism experiences during their travels, consuming products and services more for the experiences they provide than any other tangible element (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). The memorable experience also forms the image of the destination by promoting the intention to revisit the destination (Tasia & Yasri, 2021).

In general, memorable experiences in tourism do not specifically target the Airbnb platform, but this research was deemed necessary since a new mode of interaction between guests and hosts has emerged through tourism experiences, and because the comments are genuine and readily available. In this sense, the research by Sthapit and Jiménez-Barreto (2018), explored the memorable experience in the field of hospitality, as well as social interactions with the host, but with the focus on the exclusive on the accommodation and not on Airbnb tourism experiences.

Perception is a process related to the selection, organization, and interpretation of sensations and stimuli (Solomon, 2002) and is a critical determinant of satisfaction (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008). As an inherently social phenomenon, experiencing places and cultures through interaction with other people makes it important to study tourist behavior and their interest in choosing an experience (Pearce, 2005). However, it is the tourist's perception that determines their behavior, and may even be based on previous experience or lifestyle and is subject to constant change (Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002).

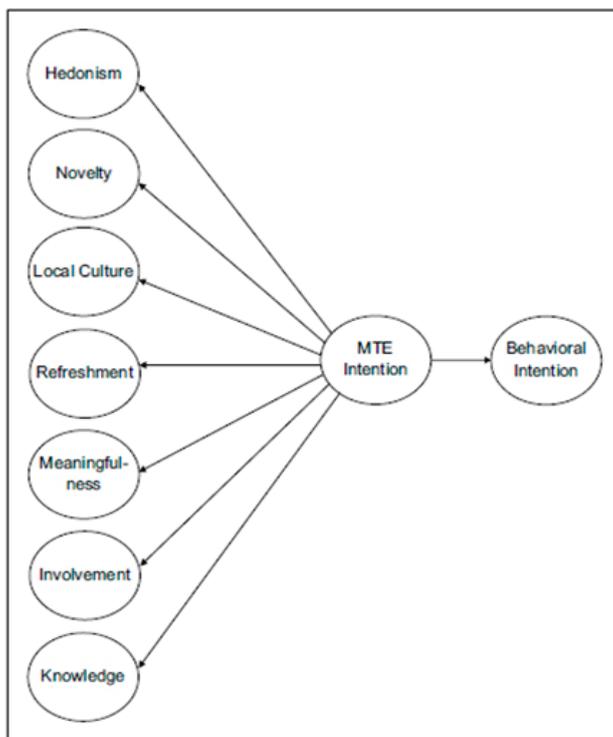
The study of tourist behavior may seem simple or linear, but it is complex (Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002; Pearce, 2005). One of the dimensions that differentiates tourist behavior from an ordinary consumer is the experiences experienced during the visit and the activities practiced at the site (Clawson & Knetsch, 1963). Regarding tourist behavior, multiple are the emic (unique aspects of each culture) and ethical (common aspects across cultures) perspectives, as they depend on each person's personal identities and social values (Solomon, 2002; Pearce, 2005). However, tourism experiences are social in that they attract people with similar interests and motivations (Levy, 2010). The motivations that lead an experience to be memorable are not always as obvious as they appear to be, as humans have complex behaviors and can often surprise, and this understanding is a challenging endeavor (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008). Hence, the importance of research.

In this sense, during the deepening of this study, as a contribution to the literature and to the market, a new attribute was researched, identified, and added later explored.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The starting point for studying tourist satisfaction behavior points to individuals' behavioral intentions, which lead to MTEs, since previous positive experiences suggest future decisions in destination choice (Kim & Ritchie, 2014). Jafari (1981) noted that few common theoretical understandings had emerged at the time. However, since his work, substantial progress has been noted in the consensus of understandings of satisfaction, motivation, and consumer behavior. (see Figure 1)

**Figure 1: MTE and the hypothesized relationships with behavioral intention.**



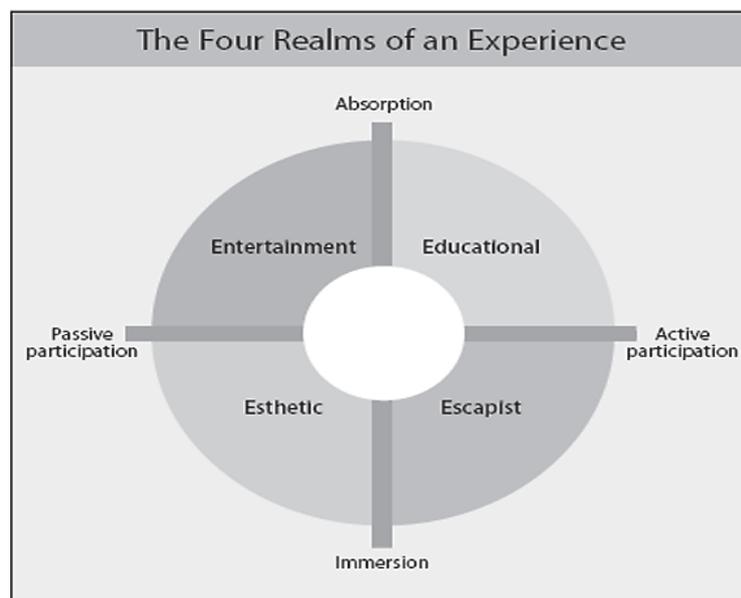
Source: Kim and Ritchie, 2014, translated.

