Authenticity: Multiple-item Scale Development and Validation

W.M.R. Laksiri*

Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management and Finance, University of Ruhuna
rohan.laksiri@gmail.com

Abstract

The goal of this study is to create a scale for measuring authenticity in a tourism management environment. Authenticity has been extensively studied in a wide range of academic fields. Authenticity has been a theme in tourism management research, and this strategy is becoming more and more popular. Only a few studies have been done on measuring objects in a tourist setting, even though there is a wealth of literature on authenticity in tourism management. The primary objective of this study is to fill the above gap in the modern jurisprudence of tourism. In response to the need for standardizing the measurement of the construct, a multi-item "authenticity" scale was created. The scale has 18 items that measure how consumers feel about the authenticity of the goods, services, and experiences they use. This paper describes the scale development process and validation procedures. The empirical data was gathered using two distinct samples: business management, humanities, and social science majors at universities and hotel industry professionals. The data in this study were analyzed using an exploratory factor analysis, and it was found that authenticity has five different facets: The results of the conformity factor analysis confirmed aesthetic, cultural, environmental, personal experiences, and service as authenticating factors. In addition, the properties and the potential applications of the scale are discussed.

Keywords: Authenticity, scale development and validation, tourism

---

* Corresponding Author - rohan.laksiri@gmail.com

Introduction

In a tourism management context, authenticity is the topic of this study. Authenticity is a conceptual and theoretical concept that is used in academic works from various academic disciplines (Le et al., 2019; McTighe et al., 2020). The theories have been around for a while and are becoming more and more popular in the literature on tourism management. The review of the literature revealed conflicting and occasionally incoherent definitions. This study examines authenticity in the context of tourism management. Authenticity is a conceptual and theoretical concept that is utilized in scholarly works across a variety of academic disciplines. In the tourism management literature, the concepts have been in use for a long time and are gaining popularity daily. The literature review has uncovered competing and sometimes contradictory definitions of authenticity that highlight various facets and distinct ways of perceiving authenticity. In the academic literature on the topic at hand, there is no commonly accepted definition. As indicated by the available literature, at least twenty elements have been used to conceptualize authenticity. The vast literature on authenticity and tourism management raises the question of whether anything new warrants additional research on authenticity in tourism management. Nonetheless, Grayson and Martinec (2004), Kadirov (2010), and Wang (1999) identify a significant gap in the literature on tourism management. They claimed that there are few studies that attempt to empirically measure the concept. highlighting various characteristics and disparate approaches to understanding authenticity.

In academic studies on the topic at hand, there is no generally accepted definition. At least 20 items that have been used to conceptualize authenticity can be found in the literature that is currently available. The extensive body of literature on authenticity and tourism management raises the question of whether anything new exists that justifies more research on authenticity in this area. However, a significant gap in the literature on tourism management has been noted by Grayson and Martinec (2004), Kadirov (2010), and Wang (1999). They asserted that there aren't many studies that make an empirical attempt to measure the construct. In addition, authenticity is widely used in tourism studies, but the concept is not operationally defined. This lack of an operational definition in the literature on tourism management has consequences and impedes its practical application (Wang, 1999). Due to their problematically contradictory positions, some authorities have suggested abandoning the concepts in "in" studies considering the current circumstance. Nonetheless, some suggestions for the development of a standard scale could provide a solution to the dilemma, as researchers and decision-makers would have a tool for measuring authenticity. The measurement of variables with a suitable measuring device is of the utmost importance. Day and Montgomery (1999) represent an essential area of research (Lee and Hooley, 2005).

Kuhn (1970) and Latour (1987) argue that for science to advance, researchers within the field of study must reach a consensus on the definition of the basic constructs and variables of the theory under investigation. Having a measurement scale will eventually be mutually beneficial for both the business and research communities. This research aims to develop a measurement scale for authenticity in tourism management literature, filling a significant gap in the field. The primary objective of this study is to develop a theoretical and operational construct for latent variables that are indicative of authenticity as well as a measurement scale for authenticity in the context of tourism management, utilizing 20 dimensions identified through a literature review.

This study employs both traditional frameworks, such as those proposed by Churchill Jr. (1979), and a modern statistical technique, exploratory factor analysis, for assessing the dimensionality of developing measures. This paper is divided into five sections that outline the steps followed throughout. The concept of authenticity is defined in the first section, and the process of item generation is detailed in the second part. In the third section, the procedures used to identify the factor structure of authenticity with authenticity scale-purification are discussed. The reliability and validity of the authenticity measurement scale are evaluated using statistical techniques suggested by the literature. The final section examines the scale's potential applications.

Literature Survey

Various academic disciplines have formulated distinct definitions of authenticity. Since "authenticity" is a concept used across disciplines, there is no accepted definition among researchers. Thus, the concept of authenticity is defined differently in various academic contexts. Shomoossi and Ketabi (2007) The frequently cited definition of Trilling (1972) in a museum context continued to explain the concept as follows: "where persons expert in such matters test whether objects... are what they appear to be or are claimed to be, and therefore worth the price that is being asked for them or, if this has already been paid for them, worth the admiration they are receiving," they shall be considered authentic (1972:93). The preceding explanation emphasizes the importance of originality and has been deemed authentic by a qualified individual. Moreover, it justifies the premium price paid for authentic items. This explanation highlights the superiority of things regarded as genuine (Trilling, 2009). According to Cornet (1975), authentic objects are those created for a traditional purpose by a member of the tradition in accordance with the traditional form. It also denotes as unauthentic any deviation from the traditional form. For living history specialists, "authenticity requires either historical accuracy or symbolic isomorphism." "A piece of living history is authentic if it accurately simulates or recreates a specific place, scene, or event from the past" (Handler and Saxton, 1988). Inauthentic displays "symbolize" the past, as opposed to "re-creating" it (Worthen, 1984, cited in Handler and Saxton, 1988). This is a universal truth (Cohen, 1988; MacCannell, 1973; Naoi, 2004).

