

Convergence in the Sharing Economy: Evaluating Uber's Influence on Societal Services and User Time Savings as Added Value

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Abstract: - This paper examines the attitudes and behaviours of Uber users and drivers in Croatia within the broader context of the sharing economy (SE). Literature highlights the economic relevance and regulatory challenges of the SE- critical for guiding practice, monitoring impacts, and managing disruptions. This study examines how Uber users and drivers in Croatia engage with the SE, investigating how platform factors like availability, waiting times, and ratings relate to attitudes across age groups. Based on survey data from 144 users and nine Uber drivers, statistical analyses reveal no significant differences in satisfaction or usage patterns across age and gender subgroups, confirming the demographic robustness of the findings. Findings show that users primarily value convenience, price transparency, and app quality, whereas drivers emphasize flexibility despite concerns over earnings and commission structures; furthermore, observed price sensitivity and platform-switching during peak periods highlight intensifying competition in the Croatian market and its role in reshaping consumer behaviour.

Key-Words: - peer to peer economy, sharing economy, Uber, drivers, customers, night outings, airport transportation, payment system, application.

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1 Introduction

The sharing economy (SE) refers to transactions enabled by digital platforms that allow individuals to access goods and services they do not own. It includes a wide range of models such as ride-sharing (Uber, Lyft), accommodation platforms (Airbnb, HomeAway), service exchanges (TaskRabbit, Instacart), crowdfunding (Kickstarter, Lending Club), and peer-to-peer marketplaces (eBay, Etsy). Botsman and Brozović classify SE models based on asset ownership and the degree of platform control [1], [2]. SE platforms are also commonly referred to as peer-to-peer economy, collaborative economy, gig economy, and access-based consumption.

Beyond the nomenclature, sustainability is an area of research focus. According to the research by some authors, [1], [3], [4], SE practices reduce

resource consumption, waste, and emissions. However, to achieve sustainability goals, effective regulation and platform governance are needed, [5].

Although the idea of sharing resources is not new, digital technologies have transformed the SE into a global phenomenon, particularly among younger generations who are highly tech-oriented and receptive to online platforms, [6], [7], [8]. Millennials and Generation Z are especially motivated by affordability, convenience, environmental concerns, and platform reputation, [9], [10], [11].

Given this strong generational focus, research on the SE in Croatia, particularly among younger users, contributes to understanding adoption patterns and future market potential. The SE continues to grow rapidly. Statista forecasts a market valued at 600 billion USD by 2027, [12].

The objective of this research was to explore the attitudes and behaviors of Uber customers and Uber drivers in Croatia toward SE usage. It examined general perceptions, participation as users and service providers, and the relationships between key variables such as practicality and availability, waiting time for ride confirmation, and driver ratings and reviews across age groups. The main research question (RQ) is *How do Uber users and drivers in Croatia perceive and engage with the sharing economy, and how are key platform-related factors -such as practicality and availability, waiting time for ride confirmation, and driver ratings and reviews – associated with their attitudes and behaviors across different age groups.*

Findings were obtained through a review of prior studies and primary survey research. The paper is organized into an introduction, literature review, methodology and sample description, results, discussion, and conclusion, including limitations and recommendations for future research.

2 Literature Review

Contemporary entrepreneurship within creative and experience-based sectors is increasingly mediated by secondary digital technologies, particularly platforms emblematic of the sharing economy (SE), such as Uber and Airbnb. These platforms exemplify how digitalization enables collaborative consumption, efficient resource utilization, and scalable networked interactions, effectively altering traditional market structures. By facilitating real-time matching of supply and demand, SE platforms introduce disruptive mechanisms that challenge established travel and hospitality models, creating new competitive pressures for both incumbents and emerging entrepreneurs, [13]. The deployment of these technologies reshapes partnerships and collaborative networks, as local service providers, creative entrepreneurs, and platform intermediaries engage in co-creation processes that generate both economic and social value. SE-driven models not only enhance consumer agency and choice but also incentivize entrepreneurial innovation, encouraging agile responses to shifting market conditions and evolving consumer preferences. This convergence of digital connectivity, collaborative relationships, and market access fosters a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem, where competitive advantage is increasingly derived from platform-mediated visibility, adaptive partnerships, and the ability to co-produce differentiated experiences, [14]. Consequently, secondary digital technologies act as a catalyst for systemic disruption in the travel

sector, redefining both competitive landscapes and collaborative paradigms, while simultaneously expanding opportunities for creative entrepreneurship and culturally authentic, experience-driven services.