Pine II & Gilmore (1999) had great importance in defining the introductory concepts of experience economy. They found that experiences have four major categories called “domains”: entertainment, educational, aesthetic and escapist, which can be intertwined and crossed with other two dimensions, enabling the classification of memorable experiences.

The first dimension corresponds to the type of participation, which can be passive or active of the consumer. In passive participation, consumers do not affect the performance of the experience, being its participants mere observers. In active participation, consumers participate in the activity.

Pine II & Gilmore (1999) argue that the mere fact that a person attends an event can contribute to the atmosphere of the activity and this, by itself, can make him/her an active consumer and not just a passive one, as one might assume. The second dimension is related to the connection or environmental relationship and has two extremes: absorption and immersion. In absorption, the consumer lives the experience, assimilating it, and in immersion, the consumer gets involved and is part of the experience. Figure 2 shows how all these dimensions found by the authors can interact with each other.

**Figure 2: The four domains of experience.**



Source: Pine II and Gilmore (1999), translated and adapted by the authors.

Cohen (1979) classified the first types of experience tourism and typified them into five modes: recreational, which seeks leisure; diversionary, which refers to the tourist who wants to escape from routine; existential, for those who want to experience exile or spiritual retreat; the experiential, which provides different alternatives and meanings of the trip and the “experiential”, which provokes authenticity and active participation of the experience. In the mid-1990s, Otto & Ritchie (1996) found four dimensions of experience tourism: hedonism; peace of mind; involvement; and recognition.

One of the functions of rehearsal is to allow information to be transferred to long-term memory, such as the guest remembering the experience even after some time has passed. Blackwell *et al.* (2008) state that when something can be remembered for a long time, it means that it has been learned well. The authors refer to two key factors which are rehearsal and elaboration. Elaboration refers to the technique one uses to retain the information, that is, the resources used to store the experience in memory.

Pearce (2005) states that satisfaction is a post-experience attitude, and attitudes are not fixed or tangible parameters. Tourist satisfaction stems from the gap between their expectation and the result obtained (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985; Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002; Blackwell *et al.*, 2008). It is usually measured on a Likert scale (Veal, 2011). When dissatisfaction is identified, it can stem from uncontrollable factors such as weather conditions, strikes, harassment by beggars and vendors, infrastructure problems of the place visited, lack of hygiene and safety, and the behavior of other tourists (Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002). It can also lead to complaints, which leads consumers to spend time and effort to record online evaluations of the experience (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008).

A memorable experience should go beyond seeing or visiting (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013). Airbnb provides the opportunity for ordinary people to offer their own perspectives on their city, craft, cause, or culture by “hosting” the experience on their platform (Airbnb, 2022a). Through Airbnb, tourists and hosts are connected with the goal of giving a deeper understanding of something the host loves, so that the guest has unforgettable moments and can tell their travel stories. These alternative tourism initiatives contest the dynamics of metropolitan transformation, which does not mean resistance to tourism, but a resistance that uses tourism and its codes, and that contributes to challenge the dominant urban dynamics and its consequences on inhabitable and shared spaces (Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2016).

### **Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)**

Experience in tourism has been defined by Otto & Ritchie (1996) as a subjective mental state. For an experience to happen, Schmitt (2002, p. 47) states that “consumers want to be stimulated, instructed, and challenged.” The author found that many consumption situations are associated with emotion and emotional experiences strike feelings in varying degrees of intensity, which can be positive or negative and that, in turn, emotions are generated by specific stimuli, which can result from events or people.

The behavioral paradigm in tourism experience research provides for the exploration of emotions in the context of MTEs (Skavronskaya *et al.*, 2020). In the memorable experience the emotional component is more relevant than the rational one (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999; Jensen, 1999), i.e., the consumer wants to acquire what stirs his emotion. At the entrance of the new millennium, the term “dream society” proposed by Jensen (1999) alerts us to our need to experience stories and feelings more than acquiring material goods, in a world based on the fulfillment of dreams.

