

Do Authentic Experiences in Tourist Destinations Influence Everyday Purchase Behavior?: Moderating Effect of Destination Brand Self-congruence

Tanaka, Shoji, Associate Professor, Setsunan University, Japan

Abstract

Research has shown that authentic experiences at tourist destinations, referred to as destination authenticity, lead to increased revisit intentions and recommendations. However, studies demonstrating the impact of destination authenticity on everyday purchasing behavior are scarce. To address this research gap, based on autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory, this study re-examines the relationship between destination authenticity and purchase behavior toward brands created in tourism destinations encountered in everyday life. This study reveals that brand authenticity mediates destination authenticity's effect on the purchase intention toward destination brands. Furthermore, the effects of destination authenticity on brand authenticity, as well as brand authenticity on purchase intention, are moderated by destination brand self-congruence. The findings of this study contribute to the literature by examining the mechanisms of tourists' purchase behavior, based on autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory. In addition, it sheds light on the boundary conditions under which the impact of destination authenticity on brand authenticity and that of brand authenticity on purchase intention are enhanced.

Key words: Destination authenticity; Brand authenticity; Destination brand self-congruence; Everyday purchase behavior

1. Introduction

Destination authenticity, which refers to the authentic experience of tourist destinations, is becoming increasingly important. It goes beyond the temporary tourism experience and remains an autobiographical memory, that is, the memory of events experienced by tourists (Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick, 2012); it serves as a source of information in purchase decision-making, leading to the intention to revisit a tourist destination (Yin, Poon, and Su, 2017). Furthermore, this phenomenon has been observed not only in tourist destinations, but also in the entire service industry, such as accommodations (Mody and Hanks, 2020) and restaurants (Le, Arcodia, Novais, and Kralj, 2021). In other words, destination authenticity significantly impacts consumers' behavioral patterns and decision-making.

Destination authenticity is created by a visitor's actual experience of a place's culture, history, and atmosphere (Wang, 1999). Specifically, participation in cultural traditions (Park, Choi, and Lee, 2019) and rituals (Zhu, 2012), experiencing local food culture (Le et al., 2021), and interacting with local residents (Yi, Fu, Lin, and Sun, 2024) are considered antecedents of authenticity. These experiences go beyond mere activities at the destination and lead to tourists' authentic perceptions of the destination as they understand and empathize with its culture (Yi, Fu, Lin, and Xiao, 2022). Destination authenticity means that tourists gain a deeper experience, and this perception affects their loyalty to the place (Yi, Fu, Yu, and Jiang, 2018). This positive emotion is believed to lead to the formation of revisit intentions (Chen, Zhou, Zhan, and Zhou, 2020) and positive word-of-mouth (Deb and Lomo-David, 2021) toward an area, including its service providers. Therefore, for tourism destinations and service providers, the provision of authentic experiences has become an important marketing goal for building strong relationships with tourists. This is because the more tourists come for authentic experiences, the more valuable and competitive an area becomes, helping achieve sustainable growth.

Prior research has identified two issues that motivated this study. First, little research has been conducted on destination authenticity's effects on daily purchasing behavior. Studies have shown that destination authenticity leads to revisits and word-of-mouth intentions (Chen et al., 2020; Deb and Lomo-David, 2021). Similarly, studies show that destination authenticity leads to souvenir purchase intention (Soukhathammavong and Park, 2019; Wilkins, 2011). As authentic experiences at tourist destinations accumulate as consumer knowledge, such experiences are assumed to feed into everyday purchases. However, few studies link destination

authenticity to everyday purchases. Second, the boundary conditions under which destination authenticity influences everyday purchasing behavior are largely unknown. In the brand authenticity context, moderating effects of the degree of self-congruence between brands and consumers have been noted (Kumar and Kaushik, 2022). Therefore, this research suggests that it is necessary to examine the boundary conditions with reference to previous studies to clarify the effect of destination authenticity on purchasing behavior in everyday life.

Against this background, this study examined whether destination authenticity influences purchasing behavior in everyday life. Simultaneously, this study aims to develop the literature on authenticity using autobiographical memory (Bluck, Alea, Habermas, and Rubin, 2005) and consumer inference theory (Kardes, Posavac, and Cronley, 2004). Specifically, this study advances investigation of destination authenticity and consumer purchasing behavior in two ways. First, regarding the limitations of previous research, this study examines the relationship between destination authenticity and everyday purchasing behavior, contributing significantly to the literature by focusing on destination authenticity and everyday purchasing behavior based on autobiographical memory studies. This study assumes that brand authenticity mediates the effect of destination authenticity on everyday purchasing behavior. As experience is stored as knowledge in autobiographical memory (Yin et al., 2017), it is not surprising that authentic experience is stored as knowledge. This knowledge therefore has a direct effect on the brand as a purchase target in daily life. Furthermore, based on consumer inference theory (Kardes et al., 2004), this study posits that destination authenticity links authentic images to brands created in tourist destinations via tourist destination labels. This study assumes that this will enhance brand evaluation at the tourist destination and consequently lead to purchases.