Literature pertaining to authenticity reveals that it has primarily been regarded as a value (Olsen, 2002). According to social anthropologists, authenticity is a motivating force to do, purchase, or consume something (Kolar and Zabkar, 2010; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Naoi, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Cohen, 1988; Leigh et al., 2006). Others who have studied the behavior of business firms have asserted the importance of authenticity in ensuring profit and market equilibrium (Peterson, 2005). Sociologists who have studied the role of agent and agency in the construction of authenticity have emphasized the importance of perception, and according to them, authenticity relates to the individual who seeks authenticity (Cohen, 1988). Concerned with the decision-making of individuals in the expectational domain, scholars have highlighted the significance of their decision to use or purchase a good or an experience (Steiner and Reisinger, 2006). Grayson and Martinez's perspective differs significantly from traditional conceptions of authenticity, and they emphasize the importance of authenticity in indexing and iconizing goods and services in relation to personal experience (2004a). Scholars who rely on existentialist philosophical literature have emphasized that authenticity is to be equated with experiencing the whole, and they have suggested that authenticity is a holistic concept and that all facets of experience must be considered when measuring authenticity (Handler and Saxton, 1988). Literature on organizational behavior has highlighted the influence of input and

environmental factors in determining an individual's authenticity (Brown and Menasche, 2005; Tatsuki, 2006). They differentiated between input authenticity and task authenticity. In addition, they thus highlighted the dichotomous opposition between authenticity and inauthenticity. The binary oppositional viewpoint aids in the identification of ambiguous areas between authenticity and inauthenticity.

The literature regarding the dimensions has revealed the degree of authenticity. Shomoossi and Ketabi (2007) have proposed five levels of authenticity in the case of input, viz., 1. genuine, 2. altered, 3. adapted, 4. simulated inauthenticity, and 5. inauthenticity. The literature on authenticity has also revealed the necessity of defining the concept based on its inherent qualities and characteristics in the appropriate contexts, which opens the door to pragmatic variations of authenticity (Shomoossi and Ketabi 2007). Authenticity was once considered synonymous with originality or genuineness. Social constructivists measured authenticity using the sense of "original" and "real" (Bruner, 1994; Hughes, 1995). cultural and historical integrity (Littrell et al., 1993) and genuineness (Kolden et al., 2011, Schaefer and Pettijohn, 2006, Schnellbacher and Leijssen, 2009) in judging authenticity. Harter et al. (1996) considered authenticity to be real and true. Authenticity, according to Grayson and Martinec (2004), is defined as a connection to history and an accurate reproduction of the original.

They believe that consumers judge the authenticity of brands and products based on subjective assessments of tangible and intangible product attributes as well as brand essence. Three-dimensional, sustainable, and human elements were considered as new additions to Boyle's (2004) theory; apart from the new additions, he agrees with Gilmore and Pine (2007) that unspun, ethical, natural, honest, and beautiful are dimensions of an authentic brand. The consumer behavior literature that draws from the nature of human perspective highlighted the inherent characteristics of people to see the world in terms of real or fake and thus their proclivity to buy the genuine rather than the fake.

Different research traditions impose distinct authenticity standards and definitions. Grayson and Martinec (2004) acknowledged the dual nature of genuine products. When an object has a genuine connection to history, it has "indexical authenticity." When a product is an exact replica of the original, it has iconic authenticity because it has the same physical characteristics as the original. Wang (1999) outlined five characteristics of authenticity: First, there is "no absolute and static original or origin upon which the authenticity of originals is based" (p. 355). Second, "our conceptions of origins are constructed to meet current needs and are contested" (p. 355). Third, "the authentic experience is pluralistic" (p. 355). Fourth, "authenticity is frequently attributed to objects that conform to stereotypical images" (p. 355). Authenticity reflects the expectations of tourists (Kelner, 2001). Lastly, things currently considered to be inauthentic may be deemed authentic in the future; this process is known as "emergent authenticity" (Wang, 1999). The constructivist point transforms authenticity from an inherent property of toured objects to a set of socially constructed symbolic connotations communicated by the objects (Kelner, 2001). Reisinger and Steiner (2006) reached the conclusion that the scholars' divergent perspectives on authenticity are contradictory and incompatible. Considering this, they proposed that future researchers rectify their careless application of the concept. At this time, we concur with Belhassen and Caton's (2006) response to this proposal, in which they assert that authenticity is not objective but rather a subjective evaluation by tourists and tourism and hospitality managers that plays a significant role. Therefore, it is the responsibility of academic researchers to empirically investigate the concept and develop theories by connecting it to other

significant antecedents. The pursuit of authenticity in guest experiences is recognized as a significant industry trend. Authenticity is becoming increasingly important in the tourism and tourist decisions. Therefore, authenticity can be understood as a precursor to tourist behavior, as it is a significant driver of value, motivation, and interest (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Leigh et al., 2006; Yeoman et al., 2007). The focus of Johnson's (2007) discussion of authenticity is Thai tourism. According to Johnson, the relationship between authenticity and the tourist's identity is close. This perspective draws attention to the tourist's expectation of being distinguished from other tourists in the presence of locals, as well as his expectation of being accepted by those same locals. According to this explanation of authenticity in the context of tourism management, the tourist assumes a new identity when exposed to authentic tourist experiences. Johnson challenges authenticity by asserting that a tourist's preconceived image of a destination may differ from its actual appearance. Johnson's work is significant for numerous reasons. He explained that tourists arrive with preconceived notions of authenticity and may experience anxiety if their experience does not match their preconceived notions. Moreover, he asserts that authentic experiences contribute to the development of the tourist's identity. Several studies have highlighted the significance of authenticity in tourism marketing. For instance, Chambers and McIntosh (2008) discuss how authenticity contributes to a competitive advantage in medical tourism. They argue that rather than attempting to compete with other destinations, particularly Asian destinations, the English-speaking Caribbean must identify and develop unique resources to promote medical tourism on the Caribbean Islands. They emphasize, on the other hand, that postmodern tourists seek exploitable authentic experiences. Chambers and McIntosh's (2008) conception of authenticity relates to the psychological uniqueness of the destination, which is in the mind of the tourist, as well as physical authenticity, which consists of native herbal remedies in the region (make this bit clear). Their research indicates that there are both supply and demand sides to the concept of authenticity.