Pine II & Gilmore (1999) recommend that an experience should follow five basic principles in order to be considered memorable: The title of the theme of the experience should be concise, consistent with the proposal, clearly indicating what it is about; the experience should be consistently harmonized with positive words that suggest its nature; negative words or terms should be eliminated, as well as anything that contradicts or takes away from the focus of the theme; items may be made available, or sold, that serve as souvenirs of the experience; and it is recommended that the five sensory senses be included as perception in the experience, because the more senses that are involved, the more memorable the experience will be. The authors warn that these five principles, which they call design, may not guarantee success, but they will certainly add value and, therefore, they recommend that the experiences be constantly updated and new attractions be added to them.

According to McCarthy (2000), conditions such as seeing, absorbing, feeling, hearing and being in the place visited are considered intangible sources, which make the experience unforgettable. Pizam (2010) found that, people are willing to spend more money not necessarily because of the tangible factors, but for the intangibles. The author refers to "service quality," "environment," "atmosphere," and "landscape," which are the components associated with increasing guest satisfaction. Some places can convey sensations so special that they lead visitors to make intangible associations with spiritual fulfillment or even provoking chills (McCarthy, 2000; Pearce, 2005).

An experience is not only linked to entertainment, since it involves consumers in a personal and memorable way (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). To be satisfied, the experience needs to be worth the price and, like other goods and services, have different qualities and characteristics that result from an interactive process, besides satisfying the need of its user (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999; Pizam, 2010; Santos & Kadota, 2012).

Coelho *et al.* (2018), researched the results of the memorable experience that the tourist goes through, investigating the environmental and individual psychological influences evidenced by emotional engagement and reflection, when the consumer perceives and provides opportunities for these feelings to be expressed, intrinsically by their own feelings and extrinsically being perceived by people of the relationship of the one who lives the emotions of the experience, going through a personal transformation and learning (Coelho *et al.*, 2018).

Leisure and cultural activities are also increasingly occupying different spaces, forming new cultural centers or transforming abandoned places into leisure centers and thus providing new urban experiences of leisure and tourism, which are seen as drivers of the development of cities (Gravari-Barbas, 2006). It was observed in this study that many of these activities are being exploited by the hosts of the researched experiences.

The developments raise the issue of commercial perspectives and diversification, as with the development of new forms of consumption, which go beyond the purchase of objects, tourism introduces and represents a new relationship with commercial space, which can be considered a relationship of discovery, experience and playful consumption (Gravari-Barbas & Jacquot, 2019). It is emphasized that the expectation of an experience involves a process of anticipation of something future that begins at the moment of its prospection (Skavronskaya *et al.*, 2020) regardless of the feeling or emotion that the tourist will experience with the experience.

Based on Kim & Ritchie (2014) we consider seven attributes that reveal a memorable tourism experience, described below.

### **Hedonism**

Joy, happiness, pleasure, and excitement have been feelings found in studies of the emotions associated with hedonism and the essence of memorable experiences (Tung & Ritchie, 2011; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013).

Hedonism also includes love, in the sense of actually doing what one likes to keep in memory and share the experiences later (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). For the hedonistic tourist, the main motivation is physical pleasure and social life, which leads him to prefer parties and lively nightlife, with a lifestyle

that favors spending the whole night having fun, to then wake up late and during the day stay around a pool or on the beach with friends, for example (Swarbrooke & Horne, 2002).

### Renewal

Tourists seek relaxation and escape from routine through travel experiences, that is, the experience should take the person away from their everyday life (Cohen, 1979; Kim, 2014). To renew themselves, tourists want to get away from their usual environment (Kim, 2014). Although the universe of experiences is very broad, if there is active participation, even escapist experiences can encourage learning, as well as amuse, entertain, or engage, but if participation is minimized, the experience is only aesthetic, that is, it is restricted to the admiration of the place (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999).

Otto & Ritchie (1996) defined in the service experience framework that in order to relax, the tourist needs to find peace of mind and feel physical and psychological security. "Renewal is linked to the feeling of invigoration, when someone feels rejuvenated, refreshed, ready to deal with some situation or feeling able to accomplish something" (Lobuono *et al.*, 2016).

### Relevance

The experience that leads to a recollection of the past, or to other experiences stored in the memory, is considered of great value to consumers, since it is the first source of personal information and is therefore strongly linked to emotions (Chandralal *et al.*, 2015). Meaningful experiences are also related to improved well-being either by accomplishing something that the person deems important or that makes them learn more about themselves (Lobuono *et al.*, 2016).

Authenticity is crucial to meaningfulness (Cohen, 1979). Experiencing strong and lasting memories can have an effect on future behavior (Solomon, 2002). From this perspective, the recommendation of an experience has relevant significance.

### Novelty

Experiencing something new is a factor that draws attention in memorable experiences. Chandralal *et al.* (2015) explain that this happens when someone experiences the experience for the first time or when the experience is unique, atypical, or highly distinct from previous experiences. For neuroscience, for example, novelty can relate to both positive and negative emotions in MTEs, although more for the positive ones (Skavronskaya *et al.*, 2020).