Second, this study clarifies the influence of consumers' perceptions of destination brand self-congruence on the relationship between destination authenticity and purchasing behavior. Destination brand self-congruence is defined as the degree to which consumers perceive the image of a tourist destination as similar to their self-concept (Chen et al., 2020; Kumar and Kaushik, 2022). Consumers with a high degree of self-concordance with the image of a tourist destination behave favorably toward it (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, and Lee, 2006). Thus, this study assumes that consumers who rate their self-concept as similar to the tourist destination image will infer more favorably that the brand is authentic than consumers who do not. In other words, this study extends the understanding of the relationship between destination authenticity and everyday purchasing behavior by clarifying the moderating effect

of destination brand self-congruence.

2. Theoretical background and hypotheses

2.1 Destination authenticity

“Authenticity is related to the genuineness or truth of something (MacCannell, 2013) and is characterized by sincerity, originality (Fine, 2003), and being natural and honest (Boyle, 2003)” (Kim and Huang, 2021, p. 3). Three types of authenticity have been discussed: indexical authenticity (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) or objective authenticity (Wang, 1999), iconic authenticity (Grayson and Martinec, 2004) or constructed authenticity (Cohen, 1988; Olsen, 2002), and existential authenticity (Wang 1999). Indexical authenticity is the authenticity of something in which the object is not a copy; that is, it is believed to be the original or real thing. Iconic authenticity is based on an individual's subjective perspective that an object physically resembles the real thing (Stepchenkova and Belyaeva, 2021). Existential authenticity (Wang, 1999) is authenticity based on experiences associated with an activity (Wang, 1999). According to Grayson and Martinec (2004), who conducted a study on tourist destinations, indexical and iconic authenticity relate to whether the object is authentic or not. By contrast, existential authenticity relates to whether the consumers or tourists themselves are authentic, which is qualitatively different from other forms of authenticity.

The authenticity concept has been used in diverse categories related to tourism experiences, such as destinations (Chen et al., 2020), souvenirs (Suttikun and Meeprom, 2021), and more. This expansion in scope has inevitably led to a lack of consensus in the conceptualization of authenticity, giving rise to diverse discourses on its academic treatment (Stepchenkova and Belyaeva, 2021). Table 1 summarizes the primary studies that demonstrate the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention toward shopping and brands associated with tourism in the tourism experience context, which is the central issue here. It has been argued that authentic perceptions of a product or service in the tourism experience context lead to purchase intentions for that product or service, such as food and beverages (Kim, Youn, and Rao, 2017; Yu, Huang, Liu, and Lu, 2020) or souvenirs in tourist destinations (Sthapit, Coudounaris, and Björk, 2018; Sthapit, Björk, and Rasoolimanesh, 2022; Guo and Zhu, 2023).

In this context, theories such as the Mehrabian-Russell model (Kim et al., 2017), regulatory focus theory (Yu et al., 2020), stimulus-organization-response (Liu, Zhang, and Chen, 2022; Sthapit et al., 2022), and image congruity theory (Guo and Zhu, 2023) are used. Although their perspectives differ, these researchers agree that an authentic experience at a tourist destination has a positive effect on the products and services associated with it. Studies also confirm that this positive effect is mediated by variables such as flow experience, trust (Liu et al., 2022), personal brand identity, and social brand identity (Guo and Zhu, 2023).

However, in the context of shopping and purchase intentions during the tourism experience, few studies refer to the tourism experience and purchasing behavior in everyday life (Marques, da Silva, and Antova, 2021; Tanaka, 2024; Yin et al., 2017). Furthermore, few studies have examined the effect of destination authenticity on purchase intentions in everyday life. Moreover, the boundary conditions for this effect were not clarified. To fill this notable gap in the literature based on autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory, this study argues that destination authenticity influences positive purchase intentions toward brands created in tourist destinations encountered in daily life. This study also inferred brand authenticity from destination authenticity and assumed that brand authenticity has a positive effect on purchase intention toward the brand through mediation. Furthermore, this study demonstrated that destination brand self-congruence moderates each effect.

2.2 Autobiographical memory, consumer inference theory and conceptual framework

Following autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory, this study extends the relationship between destination authenticity and daily purchasing behavior. Autobiographical memory is a type of episodic memory that originates from an individual's life experiences (Neisser, 1988) and is mainly related to knowledge about the past self (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Autobiographical memory includes directive, self, and social functions (Bluck et al., 2005). In particular, this study focuses on the directive functions. The directive function is primarily about problem solving and planning for the future (Yin et al., 2017). Consumers consider their future purchase behavior based on past experiences and knowledge. This study predicts that destination authenticity will lead to future daily life purchasing behaviors. The reason for applying autobiographical memory as the baseline here is that it is often used in the context of tourism experiences (Jorgenson, Nickerson, Dalenberg, Angle, Metcalf, and Freimund, 2019;

<Table 1> Empirical Research on the Relationship between Authenticity and Purchase Intention in Tourism Experience.