Authenticity can also be considered a perception, and there are physical characteristics that contribute to a tourist's perception of authenticity. Consequently, authenticity is comparable to quality. According to Chambers and McIntosh (2008), there are three perspectives on authenticity: 1) objectivism, 2) constructivism, and 3) postmodernism. Objectivists believe that there are authentically defined real places, people, objects, and events. Authenticity, according to structuralists, is plural and the result of social construction. According to this viewpoint, there is no single authentic product. Postmodernists question the concept of "reality" itself, and they view authenticity as a power-based construct. However, these schools of thought demonstrate that authenticity has both controllable (physical) and psychological components. Eraqi (2006) discusses authenticity in relation to the quality of services. In a summary of the six standards for tourist products or services proposed by the World Tourism Organization, he asserts that "authenticity is the most difficult and subjective quality criterion to achieve" (p. 478). Although these definitions fail to capture the enumerated characteristics of authenticity, this shortcoming is shared by all others. In the past 40 years, the concept of authenticity in the (literary) study of tourism has undergone three shifts, including objectivist, social constructionist, and existentialist (Kelner, 2001). Boorstin (1964) criticizes the notion of authenticity as an "objective" concept based on knowledge of location and culture. Contrary to Boorstin (2012) and Jackson (1999), there are no examples of "pure" societies upon which concepts of authenticity can be based, as all cultures change. Therefore, Hughes (1995) asserts that authenticity should be considered a social construct. Using external evaluation criteria, objective authenticity can be objectively demonstrated as authentic, whereas constructed authenticity considers how authenticity is

perceived by tourists; thus, they deal with staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1992). "In the past, when an old-time traveler visited a country, what he saw was likely what actually occurred there... Today, what [the tourist] sees is typically specimens collected and embalmed especially for him or attractions that have been staged for him" (Boorstin (1961), p. 102 in Kelner (2001). Brown and Menasche (2005) attempt to explain authenticity as a binary concept (authentic or not authentic), claiming degrees of authenticity while dividing authenticity into input and task authenticity branches. This definition is adopted for the purposes of this tourism management after-work study. Authenticity is a multidimensional phenomenon that is provided by traditional locals and evaluated as authentic by an expert receiver (a tourist), with or without the assistance of a local. Authenticity is a concept that satisfies tourists and makes them willing to pay a premium price for a recipient in a tourist setting.

Methodology

Data collection

The data collection procedure consisted of two stages, with the first involving 123 respondents from academia and the hotel and tourism industries. The self-administered questionnaire is comprised of two parts: the first is for scale development, and the second is for identifying object-based authenticity items. In the second phase of data collection, students majoring in business management, humanities, and social sciences were surveyed. The total number of respondents was 100, with both disciplines being equally represented. Self-administered questionnaire employing a seven-point Likert scale constituted the research instrument. They responded to the 20-item structured survey subjected to exploratory factor analysis.

Sample profile

The profile of the survey respondents who participated in the first phase of data collection is presented in Table 1. On the basis of a rationale, university professors, professionals, and university students were selected as survey respondents. First, the nature of the research necessitated familiarity with the term; the higher the education level, the greater the likelihood that the individual has heard or used the term previously. Second, the study requires the respondent's serious commitment, dedication, and rational thought, which would be more readily available if the sample consisted of individuals with higher levels of education. Although tourism-related concepts should be tested with a sample of tourists, academics, professionals, and students were chosen on purpose because this is merely the first in a series of articles that will validate the measurement scale. In the future, a few more articles will be published using tourists as the study sample to test the reliability of the measurement scale. More than half (56.9%) of the total participants were university academics, while the remainder were employees in the travel and tourism industry. The majority of university academic respondents were senior lecturers, while less than 10% were lecturers. Regarding employees in the travel and tourism industry, 20.8% of respondents held managerial positions, while the remainder held supervisory positions. In the second phase of data collection, 100 students from both the business management and humanities disciplines participated.

Table 1: Sample Profile

Position	Profession		Total
	University Academics	Travel and Tourism Industry Employees	
Lecturer	6		6
Senior Lecturer	64		64
Manager		11	11
Supervisor		42	42
Total	70	53	123

Analytical Tools

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, as well as model fit analyses, have been conducted to establish reliability, validity, and model fit. SPSS 21 and Smart PLS were utilised to conduct these statistical analyses. For the purpose of presenting data regarding object-based authenticity in relation to a hotel experience, descriptive statistics were employed.

Scale Item Generation

To measure the extent and precise nature of authenticity, different dimensions of authenticity must be theoretically and operationally recognised. The development of a multidimensional scale should (1) capture the different aspects of authenticity that can be incorporated into items, and (2) provide an understanding of the nature and relationship between authenticity dimensions. Until such a validated instrument is developed and made available for research in the particular field of study, the different criteria of authenticity among studies will impede the generalizability of research findings and the combining of findings.