Considering that some tourists need to feel some familiarity with their place of origin when traveling, as they need to feel safe to better enjoy the experience and avoid total strangeness, novelty can be said to be restricted to the macroenvironment from the safety of a familiar microenvironment (Cohen, 1972). With globalization, this view has been reformulated. It is relevant to the process of qualifying an experience when the tourist acquires new information and the stimuli for satisfaction appear in an unexpected way (Solomon, 2002).

As a matter of importance, experiences must project some kind of innovation to attract its consumer (Pine II & Gilmore, 1999). Some tourists seek the stimulus of total novelty and contact with different people and events, have a totally unusual experience, because they seek the spontaneity of

the experience itself (Cohen, 1972). The novelty-seeking tourist usually does not intend to redo the experience but recommends it to other people (Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013).

### Local Culture

Travel motivated by local culture is difficult to identify because of interference with other motivations. However, these tourists seek a qualitative experience and do not mind spending more for it (Richards & Munsters, 2010). The beauty of the place also contributes to the cultural attribute (Pearce, 2005).

Culture is the personality of a society and accumulates meanings, rituals, norms and traditions, both abstract and material (Solomon, 2002). Culture has played a defining role in urban development whose trends, however, have less positive and worrying aspects, such as the risk of homogenization of cities as a result of the “globalization of leisure” as well as the increasing “privatization” of public spaces (Gravari-Barbas, 2006). Accounts of tourists’ best experiences include episodes of interaction, adding their meaning and interpretation for those who experience it (Pearce, 2005).

### Knowledge

Experience can cause a change in behavior through learning that occurs as a result of processing information from the external world (Solomon, 2002). The result of a memorable experience presents a number of benefits and psychological states, among them knowledge (Pearce, 2005).

Pearce (2005) states that education and knowledge are themes that drive tourism, yet the evaluation of travelers’ experiences in this domain is quite limited, as there is little commercial interest in what travelers learn in the environments visited and the cultures they visit.

The knowledge gained and the intellectual development and enhancement found in the experience by the consumer are significant components of the memorable experience found in Tung & Ritchie’s (2011) studies.

### Involvement

Pine II & Gilmore (1999) state that when there is involvement, the recollection of the lived experience usually lasts longer in the tourist’s memory, this can last for a few months or even years. Involvement relates to the consumer’s level of interest in a particular service, determining attachment (Solomon, 2002). According to Zaichkowsky (1985), involvement is defined by the perceived relevance of the service based on personal needs, interests, and values, and consumers tend to focus more attention when they are involved.

Mood also influences memory recall, is a stimulus to positive opinion about some experience, and increases the chances of memories of favorable information (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008). Involvement refers to the unfolding process of service, where participation is more important than the outcome (Otto & Ritchie, 1996).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this research was to analyze which attributes are present in the tourism experiences offered through the Airbnb platform. The qualitative approach was made by collecting the data and interpreting the comments and the quantitative approach by analyzing the data characterized by numerical results. The sample was not random, but by convenience. The research comprised the following steps:

First, a narrative literature review was conducted due to the recent aspect of these experiences on the platform, which served as the basis for the literature review, so articles that described memorable experiences were selected, and to those that had a bias on Airbnb.

Exploratory observation of experiences offered through the Airbnb platform in Brazil: it was identified that the cities of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo have a considerable number of experiences offered with reviews. Thus, we defined that experiences offered by “hosts” (those who offer the experience on the platform) in these two cities would be collected. To this end, we also defined that we would consider experiences in order of exposure on the Airbnb platform that had at least 10 reviews from “guests” (this is how Airbnb defines the users of experiences, even if they do not stay at the hosts’ homes), because we believe that these experiences are more attractive in the eyes of the consumer.

Collection of online travel reviews on the Airbnb platform: the first five reviews displayed on the page of each experience were collected, thus being the most recent. The data collection took place in October and November 2019. In addition to the reviews, we collected other variables about the experiences and the users. From the experiences we identified: title, description, value (R\$), duration, rating, host name, gender, color, self-description, if it is an action of social impact, nationality of the host, how many experiences they offer, and link to locate the experience. About the users/guests: name, self-description, gender, color, country where they live, grade given, and review of the experience. It was also related to which experience each review belongs. The data was organized in Excel spreadsheets.

500 evaluations were collected from 100 experiences in the cities of Rio de Janeiro (70 experiences and 350 evaluations) and São Paulo (30 experiences and 150 evaluations). It was decided to collect more experiences/evaluations from Rio de Janeiro because in this city there are more experiences offered. Foreign language comments were saved in the original language.

#### Data Analysis

The data were analyzed with the content analysis technique (Bardin, 1977), based on categories defined a priori. We considered as categories of analysis the attributes of MTEs defined by Kim & Ritchie (2014). In Table 1 we point out the attributes and the words (markers) associated with each attribute.