Study	Study context	Theoretical perspective	Authenticity aspects	Explanatory mechanism(s)		Outcome variable	Key findings related to this study
				Mediator(s)	Moderator(s)		
Kim et al. (2017)	Survey of 262 Australian consumers regarding ethnic restraint	Mehrabian-Russell model	Perceived authenticity	N/T	N/T	Purchase intention	· Direct effect of perceived authenticity on purchase intention (+).
Sthapit et al. (2018)	Survey of 301 tourists regarding souvenir shopping experience in Rovaniemi	N/A	Objective authenticity	N/T	N/T	Memorable souvenir shopping experience	· Direct effect of objective authenticity on memorable souvenir shopping experience (ns).
Yu et al. (2020)	Survey of 183 US consumers regarding ethnic restaurant	Regulatory focus theory	Perceived authenticity	N/T	N/T	Purchase intention	· Direct effect of perceived authenticity on purchase intention (+).
Liu et al. (2022)	Survey of 357 Chinese consumers regarding tourism e-commerce live streaming	Stimulus-organism-response theory	Authenticity	Flow experience; Trust	N/T	Purchase intention	· Direct effect of authenticity on purchase intention (+) is mediated by flow experience (+) and trust (+).
Sthapit et al. (2022)	Survey of 304 consumers regarding souvenir shopping experience	Stimulus-organism-response theory	Objective authenticity	N/T	N/T	Memorable souvenir shopping experience	· Direct effect of objective authenticity on memorable souvenir shopping experience (ns).
Guo and Zhu (2023)	Survey of 387 tourists regarding souvenirs in China	Image congruity theory	Perceived authenticity	Personal brand identity, Social brand identity	N/T	Purchase intention	· Direct effect of perceived authenticity on purchase intention (N/T) is mediated by personal brand identity (+) and social brand identity (+).
This study	Survey of 353 Japanese consumers regarding tourism experience	Autobiographical memory; Consumer inference theory	Destination authenticity	Brand authenticity	Destination brand self-congruence	Purchase intention	· Direct effect of destination authenticity on purchase intention (+) is mediated by brand authenticity (+). · Direct effect of destination authenticity on brand authenticity is moderated by destination brand self-congruence (+). · Direct effect of brand authenticity on purchase intention is moderated by destination brand self-congruence (+).

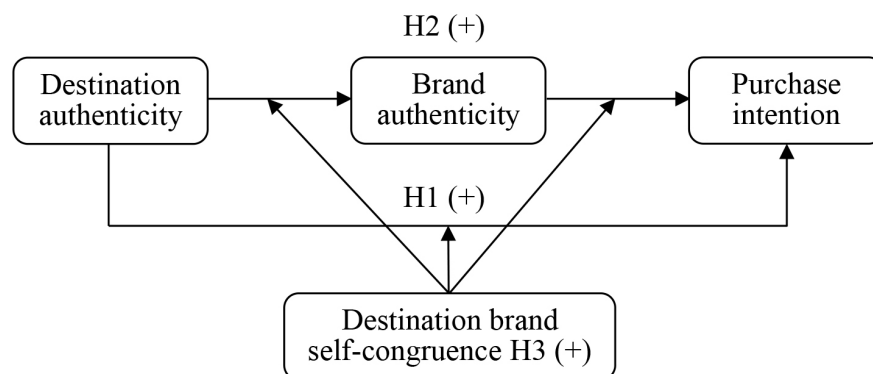
Note: This table provides an overview of the authenticity literature in terms of the empirical context and explicit focus of the examination to test the link between authenticity and purchase intention in tourism experience; aAmerican (n = 230), Indian (n = 37), Brazilian (n = 10), Italian (n = 9), Canadian (n = 6), British (n = 5), Filipino (n = 3), Irish (n = 2), Spanish (n = 1), Estonian (n = 1); N/A = Not applicable; N/T = Not tested; ns = Nonsignificant relationship. Target articles were gathered by searching the Web of Science (WoS) database. These search criteria involved selecting articles that included the keywords “authenticity,” and “tourism experience” or “tourist experience” and “shopping” or “purchase behavior” or “purchase intention,” in their titles, abstracts, or keywords. This process resulted in the extraction of 53 articles from the database. Among them, six specifically explored the relationship between authenticity and purchase intention in the tourism experience.

Yin et al., 2017; Zhang, Chen, and Jin, 2021) and destination authenticity could explain purchasing behavior in everyday life.

Consumers use information provided by firms to understand a given brand. However, consumers must make their own inferences about a brand to obtain further information and characteristics about it (Kardes et al., 2004; Tanaka, Kim, Takahashi, and Nishihara, 2024). Although there are eight types of consumer inference theories (Kardes et al., 2004), this study focused on memory-based comparative inferences, specifically schema-based deductions. A schema is an organized knowledge structure based on past experiences consisting of categorical knowledge, associative networks, implicit theories, and narrative representations (Kardes et al., 2004). In this study, if tourists encounter a brand in their daily lives that is manufactured in a tourist destination they have previously visited, the schema of the destination's authentic experiences will be activated, thus predicting that tourists will perceive the brand as authentic.

Because of applying consumer inference theory to diverse context such as store branding (Shahid, Paul, Gilal, and Ansari, 2022), brand authenticity (Lude and Prüggl, 2018), tourists' trust (Kapeš, Keča, Fugošić, and Čuić Tanković, 2022), tourists' green purchase behavior (Galeazzo, Ortiz de Mandojana, and Delgado-Ceballos, 2021), this study believes that consumer inference theory could be applied to authentic experiences in tourist destinations.