On the basis of the literature, items representing various aspects of authenticity were identified, and a summary of the literature findings regarding these items is provided in Table 2. Initially, 34 items were discovered, but their number was reduced due to the fact that some items captured nearly identical characteristics. The final result was 22 items, of which nearly half were positive and the rest were negative. Utilized was a seven-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

Table 2: Authenticity Items

Items	Source
Intriguing	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Romantic	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Lively	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Pure	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Attractive	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Special	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Artful	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Cheerful	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Peaceful	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Gilmore (2007)
Iconic	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Kadirov (2010), Napoli et al. (2014)
Genuine	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Bruhn et al. (2012), Morhart et al. (2015), (Kadirov, 2010), Napoli et al. (2014), Ramkissoon and Uysal (2011), Boyle (2004), Tatsuki (2006)
Professional	Gilmore and Pine (2007), Boyle (2004)
Smiling	Boyle (2004), Gilmore (2007)
Beautiful	Boyle (2004), Gilmore (2007)
Honest	Boyle (2004), Bruhn et al. (2012), Gilmore (2007), Morhart et al. (2015)
Natural	Boyle (2004), Kadirov (2010), Napoli et al. (2014), Rogers and Medley (1988)
Skilled	Boyle (2004), Bruhn et al. (2012)
Creative	Boyle (2004), Bruhn et al. (2012)

Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's coefficients were calculated to determine the measurement items' consistency. The Alpha coefficients for each dimension have been determined and are presented in Table 3. The internal consistency of these scales is supported by values above 0.8 (Field, 2009). In addition, the commonalities exceeded 0.65, indicating the data's high reliability.

Table 3: Reliability Statistics

Factor	N	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Experience	5	Intriguing, Romantic, Professional, Lively, Pure	0.897
Aesthetic	6	Iconic, Special, Beautiful, Artful, Attractive, Cheerful	0.928
Environmental	2	Creative and Peaceful	0.957
Cultured	3	Honest, Natural and Genuine	0.955
Service	2	Skilled and Smiling	0.910

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin value was calculated to be 0.86, and values above 0.8 are considered acceptable, indicating adequate sample size (Field, 2009, p. 647).

Five factors with eigenvalues greater than one explained 93.15 % of the variance utilising the principal components factor analysis. Two items with commonalities less than 0.6 were identified and eliminated (Hair et al., 2006; Tucker and Lewis, 1973). The varimax-rotated factor pattern suggests that the first factor relates to is "Experience" (5 items). The second consideration is aesthetics (6 items). The third factor consists of environmental characteristics (2 items). The fourth factor has to do with "Cultured" (3 items). The fifth element of authenticity is designated as "Service" (2 items). Table 4 displays the results of the authenticity factor analysis.

Table 4: Authenticity Dimensions

Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				
	Experience	Aesthetic	Environmental	Cultured	Service
Intriguing	.980				
Romantic	.974				
Professional	.957				
Lively	.950				
Pure	.804				
Iconic		.912			
Special		.893			
Beautiful		.890			

Artful	.782			
Attractive	.765			
Cheerful	.748			
Creative		.962		
Peaceful		.955		
Honest			.954	
Natural			.934	
Genuine			.928	
Skilled				.911
Smiling				.826

Measurement model

First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted to establish confidence in the measurement model, which identifies the relationship between the observed variables and the underlying constructs, as suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the measurement model for authenticity, there are 18 measurement variables which capture five latent factors. At the 0.05 level of significance, all indicators of the t-value associated with each of the completely standardised loadings exceed the critical value. The measurement model has a one-dimensional measurement of constructs in which each observed variable is associated with a single latent variable (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Although Bentler and Chou (1987) stated that having two measures per factor could be problematic, covariance between the factors in the analysis permit the identification of a workable system of equations (Baumgartner and Homburg, 1996). Unidimensionality is "among the most important and fundamental assumptions of measurement theory" (Hattie, 1985, p. 139). Unidimensionality, as stated by Gerbing and Anderson (1988), refers to the existence of a single trait or construct underlying a set of items. According to Bagozzi (1980), "the unidimensionality of a variable is a logical and empirical necessity" (p. 126). To be considered unidimensional, measures must fulfil two specific conditions. First, an indicator must be significantly associated with the latent variable, and second, it must represent a single factor (Phillips and Bagozzi, 1986). A five-dimensional, 18-item CFA model was estimated using Smart PLS, which guides refinements and ensures internal and external construct consistency (Anderson et al., 1987, Garver and Mentzer, 1999). In the sections that follow, statistical requirements for providing unidimensionality are presented in detail, along with the items used to measure authenticity.

Validity Analysis

To determine the validity of the IM construct, the average variance extracted (AVE), maximum shared variance (MSV), and average shared variances (ASV) of all 11 dimensions were calculated.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is defined as the extent to which items from a latent factor correlate positively with other items from the same (factor). The five latent factors demonstrated high convergent validity, with AVEs exceeding the acceptable limit of 0.5 in all cases.

Table 5: Convergent Validity

Dimension	AVE (More than 0.5)
Aesthetic	0.871
Cultured	0.825
Environmental	0.975
Experience	0.757
Service	0.991

Discriminant Validity

The extent to which a construct is truly distinct from other constructs is defined as discriminant validity. Thus, high discriminant validity indicates that a construct is distinct and captures phenomena that other measures do not. If two or more factors in a construct are distinct from each other, the AVE of each factor should be greater than its shared variance (Fornell and Larcker, 1981, Hair et al., 2006). Table 6 shows the AVE and shared variance estimates for all 05 latent factors. The values demonstrate that all dimensions of authenticity are distinct from one another, establishing the construct's discriminant validity.

Table 6: Discriminant Validity: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Aesthetic	Cultured	Environmental	Experience	Service
Aesthetic	0.933				
Cultured	-0.035	0.908			
Environmental	-0.041	0.064	0.987		
Experience	0.061	0.097	-0.143	0.870	
Service	0.209	0.160	-0.029	-0.012	0.995

Cross-loading aids in determining discriminant validity in CFA. To examine factor loadings and residuals, two important steps are taken. Table 7 shows the cross-loading for this study, and factor loadings are greater than 0.810, with no high residuals greater than 0.2. As a result, discriminant validity has been established.