**Table 1: Attributes of the Memorable Tourism Experience and markers**

Attributes	Markers (Words associated with the attribute)
Hedonism	Love, joy, pleasure, happiness, fantastic, surprising, exciting.
Renewal	Relaxation, rest, renewal, de-stressing.
Relevance	Emotion, spiritual fulfillment, learning/development/spiritual growth, memory, recommendation.
Novelty	Unique experience, new, different, unusual, atypical, distinctive, unique.
Culture	Cultural, interaction, residents, food, local, volunteer, social action.
Knowledge	History, geography, language, intellectual, and all derivations of the verb to know.
Involvement	Planning, participation, laughter, immersion, friends, on-site activities, friendship.

Source: Organized by the authors based on Kim & Ritchie (2014)

In the analysis of the experiences' evaluations, we tried to identify which attributes were evidenced by the markers indicated in chart 1. In each evaluation, from one to five attributes were observed. Some excerpts from the evaluation that highlight a particular attribute were highlighted.

In addition to identifying the attributes most present in the evaluations, data analysis included the crossing between variables/aspects, such as: attributes x gender of users; attributes x country of residence (Brazil or abroad); quantity of identified attributes x attributes.

The results are presented in descriptive statistics. In addition, a "word cloud" of the identified attributes was prepared with the Wordle application for Windows.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We initially present the characterization of the experiences (hosts) and users (guests). Then we show the descriptive statistics of the frequencies of the identified attributes and the intersections between the variables. At the end a word cloud is presented for better visualization of the attributes, in addition to the empirical model of the attributes of memorable tourism experiences.

### Characterization of the Hosts, Experiences and Users

Of the 100 experiences analyzed, most are in the category Tour, which has specific characteristics that differentiate the types such as historical tour through the city, nature tour, bicycle tour, tour to take pictures of the urban landscape and with photo session (the host takes the guest's pictures and

sends them in digital format). Boat, helicopter, and hang-gliding tours were also identified, although not very frequently. Another category of quite frequent experiences are the various classes, such as painting, graffiti, and gastronomy (with tasting).

Less frequently identified were gastronomic experiences (tasting typical food and drinks) and social impact experiences. The latter comprise a category defined by the Airbnb platform and are usually carried out by immigrants who present their stories, cultures, and cuisine (Airbnb, 2022a). In this type of experience the host does not need to pay commissioning fees to the platform. Among the experiences analyzed, nine are in this category of Social Impact.

Table 2 presents the characterization aspects of the experiences and the hosts.

**Table 2: Characterization of the experiences and the hosts**

Aspects		Frequency
Host gender (n=100)	F	34
	M	64
	Not Informed	2
Nationality (n = 100)	Brazilian	87
	Foreigner	13
Host color (n = 100)	White	75
	Black	10
	Brown	9
	Not Identified	6
How many experiences each host offers	1	41
	2	27
	3 a 5	22
	6 a 10	6
	More than 10	4
	Average	2,69
	Minimum	1
	Maximum	17
Duration of the experience	Average	3,35h
	Minimum	1h
	Maximum	9h

Amount charged for the experience	Up to R\$ 100	40
	R\$ 101 to R\$ 200	48
	R\$ 201 to R\$ 300	7
	R\$ 301 to R\$ 400	2
	More than R\$ 400	3
	Average	R\$ 145,32
	Bigger	R\$ 750
	Lowest	R\$ 32

Source: Prepared by the authors

As for the 500 users of the experiences, we observed in this sample that the majority are female (273), white (344), and live abroad (344). We identified the color of the hosts and users from the profile picture, in 6% of the cases it was not possible to identify. Table 3 shows the characterization of the users (guests) of the experiences.

**Table 3 - Characterization of users (guests) of the experiences**

Aspects		Frequency (n = 500)
City where you had the experience	Rio de Janeiro	350
	São Paulo	150
User gender	F	273
	M	217
	Not informed	10
User Color	White	344
	Brown	62
	Black	30
	Yellow	8
	Unidentified	56
Home country	Brazilian	154
	Foreigner	339
	Not Informed	7

Source: Prepared by the authors

### Attributes Identified in Online Travel Reviews

All the attributes of an MTE proposed by Kim & Ritchie (2014) were identified in the online travel reviews of the experiences offered by Airbnb. When analyzing the user reviews we found that many users highlighted the host as an important element for their satisfaction with the experience. The host's hospitality, kindness, attention, professionalism, and knowledge were aspects highlighted by users. Thus, considering this tourism experience offered by the Airbnb platform, we found that the relationship between host and user is an important factor for it to be or not a satisfying or memorable experience. Therefore, the results analyzed highlighted a new attribute for the MTE in addition to those proposed by Kim and Ritchie (2014), which we call "hospitality".

The welcoming attribute was revealed by the words/markers: host emphasis, comfortable, coziness, hospitality, kindness, friendship, special, care, concern for the well-being, attention, being human, help, kind, patience, sympathy, dedication.