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 summarizes the assertions that 1) brand authenticity can mediate the baseline relationship between destination authenticity and brands encountered in daily life and 2) destination brand self-congruence moderates the direct effect of destination authenticity and the direct effect of brand authenticity. Specifically, this study examines the mediating role of the authenticity perception of brands encountered in daily life and extends the



<Figure 1> Conceptual Framework

association between destination authenticity and purchase intentions for brands related to tourist destinations encountered in daily life. Authentic experiences at tourist destinations have been studied as important concepts for understanding tourist behavior, such as revisit intention (Chen et al., 2020) and word-of-mouth intention (Deb and Lomo-David, 2021). Regarding shopping, studies of authenticity toward souvenirs, among other products, exist (Suttikun and Meeprom, 2021).

In addition, scholars have examined brand authenticity. It also influences purchase intention (Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, and Farrelly, 2014). This study integrates this tourism experience context with that of everyday purchasing behavior. This study conceptualizes the authentic perceptions of brands encountered in everyday life as a mediating variable for two reasons. The first is based on the consumer inference theory. Destination authenticity reflects tourists' feelings of favorable reactions to tourist destinations (Rickly, 2022). When tourists perceive authenticity toward a tourist destination, positive destination evaluations become important and accessible knowledge. Therefore, it is predictable that authentic knowledge of a tourist destination is linked in an associative network with the brands produced there (Kardes et al., 2004); they will also perceive the authenticity of that brand. The second reason is that brand authenticity's influence on purchase intention is supported by previous research (Napoli et al., 2014). However, little investigation exists on destination authenticity's impact on daily purchasing behavior. Thus, research on baseline relationships is limited. To fill this gap, this study extends the relationship between brand authenticity and purchase intentions established in previous studies with new findings while also conceptualizing destination authenticity as a leading factor. Finally, this study examines the impact of destination brand self-congruence. This refers to the extent to which consumers perceive similarities between the image of a tourist destination and their self-concept (Chen et al., 2020; Kumar and Kaushik, 2022). This study reveals the impact of destination brand self-congruence on the direct links between destination authenticity, brand authenticity, and purchase intention.

2.3 Hypothesis development

2.3.1 Direct effects

According to the concept of autobiographical memory, when consumers' autobiographical memories of their brand use experiences are activated, these influence their subsequent

information processing, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Fazio, Powell, and Williams, 1989). This study extends autobiographical memory to tourism experiences and everyday brand purchases. Specifically, when tourists encounter a brand produced at a tourist destination in their daily lives, the label of the tourist destination becomes a cue and activates their autobiographical memory of the destination's authenticity. Tourists may respond to this episodic memory of destination authenticity and form purchase intentions toward the brand (Baumgartner, Sujan, and Bettman, 1992; Sujan, Bettman, and Baumgartner, 1993). Yin et al. (2017) found that such autobiographical memories influenced purchase intentions in everyday life. Few studies have demonstrated this in the context of destination authenticity. Therefore, this study extends the idea of autobiographical memory from Yin et al.'s (2017) study. This leads to Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 1: Destination authenticity has a direct impact on everyday purchasing behavior.

2.3.2 Mediating effect

Consumer inference theory is used to extend the direct relationship between destination authenticity and everyday purchase intention of brands, as indicated in Hypothesis 1: According to consumer inference theory, destination authenticity forms a schema. This is connected by an associative network between tourist destination names and the components of the experienced authenticity (Tanaka et al., 2024). In everyday life, when a consumer by chance encounters a brand manufactured at a tourist destination, the destination's label triggers recalling a schema of destination authenticity. Using this schema, consumers evaluate a brand through top-down processing (Liu, Hultman, Eisingerich, and Wei, 2020). Consequently, when destination authenticity is linked to brands encountered in daily life in this association network, this study predicts consumers will perceive brands created in tourist destinations as authentic. Furthermore, brands perceived as authentic lead to brand purchase intentions. This shows the transmission of an image of authenticity to a brand, which increases its perceived quality (Pelet, Durrieu, and Lick, 2020). Therefore, being perceived as authentic by consumer inference may lead to purchase intentions for the brand. Therefore, based on consumer inference theory, this study integrates the concept that authenticity is inferred for brands encountered in daily life based on destination authenticity, with authenticity's positive impact on brand purchase

intention, as posited in brand authenticity research. This leads to Hypothesis 2.

Hypothesis 2: Destination authenticity positively influences everyday purchasing behavior through brand authenticity.

2.3.3 Moderating effect

The higher the degree of congruence between the consumer's self-concept and brand image, the stronger the emotional bond between the consumer and brand (Kumar and Kaushik, 2022). Thus, favorable behavior toward a brand depends on its degree of self-congruence (Kressmann et al., 2006; Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, and Nyffenegger, 2011). Self-congruence is defined as "the extent to which a consumer perceives a brand as similar to his or her self-concept" (Kumar and Kaushik, 2022, p.29). Here, using the tourism context, self-congruence is viewed as the degree to which consumers perceive a destination's image as similar to their self-concept; that is, destination brand self-congruence (Chen et al., 2020; Kumar and Kaushik, 2022). When the degree of this self-congruence is high, the emotional bond between the tourist and destination is strong. This stronger connection positively influences tourists' associations with the destination in their autobiographical memory. This study, therefore, posits that tourists are more likely to access their memories of the destination. This leads to Hypothesis 3a.