Table 7: Cross Loadings

	Aesthetic	Cultured	Environmental	Experience	Service
Artful	0.942	-0.116	-0.057	0.072	0.150
Attractive	0.939	-0.042	-0.008	0.102	0.226
Beautiful	0.950	0.004	-0.100	0.020	0.173
Iconic	0.932	0.034	-0.062	0.005	0.175
Cheerful	0.908	-0.042	0.047	0.116	0.227
Special	0.927	-0.023	-0.057	0.072	0.150
Natural	0.002	0.934	0.048	0.057	0.156
Genuine	-0.065	0.830	0.067	0.139	0.110
Honest	-0.028	0.955	0.057	0.065	0.170
Creative	-0.048	0.063	0.989	-0.147	-0.033
Peaceful	-0.032	0.063	0.986	-0.134	-0.024
Intriguing	0.028	-0.033	-0.155	0.843	-0.105
Lively	0.088	0.151	-0.123	0.943	0.036
Romantic	-0.004	-0.023	-0.104	0.810	-0.056
Professional	-0.036	-0.048	-0.133	0.819	-0.098
Pure	0.088	0.175	-0.122	0.926	0.041
Skilled	0.194	0.162	-0.030	-0.007	0.995
Smiling	0.191	0.157	-0.028	-0.018	0.995

Henseler et al. (2015) use a simulation study to show that the Fornell-Larcker criterion and cross-loading do not reliably detect the lack of discriminant validity in common research situations. As a result, these authors propose an alternative approach to assessing discriminant validity based on the multitrait-multimethod matrix: the heterotrait-monotrait correlation ratio (HTMT).

If the HTMT value is less than 0.90, discriminant validity between two reflective constructs has been established (Henseler et al., 2015). Because the HTMT value meets the condition, discriminant validity is confirmed. Table 8 displays the HTMT values for the latent factors.

Table 8: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)	Aesthetic	Cultured	Environmental	Experience	Service
Aesthetic					
Cultured	0.072				
Environmental	0.067	0.068			
Experience	0.073	0.139	0.150		
Service	0.208	0.170	0.030	0.079	

Reliability statistics

The internal consistency of a scale's measure of the latent construct is referred as reliability (Churchill Jr and Peter, 1984, Peter, 1979). Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha is still the most widely used and widely accepted index for determining a scale's internal consistency (Peter 1979). A higher alpha correlates with greater item covariance or homogeneity and captures the sampling domain adequately (Churchill Jr, 1979). Although there is no agreement on how large it should be, anything greater than 0.7 is considered reliable. Cronbach Alpha coefficients range from 0.892 to 0.997 in Table 8, indicating that the set of items is highly reliable.

Table 9: Composite Reliability

	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability
Aesthetic	0.971	0.976
Cultured	0.892	0.934
Environmental	0.975	0.987
Experience	0.933	0.939
Service	0.990	0.995

Construction (composite) reliability (CR) should be reported in addition to Cronbach Alpha. It determines the construct's composite reliability and a value of 0.7 or higher indicates good construct reliability (CR). The squared sum of the factor loadings for each construct and the sum of the error variance terms are used to calculate CR (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The CR values in Table 9 show that all dimensions have high construct reliabilities.
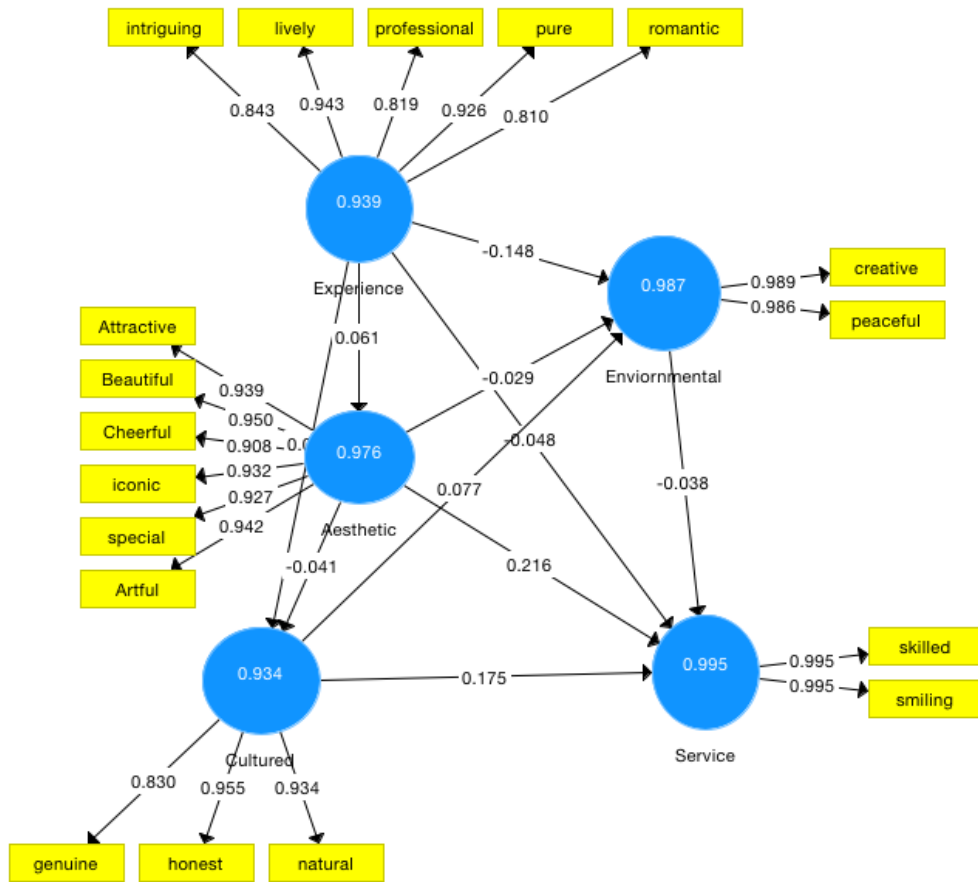
Figure 1: Measurement model

The significance of each item/parameter included in the model is determined by screening the regression weight and estimating the significance. The regression weights of all 18 variables were found to be highly significant at $p < 0.001$ in the tested model of this study, with values ranging between 0.810 and 0.995. These findings indicate that all variables considered are relevant and should be kept in the model. The standardised regression weights of all model parameters are shown in Figure 1, along with the composite reliability statistics.