There is increased interest in the SE in Croatia. Studies show that although the SE in Croatia is still developing, it holds strong potential to influence the national economy, entrepreneurship, and labor markets, [13], [14]. The most widely used SE services include ride-sharing, home sharing, household services, professional advice, financial services, and peer-to-peer lending, [2]. Sharing economy platforms increasingly rely on algorithmic management systems in which software algorithms assign, monitor, and evaluate work, reshaping labor relations, control mechanisms and worker autonomy, [2]. Research on platforms like Uber suggests that algorithmic management plays a strong role in directing drivers' work, often reducing their autonomy and increasing stress, while also prompting both individual and collective resistance, [8].

However, the lack of regulatory clarity and transparency has created risks. Some of the risks include tax evasion, failed consumer and worker protection, and unfair competition. Some authors [13] stress the urgent need for consistent regulations to ensure safety and market fairness.

At the same time, the SE platforms can stimulate entrepreneurship by creating flexible opportunities and enabling new business models, [15]. Advantages of the SE in Croatia include lower prices, flexible work opportunities, and the possibility for individuals to act as both users and providers. Yet disadvantages persist, such as income instability and limited labor protections, [2]. In the tourism sector, SE platforms, particularly Uber and Airbnb, play a major role in transportation and accommodation services, [16]. Croatian students are frequent users. However, a recent study found the students do not understand the how the SE works or its impacts, [17]. These findings underscore the need for further research on young generations' attitudes toward the SE.

Associated with a broad number of sectors, the sharing economy now encompasses novel sectors - not previously associated with the sharing economy in extant literature on demand services, fashion and clothing, and food delivery. SE encompasses a wide array of actors that compete within their associated sectors such as mobility, hospitality, fashion and clothing, business and work, food, logistics, leisure, kids and children, finance, non-profit association, housing energy, pets, general services and

construction. Effects, long term consequences and benefits are assumed in the long tail of the sharing economy. Covering different niches spanning many sectors of the economy, while Uber and Airbnb together account for approximately 34% of the total content, and about 50% of entries in social media concern actors that account for only 0.3–1% of the total, [18]. Traditional media contents exhibit a similar pattern. It can be regarded as a discounting. If platforms gain momentum, processes of competitive and institutional turbulence may be invoked in more sectors of the economy. Our data is only indicative of potential changes in the coming years, yet it is worth pointing out that diffusion processes start slowly and gain momentum exponentially. In particular, platforms are subject to substantial network effects, making their growth pattern even more explosive, [19]. We acknowledge that technological innovation does not necessarily imply widespread diffusion [20], and overcoming obstacles to adoption is not a trivial task [21], [22], but transitions to abundance can nevertheless be very swift once a critical mass is reached and related processes of creative destruction in more sectors of society cannot be excluded.

How the distinct features of the sharing economy foster new experiences that may influence consumers' future sharing commitments. According to [23], it has been observed that new sharing experiences introduce a new set of critical factors that determine consumers' continuous commitment to sharing practices. While recent service marketing studies show that platform responsiveness and reliability, as well as service quality and satisfaction, are positively associated with loyalty in sharing practices, [24], [25], [26], these factors do not fully explain the relationship between the disruptiveness of sharing practices and consumers' decision-making. Studies show that drivers of general participation intentions for sharing schemes (e.g., environmental impact) do not determine future engagement ([27], [28], and the antecedents (e.g., social benefits) of re-engagement intention do not yield consistent findings, [26], [27], [28]. According to [29] anecdotally suggest that consumer characteristics, such as materialism or environmental and economic consciousness, affect consumers' loyalty to sharing activities. However, few studies identify the different drivers, processes, and contingent conditions for motivating current participants to re-engage in sharing activities, [30], [31], [32].