Hypothesis 3a: Destination brand self-congruence strengthens destination authenticity's direct effect on purchase intention.

Similarly, consumers with higher degrees of destination brand self-congruence respond more sensitively and strongly to tourist destination labels than consumers with lower degrees. This suggests that, through the use of schemas constructed by authentic destination experiences, which are memories characterized by emotional responses (Hosany, Sthapit, and Björk, 2022; Kim et al., 2012), top-down processing (Liu et al., 2020) will occur when evaluating brands encountered in everyday life. This leads to Hypothesis 3b.

Hypothesis 3b: Destination-brand self-congruence strengthens destination authenticity's direct effect on brand authenticity.

Furthermore, destination brand self-congruence moderates the effect of brand authenticity on purchase intention. This hypothesis' premise is that consumers with high destination brand self-congruence will trust and have high expectations for authentic brands that are consistent, always maintaining their brand values and promises. Thus, they will be more likely to prefer authentic brands (France, Merrilees, and Miller, 2016). This leads to Hypothesis 3c.

Hypothesis 3c: Destination brand self-congruence strengthens brand authenticity's direct effect on purchase intention.

3. Method: participants, procedure, and measurement

Data were collected via an online survey of monitors at a Japanese research firm. The survey was conducted between February 28 and March 1, 2023, and received 353 valid responses (Table 2). The sample is summarized as follows: The respondents consisted of 177 men (50.14%) and 176 women (49.86%), with a mean age of 46.34 years ($SD = 13.87$). A total of 198 (56.09%) worked in companies, and 60.63% of the total respondents had an income of more than 4 million yen per year. The respondents were asked to imagine the most memorable tourist destination they had visited during their sightseeing trips in the past 10 years. Afterward, the respondents answered questions regarding the relationship between the following concepts while imagining the tourist destination. All constructs were multi-item and reflective, and measured on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

The concepts and questions are presented in Table 3. The scale items used to measure destination authenticity are based on Chung, Kim, Lee, and Kim (2018). Similarly, the scale items for measuring purchase intention were adapted from Yin et al. (2017), and those for measuring brand authenticity were applied from Newman and Dhar's (2014) transferred essence scale and Napoli et al. (2014). The scale items for destination brand self-congruence were adapted from Kumar and Kaushik (2022). Each item is modified to fit the research context. Dummy variables were created for gender (male = 0, female = 1).

<Table 2> Demographic Profile of Respondents.

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	177	50.14
Female	176	49.86
Age		
20-29	61	17.28
30-39	68	19.26
40-49	70	19.83
50-59	74	20.96
60 or more	80	22.66
Occupation		
Employed	198	56.09
Self-employed	25	7.08
Student	7	1.98
Others	123	34.84
Household income		
Less than JPY 4,000,000	139	39.38
JPY 4,000,001 - 8,000,000	130	36.83
JPY 8,000,001 - 1,500,000	66	18.70
More than JPY 1,500,000	18	5.10

<Table 3> Constructs and Measurement Assessment.

Constructs and scale items	Factor loading ^a	CR	AVE
<i>Destination authenticity</i>		0.78	0.55
The tourism destination provided me with authentic experiences.	0.81		
The tourism destination provided me with exceptional experiences.	0.73		
The tourism destination provided me with unique experiences.	0.67		
<i>Brand authenticity</i>		0.83	0.63
The products made in the destination embody the origin and history associated with the destination.	0.80		
The products made in this destination contain the essence of the destination.	0.79		
The products made in the destination reflect the traditional techniques of the destination.	0.78		
<i>Destination brand self-congruence</i>		0.87	0.70
The personality of the destination is close to my own personality.	0.84		
The personality of the destination is a mirror image of me.	0.83		
The personality of the destination is consistent with how I see myself.	0.83		
<i>Purchase intention</i>		0.82	0.70
In everyday life, I want to buy products from companies based in the destination.	0.84		
In everyday life, the likelihood of buying a product associated with the tourist destination is high.	0.83		

Note: ^a standardized factor loading; CR = Composite reliability; AVE = Average variance extracted.

4. Analysis and results

4.1. Construct validity

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis underscore the robustness of the four-factor model proposed here, demonstrating satisfactory fit indices ($\chi^2(38) = 80.89$, $p < 0.001$, RMSEA = 0.06, GFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.98). As shown in Table 3, all items associated with the study variables exhibit factor loading scores exceeding 0.60, surpassing the established threshold by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2014). Notably, both composite reliability (CR = 0.78 ~ 0.87) and average variance explained (AVE = 0.55 ~ 0.70) values surpassed the recommended benchmarks of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively (refer to Table 3), as per guidelines from Hair et al. (2014), and Kumar and Shah (2021), affirming satisfactory convergent validity, as assessed by the method proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981).

Examining Table 4, the square root of the AVE values for all constructs (AVE = 0.74 ~ 0.84) notably exceeded the correlations between any observed constructs ($r = 0.44 \sim 0.67$), supporting discriminant validity according to Fornell and Larcker's (1981) criteria. In summary, the findings collectively alleviate concerns regarding construct validity within the scope of this study.