Discussion and Conclusions

Authenticity, as defined by researchers, is a complex concept with numerous theoretical definitions. It has been operationalised and used extensively for various meanings in various contexts. Despite the general disagreement among modernists, symbolic-interpretivism, and postmodernists, there is additional disagreement in the various domains in which the construct is used. Furthermore, this study contends that different notions and aspects of authenticity should

not be avoided, but rather exposed and studied more thoroughly in order to better understand and possibly employ them.

In terms of object-based and existential perspectives, each object has a certain level of authenticity. The degree of authenticity may vary depending on the object. As a result, a certain level of authenticity is required. The authenticity of an object is determined by the person who defines the degree, so perceived authenticity is more important; it is an evaluative judgment that can be served as a performance indicator in the same way that quality and satisfaction do.

This study looked into the concept of authenticity, which is theoretically very well-developed but lacks a strong and valid instrument to measure. To achieve the study's goal, quantitative analyses were performed. The emphasis on scale development arose from a widespread concern that authenticity, as the primary quest, target, and inquiry in both basic and applied domains of research, has lagged behind other areas such as quality, loyalty, and satisfaction in the development and application of theory and practice. It is clear from the literature that no standard scaling procedure has been followed (where). Although there have been few empirical attempts to measure authenticity, they have arbitrarily combined items without providing a rationale for the selection of items included in their scales. This study aims to address these shortcomings by developing a multi-item scale for authenticity, advancing the literature on the subject, and presenting a systematic process for validating new scales in future studies. The use of standardised measures for authenticity allows for comparisons and the development and testing of theories that use authenticity as a construct.

Authenticity encompasses a variety of dimensions. The findings of authenticity are divided into five categories: Aesthetic, Cultural, Environmental, Experience, and Service. Today, every experience combines tangible, intangible, and experiential elements. All of the elements are important in determining authenticity.

The aesthetic aspect of authenticity captures the object's artful, attractive, beautiful, iconic, cheerful, and unique characteristics. Aesthetic aspects of the experience should be prioritised in the modern experience economy (Leslie et al., 2015). The shape of an object is the primary medium of aesthetic communication to the customer, but colour, texture, material, and other visual properties are also important. These object properties, when combined, leave an impression on customers and elicit emotions (Yadav et al., 2013).

Culture is a process of learning and indoctrination by environmental actors towards specific phenomena in the environment. It includes norms, beliefs and faiths, and behavioural patterns. The literature on culture has shed light on three critical aspects of the culturizing process: knowing, feeling, and evaluating. For this research, cultural dimensions of consumer behaviour are defined as the process of knowing, feeling, and evaluating certain things based on cultural habits. Thus, culture is defined here as natural, genuine, and honest things learned. In the customer's mind, there may be a reality that is natural, honest, or genuine that they have already learned. Historically, genuine and honest characteristics have played an important role in authenticity studies. Authenticity in behavioural sciences such as sociology and political science refers to the leader's genuine and honest behaviour; this has eventually passed into consumer behaviour where he evaluates a product.

The consumption environment is most important in an experience economy. The environmental dimension of authenticity includes elements of creativity and peace. According to Lovelock (2011), the service environment should be both creative and peaceful. It elicits various consumer emotions and determines the level of service quality. According to Bitner (1992), the service environment can influence customers' emotional, cognitive, and physiological responses, which in turn influence their evaluations and behaviours. Baker (1986) distinguishes three environmental elements: ambient, design, and social, all of which require creative and peaceful enhancements. Creative and peaceful elements do not have to be limited to service encounters; they can also be applied to physical objects.

Authenticity is defined by elements of experience that capture intriguing, lively, romantic, and professional elements. Experience, in which receivers feel a sense of excitement and deep enjoyment, is a part of authenticity that cannot be captured by a passive and unexciting moment of truth. "An experience occurs when a company uses services as the stage and goods as props to intentionally engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event" (Pine and Gilmore (1998), p. 98). Experiences leave an impression. As a result, elements such as intriguing, lively, romantic, and professional parts are important in determining authenticity.

The authenticity dimension of service explains skilled and smiling people. The main determinant of customer satisfaction in the service encounter is the service worker (Bitner, 1992, Bitner et al., 1994, Frazer Winsted, 2000). The importance of smiling service staff is emphasised by Barger and Grandey (2006), Groth et al. (2009), and (Söderlund and Rosengren, 2004). On the other hand, it is widely accepted that skilled people generate more satisfaction, quality, loyalty, and authenticity, as this study demonstrates.

This study reveals certain important attributes that respondents reported when assessing the authenticity of the given objects in a hotel service or experience. According to the report, the attributes that the person evaluates may change as the object under consideration changes. The dimensions in Table 4 will be more useful for someone researching authenticity about a hotel experience.

References

Anderson, J. C., & Gerbing, D. W. (1988). Structural equation modeling in practice: A review and recommended two-step approach. *Psychological bulletin*, *103*(3), 411. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.103.3.411

Anderson, J. C., Gerbing, D. W., & Hunter, J. E. (1987). On the assessment of unidimensional measurement: Internal and external consistency, and overall consistency criteria. *Journal of marketing research*, *24*(4), 432-437.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224378702400412

Bagozzi, R. P. (1980). *Causal models in marketing*. Wiley.

Baker, J. (1986). The role of the environment in marketing services: The consumer perspective. *The services challenge: Integrating for competitive advantage*, *1*(1), 79-84.