In the evaluations, between one and five attributes were verified (chart 4), with an average of 2.7 attributes per evaluation. Most of the evaluations (193) revealed the presence of three attributes. In 171 evaluations it was possible to identify two attributes. In 17% of the evaluations four attributes were identified. In 59% of the evaluations at least three attributes were identified, and the maximum of attributes identified in a single evaluation was five, in 13 comments.

**Table 4: Number of attributes in each online travel reviews**

Number of attributes identified	Frequency of reviews
1	40
2	171
3	193
4	89
5	13
<b>Average</b>	<b>2,7</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors

Table 5 shows the frequencies of each attribute in online travel reviews.

**Table 5: Frequency of each attribute in online travel reviews**

Attributes	Frequency of the attribute in online travel reviews
Welcoming	351
Significance	252
Knowledge	225
Local Culture	148
Novelty	146
Involvement	130
Hedonism	86
Renewal	8

Source: Prepared by the authors

The most frequently identified attribute was Welcoming (351 times), revealing that the way the host receives the user is a critical aspect for the user's satisfaction with the experience. This emphasis on the host and the Welcoming may be related to the close relationship that is established between the host and the user. Unlike more traditional tourism experiences, such as the tours offered by travel agencies, in these experiences visitors interact directly with the host since the first contact for the reservation and confirmation of date and time. Another aspect may be the exclusivity that the host offers to the guest, by performing the experience with only one person or a small group, unlike the tours conducted by tourism agencies, in which the tour guides lead groups with up to 40 people, being difficult for the guide to give special attention to each one.

Significance was the second most frequent attribute (252 times). The aspects that reveal this attribute are associated with what is understood as MTE, as it reveals that the experience caused a positive impact on the visitor's life. The attribute is perceived in the words related to emotion, learning and recommendation for other people to have the experience.

The attribute Knowledge (225 times) is associated with the guest acquiring new knowledge from the experience. This knowledge is also associated with the host, who owns it and passes it on to the guest.

Local Culture is an attribute with moderate frequency (148 times). Its importance is evidenced mainly in the experiences of historical tours, gastronomy and social impact.

The attribute Novelty (146 times) indicates that the experience was something new or unusual in the guest's life. We noticed that this attribute composes the presentation of the experiences by the hosts, who propose them as something new, a unique experience for the visitors.

Involvement (130 times) is revealed in the evaluations that highlight the creation of a bond between the user and the host, or between users, during the experience. In some evaluations guests call hosts by nicknames (such as Gui, for Guilherme) and indicate that they intend to have another experience with the host.

Hedonism was identified in less than 20% of the reviews (86 times). In turn, the Renewal attribute was found in less than 2% of the evaluations (only 8 times), indicating that, even though users emphasize the acquisition of new knowledge and their satisfaction with the experiences, few emphasize these aspects of renewal and hedonism. This may be related to the short duration of each experience, as shown in table 1, the experiences are on average 3.35 hours long.

### Crossings between Attributes and Variables

When comparing the frequency of the attributes in the evaluations according to the gender of the evaluators we observed that for both men and women the most frequent attributes are Welcoming, Significance and Knowledge. Women are the majority (273) in the analyzed evaluations, this may be the reason for having more attributes in the evaluations made by female users (table 6).

**Table 6: Frequency of each attribute in online travel reviews by gender**

ATTRIBUTE								
Gender	WELCOMING	SIGNIFICANCE	KNOWLEDGE	CULTURE	NOVELTY	INVOLVEMENT	HEDONISM	RENEWAL
F	200	137	119	81	81	77	58	5
M	143	107	101	63	62	52	28	3
NI	8	8	5	4	3	1	0	0
Total	351	252	225	148	146	130	86	8

Source: Prepared by the authors

Regarding the users' country of residence, we observed that the same attributes (Welcoming, significance and knowledge) are the most frequent for those who live in Brazil and for those who live abroad (Table 7). In this aspect we prefer to use "living abroad" than nationality because some users are Brazilians living abroad, while others live in Brazil but are of another nationality. An aspect that could be considered in the analysis of the consumption of these experiences by residents of the same city.

**Table 7: Frequency of each attribute in online travel reviews by country of residence of the user**

ATTRIBUTE								
Country of residence	WELCOMING	SIGNIFICANCE	KNOWLEDGE	CULTURE	NOVELTY	INVOLVEMENT	HEDONISM	RENEWALL
Brazil	111	70	61	39	53	37	25	3
Abroad	235	179	161	105	92	93	60	5
NI	5	3	3	4	1	0	1	0
Total	351	252	225	148	146	130	86	8

Source: Prepared by the authors

By analyzing how many attributes are identified in each evaluation (Table 8) we can see that Knowledge (15) and Welcoming (12), respectively, are the main attributes in those evaluations where only one attribute is identified. In the evaluations where two attributes were identified, the most frequent are Welcoming (95) and Knowledge (71). In the evaluations where three attributes are identified, the main attributes are Welcoming (152), Significance (126), and Knowledge (77). The same attributes are repeated in the evaluations where four attributes are identified with Welcoming (80), Significance (69) and Knowledge (52), as well as in the evaluations with five simultaneous attributes Welcoming (12), Significance (12) and Knowledge (10), but in this case the attribute Novelty (10) is also added.