To address the potential common method bias, Harman's single-factor test was conducted following the recommendations of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). The analysis indicated that a single factor accounted for only 49.39% of the variance, which is below the recommended threshold of 50%. In accordance with established practices (Kumar and Shah, 2021; Malhotra, Kim, and Patil, 2006), this study adopted a method involving a comparison of fit indices between the proposed four-factor and single-factor models.

<Table 4> Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix.

Constructs	Mean	SD	X1	X2	X3	X4
X1 Destination authenticity	3.76	0.68	0.74			
X2 Brand authenticity	3.48	0.73	0.55*	0.79		
X3 Destination brand self-congruence	3.47	0.78	0.59*	0.67*	0.84	
X4 Purchase intention	3.27	0.85	0.44*	0.67*	0.62*	0.84

Note: SD = Standard deviation; Italic numbers in the diagonal row are square roots of the AVE values; * $p < 0.05$.

<Table 5> Results of the Model Fit Indices.

Model	χ^2	df	RMSEA	GFI	CFI	χ^2 difference (<i>p</i> -value)
One-factor model	370.34	44	0.15	0.82	0.85	–
Four-factor model	80.89	38	0.06	0.96	0.98	$\Delta\chi^2(6) = 289.45$ ($p < 0.001$)

Table 5 shows that the fit indices for the four-factor model here demonstrated marked superiority over those of the single-factor model ($\chi^2(44) = 370.34, p < 0.001, RMSEA = 0.15, GFI = 0.82, CFI = 0.85$) at a significance level of 0.01% ($\Delta\chi^2(6) = 289.45, p < 0.001$). Collectively, these results indicate that common method bias is not a significant concern in findings of this study.

4.2. Hypothesis testing

This study employed the Hayes’ PROCESS macro (Model 4) to assess H1 and H2. H1 proposes a direct positive effect of destination authenticity on purchase intention. The results of Model 4 show that the direct link between destination authenticity and purchase intention ($b = 0.13, SE = 0.06, t = 2.22, 95\% CI [0.02, 0.25], p < 0.05$) is significant. Hence, H1 is supported. H2 proposes destination authenticity’s positive indirect effect on purchase intention through brand authenticity. The results of Model 4 show that the direct links between destination authenticity and brand authenticity ($b = 0.59, SE = 0.05, t = 12.46, 95\% CI [0.50, 0.68], p < 0.001$) and between brand authenticity and purchase intention ($b = 0.72, SE = 0.06, t = 13.00,$

<Table 6> Results for Mediating Effect of Brand Authenticity.

	b	95% CI		b	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper
<i>Direct effect</i>	Dependent variable model (Purchase intention)			Dependent variable model (Purchase intention)		
Destination authenticity	0.13	0.02	0.25	0.13	0.02	0.25
Age				-0.01	-0.01	-0.00
Gender				-0.03	-0.16	0.10
<i>Indirect effect</i>	Mediation variable model (Brand authenticity)			Mediation variable model (Brand authenticity)		
Destination authenticity → Brand authenticity → Purchase intention	0.43	0.32	0.55	0.42	0.31	0.53

Note: B = Unstandardized coefficients; 95% CI = Lower/upper limit of the 95% percentile bootstrap confidence interval with a dataset of 5,000.

95% CI [0.61, 0.83], $p < 0.001$) were significant. Based on these findings, this study identified a significant positive indirect effect ($b = 0.43$, $SE = 0.06$, 95% CI = [0.32, 0.55]). Hence, H2 is supported (see Table 6). The analysis was also conducted using age and gender as control variables. Although age was a significant factor, the results here were not affected by the presence or absence of control variables.

Third, this study employed Hayes' PROCESS macro (Model 59) to assess H3a, H3b, and H3c simultaneously (Hayes, 2018). Before creating an interaction term, all predictor variables were mean-centered and percentile bootstrapping was conducted on a bootstrapped dataset of 5,000 samples to test the moderation hypotheses. Table 7 summarizes the findings. The results show that destination brand self-congruence had a significant moderating effect on destination authenticity and brand authenticity ($b = 0.10$, $SE = 0.04$, $t = 2.91$, 95% CI = [0.03, 0.17], $p <$

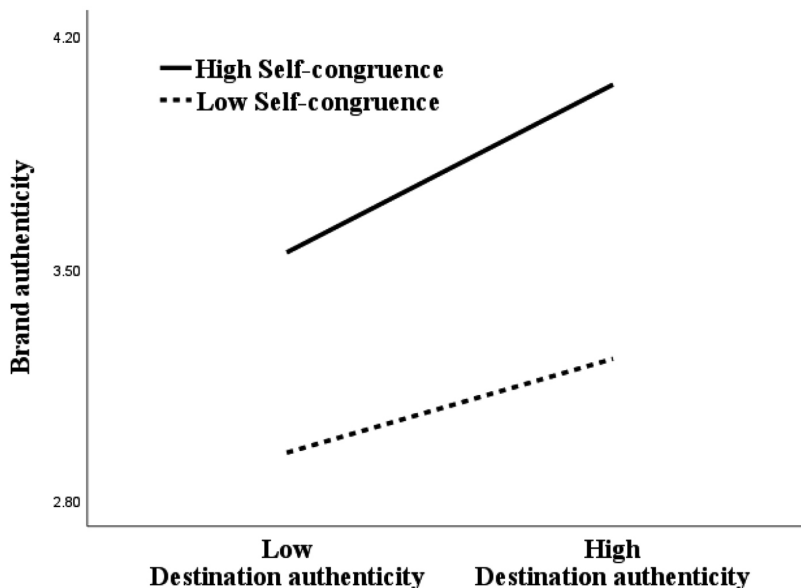
<Table 7> Results for Moderating Effect of Destination Brand Self-congruence.