Recent research has increasingly turned to data-driven approaches. At Hurst Castle, for example, multi-temporal modelling was used to analyse

displacement and environmental data and to identify key trends and anomalies [32]. This study demonstrated how carefully structured data collection, processing, and analysis can enhance the robustness and reliability of research findings. Research on the sharing economy depends on thoughtfully designed surveys and careful analysis to understand users' behaviours and perceptions.

3 Methodology

The methodology of the paper includes the description of the sample, the research methods, and the method of data collection. The study involved 168 respondents, of whom 24 did not use Uber platform and were therefore excluded from the survey. In total, the number of valid questionnaires was $n = 144$, of which 42 (29.17%) were male and 102 (70.83%) were female. Table 1 describes the sample in more detail through frequency distributions of the independent variables.

Table 1. Respondent profile

Gender	29.17% M	70.83% F
Age (group)	18-25: 27 (18.75%) 26-35: 101 (70.14%) 36-45: 15 (10.42%) 46-55: 1 (0.69%)	
Generation	29.17% (Y)	70.83 % (Z)
City of residence	Dubrovnik (74.31%); Zagreb (12.50%); Split (2.08%); Zadar (2.08%); Šibenik (2.08%); Other (6.95%)	
Residential area	Urban: 98 (68.06%) Suburban: 40 (27.78%) Village: 6 (4.17%)	
Working status	Employed: 115 (79.86%) Unemployed: 4 (2.78%) Student: 20 (13.89%) Other: 5 (3.47%)	
Respondent's last completed level of education	High school: 31 (21.53%) Bachelor degree: 41 (28.47%) Master degree: 71 (49.31%) PhD: 1 (0.69%)	

Source: Author's calculation

Based on this description, it can be concluded that the average respondent (i.e., the general respondent profile) is a female in her late twenties or early thirties who lives in an urban area of Dubrovnik, is employed, and holds a master's degree. This respondent profile may be significant for the research results. In the empirical part of the paper, the survey method was the primary research method. The survey method is a procedure through which, data, information, attitudes, and opinions

related to the research topic are collected using a questionnaire. This method is reliable to the extent that the information obtained through it is reliable [33]. Therefore, it was important to establish the respondent's profile and describe it in detail.

Data collection was conducted online using the Google Forms tool. The questionnaire (the main research instrument) was posted in various groups on social networks and was available for respondents to complete for one month (August 4, 2025 - September 4, 2025). The survey questionnaire consists of several parts. It can be divided into three large parts: the first, in which respondents provide information about themselves (for example, age, gender, employment status), the second, in which they evaluate certain statements related to customer satisfaction using a Likert scale, and the third one for those respondents who are also Uber drivers. They evaluated certain statements using a Likert scale (only 9 respondents; 6.25%). Finally, the respondents had the opportunity to provide their own observations in free form.

Finally, the respondents had the opportunity to provide their own observations in an open-ended question. This study systematically collects, processes, and analyses data to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. This approach makes it possible to identify key trends and draw meaningful conclusions.

In addition to the survey, the empirical part of the paper also employed the methods of analysis and synthesis. Analysis is used to break down complex concepts into simpler parts for more detailed examination, while synthesis combines these parts into a coherent whole [33]. These two methods should be applied together in order to interpret the results correctly and comprehensively.

In the theoretical part of the paper, the following methods were applied: compilation, comparison, and description. These methods were used when reviewing the literature and sources. This study does not employ numerical simulations. Instead, it is based on primary survey data analyzed using descriptive statistical methods, which is consistent with established empirical research in the sharing economy and tourism literature.

4 Results

The results of the empirical research are presented through two phases: a) the point of view (PoV) of respondents who are Uber customers; and b) the point of view of respondents who are also Uber drivers. In the last subsection **4.3 The contribution of critical analysis to statistical results**

interpretation, the model has been explained in more detail, specifically including mathematical results presented and compared with experimental data. Furthermore, this subsection provides quantitative metrics that contrast the simulation outputs against real measurements.