Barger, P. B., & Grandey, A. A. (2006). Service with a smile and encounter satisfaction: Emotional contagion and appraisal mechanisms. *Academy of management journal*, *49*(6), 1229-1238. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2006.23478695

Baumgartner, H., & Homburg, C. (1996). Applications of structural equation modeling in marketing and consumer research: A review. *International journal of Research in Marketing*, *13*(2), 139-161. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0167-8116(95)00038-0

Belhassen, Y., & Caton, K. (2006). Authenticity matters. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *33*(3), 853-856. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2006.03.009

Bentler, P. M., & Chou, C. P. (1987). Practical issues in structural modeling. *Sociological methods & research*, *16*(1), 78-117. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0049124187016001004

Bitner, M. J. (1992). Servicescapes: The impact of physical surroundings on customers and employees. *Journal of marketing*, *56*(2), 57-71. https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299205600205

Bitner, M. J., Booms, B. H., & Mohr, L. A. (1994). Critical service encounters: The employee's viewpoint. *Journal of marketing*, *58*(4), 95-106. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224299405800408

Boorstin, D. (1961). The Image: a guide to pseudo-events. *America 1961*.

Boorstin, D. (1964). The image: a guide to pseudo-events in America Vintage. *New York*.

Boorstin, D. J. (1992). *The image: A guide to pseudo-events in America*. Vintage.

Boyle, D. (2003). Authenticity: Brands, fakes, spin and the lust for real life.

Brown, S. & Menasche, L. (2005). Defining Authenticity. Accessed July 29, 2006 at http://www.as.ysu.edu/~english/BrownMenasche.doc

Bruhn, M., Schoenmüller, V., Schäfer, D., & Heinrich, D. (2012). Brand authenticity: Towards a deeper understanding of its conceptualization and measurement. Advances in consumer research, 40

Bruner, E. M. (1994). Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: A critique of postmodernism. *American anthropologist*, *96*(2), 397-415. http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/aa.1994.96.2.02a00070

Chambers, D., & McIntosh, B. (2008). Using authenticity to achieve competitive advantage in medical tourism in the English-speaking Caribbean. *Third World Quarterly*, *29*(5), 919-937. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01436590802106056

Churchill Jr, G. A., & Peter, J. P. (1984). Research design effects on the reliability of rating scales: A meta-analysis. *Journal of marketing research*, *21*(4), 360-375. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224378402100402

Churchill Jr, G. A. (1979). A paradigm for developing better measures of marketing constructs. *Journal of marketing research*, *16*(1), 64-73. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224377901600110

Cohen, E. (1988). Authenticity and commoditization in tourism. *Annals of tourism research*, *15*(3), 371-386. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(88)90028-X

Cornet, J. (1975). African art and authenticity. *African Arts*, *9*(1), 52-55. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3334983

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *psychometrika*, *16*(3), 297-334. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555

Day, G. S., & Montgomery, D. B. (1999). Charting new directions for marketing. *Journal of marketing*, *63*(4_suppl1), 3-13. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/00222429990634s102

Eraqi, M. I. (2006). Tourism services quality (TourServQual) in Egypt: The viewpoints of external and internal customers. *Benchmarking: an international journal*. https://doi.org/10.1108/14635770610676308

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of marketing research*, *18*(1), 39-50. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224378101800104

Garver, M.S. and Mentzer, J.T. (1999) Logistics Research Methods: Employing Structural Equation Modelling to Test for Construct Validity. Journal of Business Logistics, 20, 33-57.

Gerbing, D. W., & Anderson, J. C. (1988). An updated paradigm for scale development incorporating unidimensionality and its assessment. *Journal of marketing research*, *25*(2), 186-192. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002224378802500207

Gilmore, A. (2007). Authentic materials and authenticity in foreign language learning. *Language teaching*, *40*(2), 97-118. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004144

Gilmore, J. H., & Pine, B. J. (2007). Authenticity: What consumers really want. *Harvard Business Press.*

Grayson, K., & Martinec, R. (2004). Consumer perceptions of iconicity and indexicality and their influence on assessments of authentic market offerings. *Journal of consumer research*, *31*(2), 296-312. http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/422109

Groth, M., Hennig-Thurau, T., & Walsh, G. (2009). Customer reactions to emotional labor: The roles of employee acting strategies and customer detection accuracy. *Academy of management Journal*, *52*(5), 958-974. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.44634116

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2006). Multivariate data analysis (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson University Press.

Handler, R., & Saxton, W. (1988). Dyssimulation: reflexivity, narrative, and the quest for authenticity in" living history". *Cultural Anthropology*, *3*(3), 242-260. http://dx.doi.org/10.1525/can.1988.3.3.02a00020

Harter, S., Marold, D. B., Whitesell, N. R., & Cobbs, G. (1996). A model of the effects of perceived parent and peer support on adolescent false self behavior. *Child development*, *67*(2), 360-374. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1131819

Hattie, J. (1985). Methodology review: assessing unidimensionality of tests and ltenls. *Applied psychological measurement*, *9*(2), 139-164.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/014662168500900204

Henseler, J., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2015). A new criterion for assessing discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, *43*(1), 115-135.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11747-014-0403-8

Hughes, G. (1995). Authenticity in tourism. *Annals of tourism Research*, *22*(4), 781-803. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(95)00020-X

Jackson, P. (1999). Commodity cultures: the traffic in things. *Transactions of the institute of British Geographers*, *24*(1), 95-108. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.0020-2754.1999.00095.x

Johnson, A. A. (2007). Authenticity, tourism, and self-discovery in Thailand: Self-creation and the discerning gaze of trekkers and old hands. *SOJOURN: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, *22*(2), 153-178. http://dx.doi.org/10.1355/SJ22-2A

Kadirov, D. Brand authenticity: Scale development and validation. Annual conference of the Australian and New ZealandMarketingAcademy, Christchurch, New Zealand, 2010.

Kelner, S. (2001). Narrative construction of authenticity in pilgrimage touring. Paper Presented at the 96th Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association Anaheim, California, 1-21.