Predictor variables	Model 1 (without demographics)			Model 2 (with demographics)		
	b	95% CI		b	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper		Lower	Upper
	Dependent variable model (Purchase intention)			Dependent variable model (Purchase intention)		
Brand authenticity	0.54	0.42	0.66	0.53	0.41	0.65
Destination authenticity	-0.02	-0.15	0.11	-0.02	-0.15	0.11
Destination brand self-congruence	0.33	0.21	0.44	0.33	0.22	0.45
Brand authenticity × Destination brand self-congruence	0.16	0.04	0.28	0.14	0.02	0.26
Destination authenticity × Destination brand self-congruence	-0.05	-0.16	0.06	-0.05	-0.15	0.06
Age (control variables)				-0.01	-0.01	-0.00
Gender (Control variables)				-0.02	-0.14	0.11
	Mediation variable model (Brand authenticity)			Mediation variable model (Brand authenticity)		
Destination authenticity	0.29	0.19	0.39	0.28	0.18	0.38
Destination brand self-congruence	0.46	0.37	0.54	0.46	0.37	0.55
Destination authenticity × Destination brand self-congruence	0.10	0.03	0.17	0.10	0.03	0.17
Age (control variables)				-0.00	-0.01	0.00
Gender (Control variables)				0.06	-0.05	0.17

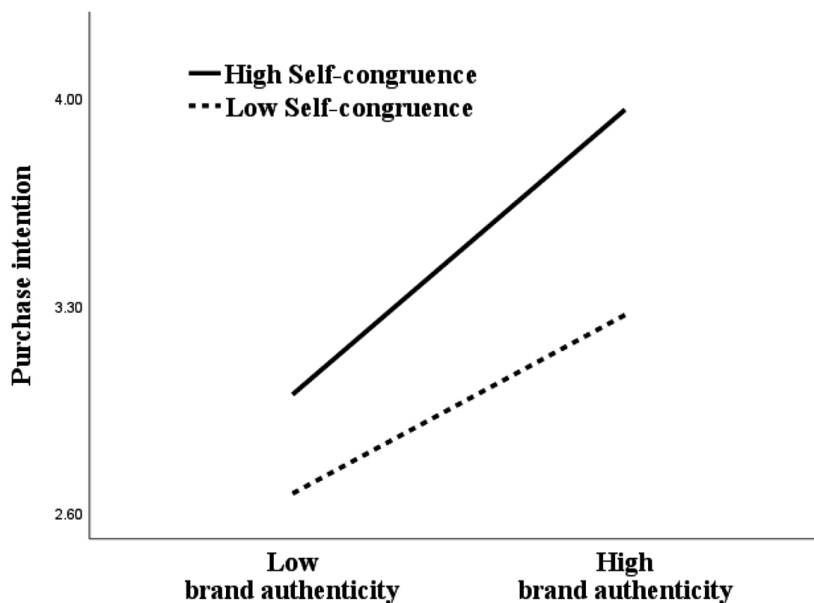
Note: B = Unstandardized coefficients; 95% CI = Lower/upper limit of the 95% percentile bootstrap confidence interval with a dataset of 5,000.

0.01) as well as between brand authenticity and purchase intention ($b = 0.16$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = 2.57$, $95\% CI = [0.04, 0.28]$, $p < 0.05$). However, destination brand self-congruence had no significant moderating effect between destination authenticity and purchase intention ($b = -0.05$, $SE = 0.06$, $t = -0.89$, $95\% CI = [-0.16, 0.06]$, $p = 0.37$).

This result suggests that destination brand self-congruence did not moderate between destination authenticity and purchase intention (H3a) but had a moderating effect on the other two assumed causal relationships (H3b and H3c). These results partially support H3. The analysis was also conducted using the demographic variables of age and gender as control variables. Although age was a significant factor in which the dependent variable was purchase intention, the results were not affected by the presence or absence of control variables. Additionally, as presented in Figures 2 and 3, this study plotted the interaction effect by showing the simple slopes of destination authenticity on brand authenticity and brand authenticity on purchase intention at ± 1 SD from the mean of destination brand self-congruence. This suggests that destination brand self-congruence strengthens destination authenticity's brand authenticity effect and the purchase intention effect of brand authenticity.



<Figure 2> Results of the Interaction Effect on Brand Authenticity



<Figure 3> Results of the Interaction Effect on Purchase Intention

5. Implications and discussion

5.1. Theoretical implications

This study makes three theoretical contributions to the literature. Few studies have addressed the relationship between experiences at tourist destinations and purchasing behavior in everyday life (Marques et al., 2021; Tanaka, 2024; Yin et al., 2017). In particular, no research has addressed authenticity, which is a major object of tourism research. In response to this research gap, this study developed a theoretical framework based on autobiographical memory and inference theory. The primary contribution here is to advance the understanding of tourism experience's impact on purchasing behavior in daily life. In particular, the authenticity concept has accumulated within tourism research. This study found that destination authenticity's positive influence on consumer purchasing behavior is mediated by brand authenticity as discussed in the field of consumer behavior research. This is important because it provides a novel perspective.