4.1 Phase 1: Uber customers (PoV)

Information and instructions on using the Uber platform were not understandable or simple for only two respondents (1.39%). Recommendations from friends or family were the most common source of information, as evidenced 84 respondents (58.30%). This indicates that interpersonal communication plays a key role in spreading information about the platform, which is consistent with the role of the word-of-mouth effect in modern digital services [34]. Social networks (27 respondents; 18.75%) and various forms of advertising (27 respondents; 18.75%) represent secondary sources of information, while media and newspaper articles are the least represented (6 respondents; 4.17%). This suggests informal and digital communication channels are more impactful than traditional media. On the other hand, recommendations from family and friends, did not appear to be a decisive factor when choosing the platform. Approximately nineteen percent of the respondents surveyed reported that recommendations significantly influenced their decision to use Uber. Approximately forty three percent reported a partial influence. A total of 55 respondents (38.19%) reported that recommendations had no influence.

The largest share of participants has been using Uber for five or more years (104 respondents; 72.22%), indicating a high level of long-term loyalty and stability within the user base. Smaller shares fall into the categories of 3–4 years of use (25 respondents; 17.36%) and 1–2 years (12 respondents; 8.33%). The smallest share of participants consists of users who have been using Uber for less than one year (3 respondents; 2.08%). These findings indicate a mature market in which most respondents have significant experience with the platform.

The results show a clear dominance of one specific usage situation. As many as 71.5% of users most often use Uber during *night outings*, indicating a strong link between the platform with needs related to safety, convenience, and avoidance of risks associated with night-time driving in one's own vehicle (e.g., alcohol consumption, limited of public transport). This suggests that night-time transportation is a key market niche in which Uber delivers the greatest functional value. The second

most common time to use Uber is *during holidays or trips* (16.7%). The second most common time to use Uber is during holidays or trips (16.7%). This is important as it shows users find Uber reliable enough to use when in an unfamiliar community. *Airport transportation* has a minimal share (4.9%), but it reflects a specific group of users for whom reliability and punctuality in time-sensitive contexts are important. The “*Other*” category (6.9%) is made up of individual and irregular needs, showing that Uber occasionally serves additional specific functions, although these are not dominant.

The analysis of usage time patterns revealed that Uber is used most often in the evening, as confirmed by 84% of respondents. Examples of this include late-night activities such as social events or late returns home. Usage in the afternoon (12.5%), and especially in the morning (3.5%), is extremely low, indicating that Uber is not the first choice for everyday morning transportation (e.g., commuting to work or university). This result means Uber is considered a secondary form of transportation. Additionally, users rely on Uber for non-routine, rather than routine, occasions. The frequency of use data confirms the behaviour patterns. The largest proportion of users who use the platform (41.7%), use Uber once or twice a month, indicating occasional rather than routine use. Also, a high proportion of users who use the platform do so only in emergencies (37.5%). This is an indication that users feel safe using Uber. More frequent usage, such as three to four times a month (14.6%), once or twice a week (3.5%), or every weekend (2.8%), is significantly less common. These results indicate that only a small share of respondents fit this profile.

Table 2 shows the factors and added benefits that influence users’ decisions to choose the Uber platform, revealing clear distinctions between the primary drivers of usage and the secondary features that complement the service experience. Table 2. shows the factors and added benefits that influence users’ decisions to choose the Uber platform, revealing clear distinctions between the primary drivers of usage and the secondary features that complement the service experience. Motivational factors, practicality and availability ($M = 4.16$) and clearly defined prices without unexpected charges ($M = 4.16$), were rated the highest. This result suggests convenience and price transparency are the most influential determinants of platform selection. Market recognizability across destinations ($M = 4.05$) and the quality of the application ($M = 3.91$) are second and third. The results suggest brand recognition and technological performance significantly influence a user’s decision to choose

Uber. Coupons, discounts, and other promotions ($M = 3.72$) as well as driver ratings and reviews ($M = 3.56$), are moderately important, supportive but less dominant factors. In contrast, Uber’s extended services have lower mean values. There is a moderate level of interest in premium and specialized ride options such as Uber XL, Uber Comfort, and Uber Black ($M = 3.05$). Other add-on services, such as Uber Reserve ($M = 2.59$), Uber Package ($M = 2.22$), Uber Pet ($M = 2.22$), Uber Pool ($M = 2.17$), and Uber Eats ($M = 2.04$), have substantially lower ratings. This indicates the services only add marginal value to users’ decisions to choose the platform.