Kolar, T., & Zabkar, V. (2010). A consumer-based model of authenticity: An oxymoron or the foundation of cultural heritage marketing?. *Tourism management*, *31*(5), 652-664. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.07.010

Kolden, G. G., Klein, M. H., Wang, C. C., & Austin, S. B. (2011). Congruence/genuineness. *Psychotherapy*, *48*(1), 65. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022064

Kuhn, T. S. (1970). Logic of discovery or psychology. *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, *4*, 1.

Latour, B. (1987). Science in action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society. *Harvard university press.*

Le, T. H., Arcodia, C., Novais, M. A., & Kralj, A. (2019). What we know and do not know about authenticity in dining experiences: A systematic literature review. *Tourism Management*, *74*, 258-275. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2019.02.012

Lee, N., & Hooley, G. (2005). The evolution of "classical mythology" within marketing measure development. *European Journal of Marketing*.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03090560510581827

Leigh, T. W., Peters, C., & Shelton, J. (2006). The consumer quest for authenticity: The multiplicity of meanings within the MG subculture of consumption. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *34*(4), 481-493.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0092070306288403

Leslie, D., Brydges, T. & Brail, S. (2015). The role of independent fashion boutiques in curating slow fashion. Spatial Dynamics in the Experience Economy.

Littrell, M. A., Anderson, L. F., & Brown, P. J. (1993). What makes a craft souvenir authentic?. *Annals of tourism research*, *20*(1), 197-215.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(93)90118-M

Lovelock, C. (2011). Services Marketing, 7/e, Pearson Education India.

MacCannell, D. (1973). Staged authenticity: Arrangements of social space in tourist settings. *American journal of Sociology*, *79*(3), 589-603.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/225585

Maccannell, D. (1992). Empty meeting grounds: The tourist papers, Psychology Press.

McTighe, J., Doubet, K. J., & Carbaugh, E. M. (2020). Designing authentic performance tasks and projects: Tools for meaningful learning and assessment. *ASCD.*

Morhart, F., Malär, L., Guèvremont, A., Girardin, F., & Grohmann, B. (2015). Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. *Journal of consumer psychology*, *25*(2), 200-218. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2014.11.006

Naoi, T. (2004). Visitors' evaluation of a historical district: The roles of authenticity and manipulation. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *5*(1), 45-63.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.thr.6040004

Napoli, J., Dickinson, S. J., Beverland, M. B., & Farrelly, F. (2014). Measuring consumer-based brand authenticity. *Journal of business research*, *67*(6), 1090-1098. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.06.001

Olsen, K. (2002). Authenticity as a concept in tourism research: The social organization of the experience of authenticity. *Tourist studies*, *2*(2), 159-182.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/146879702761936644

Peter, J. P. (1979). Reliability: A review of psychometric basics and recent marketing practices. *Journal of marketing research*, *16*(1), 6-17.

http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/3150868

Peterson, R. A. (2005). In search of authenticity. *Journal of management studies*, *42*(5), 1083-1098. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2005.00533.x

Phillips, L. W., & Bagozzi, R. P. (1986). On measuring organizational properties of distribution channels: methodological issues in the use of key informants. *Research in Marketing*, *8*(1), 313-369.

Pine, B. J., 2nd, & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. Harvard Business Review, 76(4), 97–105.

Ramkissoon, H., & Uysal, M. S. (2011). The effects of perceived authenticity, information search behaviour, motivation and destination imagery on cultural behavioural intentions of tourists. *Current Issues in Tourism*, *14*(6), 537-562. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2010.493607

Reisinger, Y., & Steiner, C. J. (2006). Reconceptualizing object authenticity. *Annals of tourism research*, *33*(1), 65-86. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2005.04.003

Rogers, C. V., & Medley Jr, F. W. (1988). Language with a purpose: Using authentic materials in the foreign language classroom. *Foreign Language Annals*, *21*(5), 467-478. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1988.tb01098.x

Schaefer, A. D., & Pettijohn, C. E. (2006). The relevance of authenticity in personal selling: Is genuineness an asset or liability?. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *14*(1), 25-35. http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/MTP1069-6679140102

Schnellbacher, J., & Leijssen, M. (2009). The significance of therapist genuineness from the client's perspective. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, *49*(2), 207-228. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022167808323601

Shomoossi, N., & Ketabi, S. (2007). A critical look at the concept of authenticity. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, *4*(1), 149-155.

Söderlund, M., & Rosengren, S. (2004). Dismantling" positive affect" and its effects on customer satisfaction: an empirical examination of customer joy in a service encounter. *The Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, *17*.

Steiner, C. J., & Reisinger, Y. (2006). Understanding existential authenticity. *Annals of tourism research*, *33*(2), 299-318. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2005.08.002

Tatsuki, D. (2006). What is authenticity. *The language teacher*, *16*(5), 17-21.

Trilling, L. 1972. Sincerity and Authenticity. London: Oxford University Press.

Trilling, L. 2009. Sincerity and authenticity, Harvard University Press.

Tucker, L. R., & Lewis, C. (1973). A reliability coefficient for maximum likelihood factor analysis. *Psychometrika*, *38*(1), 1-10. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF02291170

Wang, N. (1999). Understanding Existential Authenticity. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *26*(2), 349-370.

Winsted, F.K. (2000). Service behaviors that lead to satisfied customers. European Journal of Marketing, 34 (3/4), 399–417. https://doi.org/10.1108/03090560010311920

Worthen, W. B. (1984). Restoring the restoration. *History news*, *39*(11), 6-11.

Yadav, H. C., Jain, R., Shukla, S., Avikal, S., & Mishra, P. K. (2013). Prioritization of aesthetic attributes of car profile. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, *43*(4), 296-303. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ergon.2013.04.008

Yeoman, I., Brass, D., & McMahon-Beattie, U. (2007). Current issue in tourism: The authentic tourist. *Tourism management*, *28*(4), 1128-1138.

http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.09.012