**Table 8: Number of attributes in each evaluation**

Quant. de Atributos	Atributos							
	Aco.	Sig.	Conhe.	Cult.	Novi.	Envol.	Hed.	Renov.
1	12	2	15	4	5	0	1	0
2	95	43	71	34	34	23	27	2
3	152	126	77	62	61	58	32	4
4	80	69	52	41	36	42	24	2
5	12	12	10	7	10	7	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>8</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors

Observing the quantity of attributes in each evaluation by gender of the user, we can say that there is a small difference in the quantity of attributes, with women indicating an average of 2.8 attributes per evaluation, while men indicate 2.6 attributes (Table 9).

**Table 9: Number of attributes in each evaluation per user's gender**

Attributes	F	M	ND
1	24	15	0
2	71	94	4
3	115	74	3
4	55	29	3
5	7	5	0
Average	2,8	2,6	2,9

Source: Prepared by the authors

When comparing the number of attributes per evaluation, we verified a small difference in the group of users who live abroad, with an average of 2.7 attributes per evaluation (Chart 10). On the other hand, there is similarity in the distribution of the frequency of attributes both for those who live in Brazil and those who live abroad, and in most evaluations three attributes can be identified.

**Table 10: Number of attributes in each rating by country of residence of the user**

Attributes	Brazil	Abroad	ND
1	17	22	1
2	53	115	2
3	65	126	3
4	22	66	1
5	2	10	0
Average	2,6	2,7	2,5

Source: Prepared by the authors

### Word Cloud

By observing the word cloud of attributes identified in the evaluations of the experiences it is possible to confirm the data presented in the tables above, because the most prominent words correspond to the attributes Welcoming, Significance and Knowledge, when considering the whole sample of experiences analyzed in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Word cloud of Attributes identified in the Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo experiences**



Source: Prepared by the authors

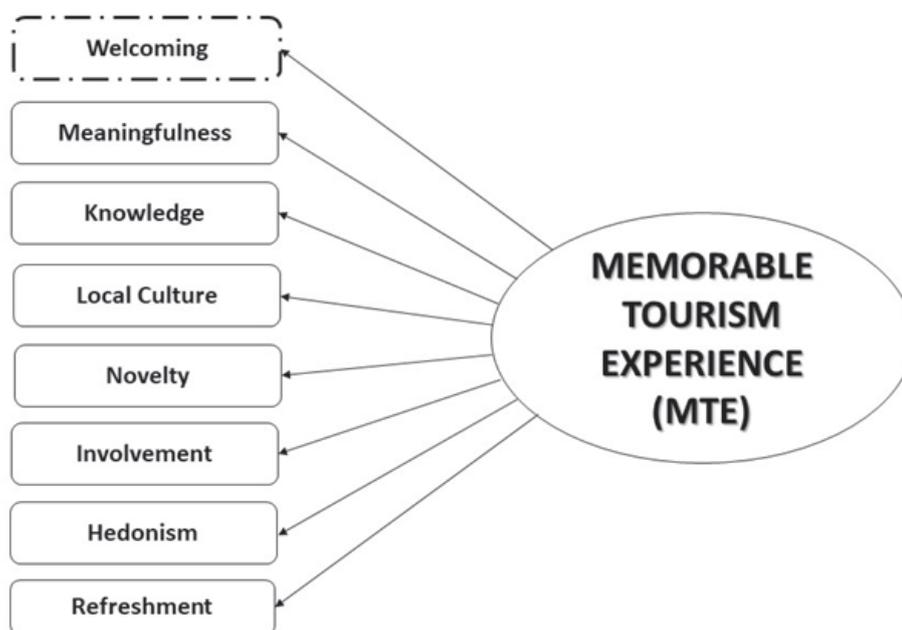
### Discussion of Results

When it comes to consumers, the analysis of demand determinants and their impacts are influenced by several variables (Santos & Kadota, 2012). On Airbnb, experiences must meet quality standards established through reviews and stars from 1 to 5. An experience that has fewer than 20 comments may be removed. If it has more than 20 comments and receives one or more 1, 2, or 3 star reviews at three separate times and its average rating is less than 4.7, it is also at risk of being removed from the platform (Airbnb Blog, 2018). Establishing, therefore, in this criterion, an expectation of offering a memorable experience. Thus, Airbnb values the offer of memorable experiences, which fully meet the expectations of users, being in line with Santos & Kadota (2012) when they state that to maximize profits, companies should aim at several variables, among them the satisfaction of their consumers. In this sense, besides indicating the satisfaction or not with the experiences offered through the Airbnb platform, the comments can point out which are the main aspects that contribute to this satisfaction or for the visitor to have a memorable experience.