Table 2. Motivational factors and additional benefits that contribute to choosing the Uber platform

Motivational factors for using the Uber platform		Additional benefits that contribute to choosing the Uber platform	
Practicality and availability	4,1571	Uber pool	2,1667
Quality of application	3,9130	Uber eats	2,0438
Clearly defined prices, no surprises	4,1571	Uber reserve	2,5942
Promotions, discounts, coupons	3,7214	Uber package	2,2230
Driver ratings and reviews	3,5571	Uber pet	2,2158
Recognizable in the market in most destinations	4,0500	Uber XL, Uber comfort, Uber black	3,0504

Source: Author’s calculation

At a high level, the findings show that users choose Uber based on core service characteristics, convenience, price clarity, brand presence, and application performance. Uber’s complementary services provide only limited added value in shaping user preferences.

Table 3 provides an overview of the key variables that contribute to user satisfaction with the Uber platform, revealing clear differences in their relative importance. The highest-rated contributors are ease of use of the application ($M = 4.23$) and the practicality and speed of using the application ($M = 4.20$), indicating that technological usability is the most influential determinant of overall satisfaction. The second most influential determinant is ease of

access to information ($M = 4.00$). Respondents prefer transparent and user-friendly platforms.

Among operational service attributes, speed of arrival at the destination ($M = 3.88$), accuracy ($M = 3.69$), and quality of service ($M = 3.68$), are the most relevant factors. This suggests that a user's perception of service quality is influenced by factors such as reliability and performance efficiency. Transportation price ($M = 3.59$) and vehicle availability ($M = 3.50$) are moderately important. The amount of time it takes for a driver to confirm a ride ($M = 3.16$) has the lowest mean score. In other words, it is not as important as other factors which contribute to user satisfaction. Together, the results describe a Croatian Uber user who values a consistent experience, both through the application as well as in person with the driver.

Table 3. Variables that are main contributors to the satisfaction with the Uber platform service

Transportation price	3,5929
Vehicle availability	3,5000
Speed of arrival at destination	3,8841
Quality of service	3,6812
Waiting time for ride confirmation	3,1643
Accuracy	3,6906
Ease of access to information	4,0000
Practicality and speed of using the application	4,2014
Ease of use of the application	4,2286

Source: Author's calculation

Table 4 presents an assessment of key barriers associated with the use of the Uber platform and evaluates the perceived broader societal impacts of its operation. The findings indicate that price-related and availability-related barriers exert the strongest influence on users' platform choices. Specifically, high prices during peak demand ($M = 3.97$) are the most significant barrier, followed by lack of availability in a service area ($M = 3.91$). Additionally, driver cancellations ($M = 3.73$) are an operational constraint that negatively affects the user.

In contrast, interpersonal or safety-related barriers such as problems with drivers ($M = 3.20$), feelings of insecurity ($M = 2.88$), and insufficient information about the driver or ride ($M = 2.85$), are perceived as moderately influential. The unclear payment system ($M = 2.57$) is rated as the least impactful barrier, suggesting comparatively higher levels of trust in the platform's pricing structure relative to other concerns.

Regarding the perceived impacts of the Uber platform, respondents identify a mix of positive and negative societal effects. The most strongly

endorsed impacts pertain to enhanced mobility and flexibility ($M = 3.81$) and the platform's positive contribution to tourism ($M = 3.49$), indicating that users recognize the broader benefits of on-demand transportation services. Similarly, additional income for local residents ($M = 3.51$) is viewed as a noteworthy advantage, while economic benefits to local communities receive a moderate rating ($M = 3.22$).