Second, this study provides a better understanding of destination authenticity's impact on everyday purchasing behavior. The finding that destination brand self-congruence enhances destination authenticity's impact on brand authenticity, and brand authenticity on everyday purchasing behavior, leads to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior.

Third, implications for authenticity research exist. Studies on the authenticity of tourist destinations have been conducted only within the framework of tourism research. This includes those who have used revisit intention and word-of-mouth intention as dependent variables of authenticity (Chen et al., 2020; Deb and Lomo-David, 2021). By contrast, this study sets brand authenticity—an important concept influencing consumer purchasing behavior in daily life—as a mediating variable and identifies a causal relationship in which destination authenticity influences brand authenticity. In other words, this is the first study to integrate destination authenticity, an important concept for explaining tourist behavior, as well as brand authenticity, an important concept for explaining consumer purchasing behavior, and thus substantially contributes to the literature.

5.2. Managerial implications

These results have important managerial implications, not only for managers of tourism-related firms in destinations, but also for managers of non-tourism-related firms based in tourist destinations. In particular, communication should appeal to tourist destination brands. Tourists who experience authenticity at a destination infer that brands manufactured at that destination are authentic. Furthermore, brand authenticity leads to brand purchase intention. Therefore, companies linked to tourist destinations, such as those headquartered in destinations that have not previously targeted tourists, should actively conduct marketing that utilizes tourist destination brands. This will help obtain a positive evaluation of the brand in terms of authenticity from tourists who perceive the destination as authentic. Moreover, tourism businesses and companies with ties to tourism destinations must be aware of marketing strategies that increase the match between the destination image and tourists' self-concept. This study recommends that firms conduct marketing research to understand what tourists seek and what makes them unique. This information should be applied to the destination experience and brand creation. This will increase the likelihood that tourists perceive destination brand self-congruence and will ultimately choose a brand associated with the destination in their daily

lives. The results here benefit not only firms that handle everyday products but also tourism businesses and residents of tourist destinations, because it will lead to increased tax revenues for destinations.

5.3. Limitations and future research

This study has three limitations regarding exploration in future research. One issue pertains to the challenge of moderating variables. While this research demonstrated the moderating effect of destination brand self-congruence within the context of brand authenticity, other moderating variables such as familiarity (Zhang and Merunka, 2015) and brand globalness (Riefler, 2020) have also shown significant effects. Future analyses that incorporate additional variables are crucial for a more nuanced understanding of consumer behavior. A second challenge relates to common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Although the four-factor measurement model used here outperformed the one-factor model, the value of Herman's single-factor test was marginally below the threshold of 50%. Subsequent studies should enhance data collection procedures by expanding the sample data across different periods and/or environments to address this issue. Third, this study had limited geographical representation among its participants. Subsequent research should investigate potential cross-cultural differences and enhance generalizability by including participants from a broader range of countries.

This study suggests two potential avenues for future research. First, it is necessary to explore the mechanisms that influence purchase behavior. There is a dearth of research on how authentic experiences at tourist destinations influence everyday purchasing behavior. It is crucial to investigate specific aspects, such as how authentic experiences in particular tourist destinations correlate with consumer brand choices, or which categories are particularly susceptible to such influences.

Second, it is necessary to examine authenticity's long-term effects. It is essential to delve into how authentic experiences at tourist destinations influence the long-term purchasing behavior and lifestyles of tourists in their daily lives. Understanding the sustainability of these experiences and their impact on daily purchasing behaviors and decision-making is crucial.

6. Conclusions

This study aimed to re-examine the relationship between authentic experiences in tourist destinations and everyday purchasing behavior. It also sought to identify the variable mediating the influence of destination authenticity on everyday purchasing, as well as the boundary conditions under which the influence between variables is moderated. Based on autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory, this study extends knowledge regarding the baseline relationship by using brand authenticity as the mediating variable and destination brand self-congruence as the moderating variable. Previous studies have not clarified these aspects adequately in the context of authentic tourist destinations.

The analysis revealed that tourists' perception of authenticity in their destinations influences their purchase intention for brands manufactured in tourist destinations that they encounter in their daily lives. Next, this study demonstrated that brand authenticity mediates this effect. Furthermore, this study shows that destination brand self-congruence strengthens destination authenticity's impact on brand authenticity, and brand authenticity on purchase intention regarding everyday brands.

The results here contribute to the literature by demonstrating the mechanisms of tourists' purchase behavior and the boundary conditions under which the influence of authentic experiences at tourist destinations on purchase intentions is reinforced, based on autobiographical memory and consumer inference theory.

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About the Authors

Tanaka, Shoji (PhD, Waseda University, Japan) is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Business Administration, Setsunan University, Japan. His research interests are in the areas of consumer behavior, brand management, and tourism marketing.

E-mail address: shoji.tanaka@kjo.setsunan.ac.jp