As a result of the analysis, a new dimension not mentioned in the study by Kim & Ritchie (2014) was identified. Hospitality was present in 351 reviews analyzed. Due to its relevance, we considered it as the eighth attribute, not only because it surpassed the mark of the other two most highlighted attributes: Significance with 252 identifications and Knowledge that appeared 225 times, but mainly because the welcome proved to be a factor that stood out, either alone or in conjunction with other attributes, so as to draw attention to the point of becoming a new attribute.

Based on the results found we propose a new model of attributes of the MTE (Figure 4), where the Welcoming becomes one of the attributes in addition to those proposed by Kim & Ritchie (2014). In the case of this empirical model, the attributes were arranged in descending order of frequency.

**Figure 4: Empirical model of the attributes of the Memorable Tourism Experience**



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Kim & Ritchie (2014)

Hospitality is a privileged form of interpersonal encounter and ethical welcoming of others (Batista, 2002). Since the Middle Ages, hosts had rules of hospitality as a courtesy of servants, as well as used to leave cheerful and well-lit environments, and offer the best to their guest (Walker, 2002). “People who travel, need hospitality, involvement, and hospitality becomes an issue dear to the modern economy, in direct proportion to what people consume and spend in these playful migrations” (Carmargo, 2004, p. 40).

Hospitality was identified and observed when the guest recognizes and specifies the kindness of his host for the hospitality offered, that is, something that the host has made a difference so that the experience can become memorable.

More advanced and innovative research techniques are needed to reveal the personal aspects of tourism experiences. Hence the importance of researching the narratives of these tourists (Willson & McIntosh, 2010), especially since they were not interviewed, so their statements are considered authentic. The opinions taken after the experience reflect what was recalled or retained in memory (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008).

Hosts who better understand consumer behavior put themselves at an advantage in attracting more of their guests (Blackwell *et al.*, 2008) and consequently improve and maintain the quality of

their reviews. Thus, the contribution of the study is to bring more profit and competitive advantage to guiding businesses in tourism experiences, with special emphasis on individualized attention, even if the guiding is in a group. Understanding the opinions of guests of competing services can also help hosts to increase their own ratings, since understanding the reasons that led to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of consumers of competing services will allow for greater efficiency of the experience.

## 5. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this paper we sought to analyze which attributes of Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) are present in online travel user reviews of experiences offered through the Airbnb platform. We found that all the attributes proposed by Kim & Ritchie (2014) are present in the observed reviews. A new attribute was identified in the reviews, which we called “Welcoming,” as it highlights the host’s attitude in welcoming users in the best way with kindness and individualized attention.

During the research, we also identified a negative impacting element, which we called “Deception”, which expressed the dissatisfaction of the guests with the frustration regarding the expectations of the consumer that were not met. Although found only 18 times in the reviews of consumers who gave 4 or 3 star ratings, it was not considered an attribute because it did not qualify the experience as positively memorable.

The results of this research confirm the proposition of Kim & Ritchie (2014) that there are several attributes that influence the definition of a memorable tourism experience, since these attributes can be identified in the spontaneous evaluations that users leave about their experiences on the platform. The results signal important aspects to be considered in the development of new tourism services, help understand tourist behavior to meet market demands.

The emphasis on the welcoming attribute meets the studies that point out that hospitality, revealed in the practice of welcoming between host and visitor is a crucial factor in tourism relations. Thus, companies in the sector, especially tourism agencies that offer itineraries highlighting the experience, may have in these hospitality practices, a competitive advantage, since this attribute is highlighted in the users’ assessments.

### Limitations

As limitations of this study we highlight that the sample was not random, but by convenience, thus it is not possible to generalize the results. Within this limitation and as a suggestion for future studies, it would be necessary to research more traditional tourism experiences, offered by tourism agencies, to verify if there is similarity in the identified attributes. Similarly, the data analyzed contemplates a specific context of memorable tourism experiences, peer to peer experiences, through the Airbnb platform.

The data analysis considered only descriptive statistics. Statistical tests need to be performed to confirm whether there is even difference or similarity in the amounts of attributes by gender and by country of residence. Confirmatory statistical techniques must also be used to verify if there are

similarities and/or differences between the observed user groups, as well as to gauge which attributes are most relevant for memorable tourism experiences.

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**Davi Alysson da Cruz Andrade:** Concepção, revisão de literatura, metodologia, análise dos dados, discussão dos resultados.

**Rina Ricci-Cagnacci:** Concepção, revisão de literatura, análise dos dados, discussão dos resultados, revisão e edição.