Table 4. Rating the barriers and impact of use the Uber platform

Rate the following barriers and how much they influence your choice of the Uber platform		Rate the impacts of the Uber platform in relation to the following:	
High prices during peak demand	3,9710	Positive impact on tourism	3,4928
Unavailability of service in certain areas	3,9130	Improves mobility and flexibility	3,8116
Problems with drivers	3,1957	Brings economic benefits to local communities	3,2190
Unclear payment system	2,5662	Makes it difficult for traditional services (taxis, hotels) to operate	3,2319
Feeling of insecurity and distrust in drivers	2,8750	Negative impact on housing prices in cities	2,4745
Insufficient information about the ride or the driver	2,8456	Encourages precarious work and unpaid taxes	2,8921
Driver cancelling rides	3,7279	Brings additional income to local residents	3,5145

Source: Author's calculation

On the negative side, respondents acknowledge that Uber may make it difficult for traditional services, such as taxis and hotels, to operate ($M = 3.23$) and may encourage precarious work and unpaid taxes ($M = 2.89$). The lowest-rated perceived impact is the notion that Uber has a negative effect on housing prices in cities ($M = 2.47$), suggesting that users see limited evidence of such broader structural consequences. Overall, the results indicate that users are most concerned with cost, availability, and service reliability, while they perceive Uber's

societal impact predominantly through the lens of mobility improvements, tourism support, and supplementary income generation, with more diffuse structural concerns viewed as relatively less influential.

Respondents also acknowledge market competition. The results show that a significant number of users are considering replacing Uber with other service providers. The most frequently mentioned alternative is Bolt. Bolt is perceived to be less expensive, faster and more reliable. Local taxis are also noted. This is in the context of cases where the taxis would offer lower prices, better service quality, or shorter waiting times. Price is the most cited reason for seeking an alternative to Uber. There is a perception within the community that Uber is more expensive than the competition. This perception is especially prevalent during peak travel times. Despite these complaints, some users would not switch. The reason being the platform provides them with a sufficiently reliable and accessible service.

Among the respondents who would consider switching to other platforms, the most commonly reported benefits include:

- a) lower ride prices (the most frequently mentioned category);
- b) faster vehicle arrival times;
- c) greater vehicle availability;
- d) simpler and more reliable communication;
- e) a better experience with drivers (professionalism, vehicle cleanliness, local knowledge of the city);
- f) affordability and more frequent promotions/discounts; and,
- g) higher service quality (well-maintained vehicles, lower cancellation rates).

It is most often emphasized that competitors, especially Bolt, offer more favorable prices and fewer cancellations, which users perceive as key advantages.

The survey results show that the majority of respondents (87.50%) would use Uber more frequently if the platform introduced additional benefits aimed at reducing costs, clearly indicating that price sensitivity is one of the key determinants of user behavior. Even satisfied respondents indicated they would use Uber more frequently if discounts, loyalty programs, or fixed prices during peak demand periods were to be made available. In contrast, a smaller number of respondents (12.50%) state that reducing costs would not significantly influence their choice of service provider, suggesting the presence of users for whom service

stability, reliability, and predictability are more important than price.

4.2 Phase 2: Uber drivers (PoV)

Despite the fact that only 9 respondents (6.25%) also work as the Uber drivers, their point of view offers valuable insights. Figure 1 is a visual representation of each driver's years of service with Uber. The results show drivers with more than two years of service make up the highest frequency (4 drivers). These are Uber's long-term platform drivers. Drivers with 0.5–1 year of experience form the second-largest group (3 drivers). These individuals are already familiar with Uber's operational environment. Lower frequencies are found in the categories of less than 0.5 year of experience (1 driver) and 1–2 years of experience (1 driver). In terms of service with Uber, there is an unequal distribution of drivers. In Croatia, the results also show a percentage of those drivers are loyal to Uber.

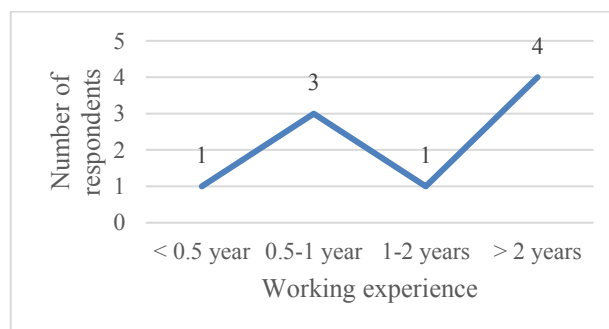


Fig. 1: The distribution of Uber drivers according to their working experience on the platform

Source: Author's work

Most of them (77.78%) work as Uber drivers only during the summer due to the tourist season, while the remaining 22.22% work throughout the entire year. This is consistent with the motivation responses for working for Uber: additional earnings (77.78%) versus flexible working hours (22.22%). In response to the question "How satisfied are you with the financial returns from working for the Uber platform?" most respondents (66.67%) indicated that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 33.33% reported being satisfied.

Not earning enough is a key report by the largest proportion of respondents (44.44%) when considering the challenges they face as Uber drivers, followed by problems with customers (22.22%). Competition, technical issues with the application, and generally poor working conditions are mentioned less frequently. Nevertheless, Uber drivers' satisfaction with their cooperation with the

platform is further examined using the variables presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Satisfaction of Uber drivers with the cooperation with the Uber platform according to the following variables

Amount of earnings in relation to the work invested	3,285714
Quality of customer support for drivers	3,071429
Safety during working hours	3,714286
Amount of commission that Uber takes	2,307692
Clarity and transparency in payments	3,428571
Flexibility of working hours and autonomy in work	4,285714
Uber's actions in case of problems with passengers	3,214286

Source: Author's calculation

Table 5 presents mean ratings that reflect Uber drivers' satisfaction across several operational and support-related dimensions. Flexibility of working hours and autonomy in work ($M=4.29$) are the highest rated variables. From the driver's point of view, there is a significant benefit from being able to control his or her own schedule. Safety during working hours ($M=3.71$) and clarity and transparency in payments ($M=3.43$) are also highly rated.

The results also show a moderate degree of satisfaction levels at the current *amount of earnings in relation to the work invested* ($M=3.29$), *Uber's actions in cases of problems with passengers* ($M=3.21$), and *quality of customer support for drivers* ($M=3.07$). These areas meet the minimum level of drivers' expectations. It also means there is room for improvement to the driver experience, specifically related to commission. The *amount of commission that Uber takes* (2.31), has the lowest mean rating, implying dissatisfaction.

The number of drivers (66.67%) who would not do the job if there were no tourists, is reflected in Table 5. Only 33.33% responded "Maybe," suggesting they might reconsider.

An approximately equal number of respondents believe that the platform should introduce additional reviews (answered "Yes") and that it should not (answered "No"). This spread shows that respondents do not agree about whether additional passenger reviews would be helpful. Some think additional feedback could be helpful while others do not think the feedback would be helpful. For example, the responses show that most drivers feel passenger ratings don't affect their work or income very much. A smaller group (22.22%) said the reviews would be somewhat helpful. Overall, drivers do not view the feedback system as a

determining factor in their success, although some drivers do recognize that ratings can influence ride availability or passenger trust. It could affect the number of rides they get or how much passengers trust them.

To conclude, drivers offered several suggestions that, in their opinion, could improve both their own and customers' experience: *allow driving around the city of Dubrovnik; reduce prices for customers, increase wages for drivers; and exclude drivers with poor ratings.*

4.3 The Contribution of Critical Analysis to Statistical Results Interpretation

The growing consideration of alternative platforms, particularly Bolt, highlights increasing price sensitivity and competitive pressure in the Croatian ride-hailing market. Users' willingness to switch platforms during peak demand periods suggests that price volatility may undermine long-term loyalty, even among otherwise satisfied customers. An independent-samples *t*-test was conducted to examine gender differences in overall satisfaction with the Uber platform. The results indicate no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents ($t = 0.19$, $p = 0.85$), suggesting that satisfaction with Uber services is perceived similarly across genders, which encompassed all sequences of satisfaction in a leveled coverage of levels, where data sets are correlated.

A chi-square test of independence was conducted to examine the relationship between age group and frequency of Uber usage. The results show no statistically significant association ($\chi^2 = 16.60$, $p = 0.17$), indicating that usage frequency patterns are relatively consistent across age categories.

To assess the robustness of the findings, key satisfaction and motivation indicators were examined across demographic subgroups (gender and age). The relative ranking of core determinants – such as price transparency, application usability, and availability – remained stable across subgroups, indicating that the results are robust and not driven by a specific demographic category.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

The research is unique in its study of both Uber users and drivers in Croatia. The majority of survey respondents are from Dubrovnik. The study shows the predominate Uber user profile is that of a young, urban, highly educated female who has long-term familiarity with the platform. This user occasionally uses Uber in the evening and at other times when it is affordable. This user reports high satisfaction with

the application's usability and overall service reliability, yet expresses concerns about high prices during peak demand, limited availability in certain areas, and occasional driver cancellations, that support RQ.

The results of the study also inform the typical Uber driver in Croatia. This driver values autonomy and flexibility and dislikes the current commission rate and seasonal work patterns that potentially disrupts his or her earnings.

Unlike other studies conducted using Croatian datasets, this study focuses solely on Uber. According to [35], [36], [37] included various SE platforms (such as AirBnb), or used different sampling approaches (e.g., focus groups). According to [38], the scientific contribution of this paper also lies in identifying the need for flexible and personalized tourism business models, driven by shifts in consumer behaviour and market structure, thereby advancing understanding of how the tourism sector must adapt to contemporary economic dynamics.

The paper emphasized that time savings and broader societal convergence are key sources of value creation in platform-based mobility services, while the present study demonstrates that Croatian users primarily evaluate Uber through price transparency, situational convenience, and application usability. Considering that, some fundamental results further underline the importance of perceived added value, which remains highly context-dependent and shaped by local market conditions and competition. Some relevant supporting study can be found in [39], [40]. As different authors [41], [42] point out, Uber's promotes a narrative of freedom and empowerment, yet behind the scenes, algorithmic pricing, performance monitoring, and customer ratings quietly shape how drivers work. These systems influence driver behaviour in ways that are often opaque and difficult to challenge, affecting their sense of autonomy, security, and control. The concerns raised by Croatian drivers in this study align closely with these observations, suggesting that flexibility within the platform economy is frequently constrained by algorithmic and market pressures [41], [42].

The study also contributes to the field through its dual PoV approach. This approach captures both users and drivers. This enhances the relevance of the findings for policymakers, platform managers, and local stakeholders seeking to improve urban mobility and service regulation, and it provides several managerial implications. The scientific contribution lies in demonstrating how digital

transformation streamlines operations, improves communication, enhances information access, reduces transaction costs throughout time savings, and helping to bridge spatial barriers between users and providers, offering guidance for developing more competitive and sustainable digital business strategies.

By exploring both users' and drivers' experiences, this study sheds new light on how platform-mediated mobility services shape not only the way people consume but also the conditions under which work is performed. This dual perspective enhances the relevance of the findings for policymakers, platform managers, and local stakeholders concerned with urban mobility, service quality, and labour regulation. The study also shows how digital tools can make operations smoother, improve communication, provide easier access to information, save time, and connect users with service providers more efficiently. At the same time, as [42] note, these benefits come with more intense algorithmic control. This can limit workers' participation and voice. Evaluating platforms means considering more than efficiency and user satisfaction; their social and labour consequences are equally important.

Based on the results, three recommendations are proposed. To improve customer loyalty, Uber should stabilize its pricing mechanisms and take efforts to ensure vehicles are available as often as requested. To retain drivers, Uber should reevaluate its commission structure. To improve the local business climate, local authorities should consider clearer regulatory frameworks to balance competition between ride-sharing and traditional taxi services while safeguarding worker conditions. Future research should expand the sample geographically across Croatia and include longitudinal tracking to capture evolving user behaviour in a rapidly changing mobility market. Additionally, qualitative research would deepen understanding of perceived risks, trust, and platform governance issues. Comparative studies between Uber and competing services such as Bolt would further illuminate the dynamics of platform competition in the Croatian context.

As with all survey-based research, the findings are subject to limitations related to self-reported data, potential response bias, longer research period to monitor the dynamics of changes in time-defined intervals, increase the number of significant variables in convergence to long-term platform loyalty. However, the consistency of responses across demographic groups and the absence of

statistically significant subgroup differences enhance confidence in the reliability of the results.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The authors wrote, reviewed and edited the content as needed and they have not utilised artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The authors take full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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Contribution of Individual Authors to the Creation of a Scientific Article (Ghostwriting Policy)

The authors equally contributed in the present research, at all stages from the formulation of the problem to the final findings and solution.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

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