

T.C.
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SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
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ÜRETİM YÖNETİMİ VE PAZARLAMA (İNGİLİZCE) ANA BİLİM DALI

**THE IMPACT OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY ON BRAND ADVOCACY,
THROUGH BRAND TRUST AND CONSUMER-BRAND
IDENTIFICATION MEDIATORS, IN TURKEY**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

EVREN DAĞ BAŞAR

İstanbul, 2020

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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

Underpinned from the fact that investing in relationship marketing is crucial for companies and brands today, and the demand for trustworthy and truthful consumer-brand relationship is rising, this study took brand authenticity as the core construct that is stated to create trust and enhances emotional bonds between the consumer and the brand in the prior literature studies. Brand Authenticity is one of the most recent constructs in marketing literature and there has been increasing number of academic studies worldwide since mid 2000s.

The initial purpose of this study was to examine strong consumer brand relationship benefits when a brand intrinsically positions itself as authentic and the sequential consumer and brand benefits of brand authenticity. Aimed at stressing the casual relationship between the constructs, we aimed to contribute and extend the literature through a new model which tested the mediation effects of Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification between Brand Authenticity and Brand Advocacy. Testing both mediators in a Brand Authenticity study as well as testing Brand Advocacy as an outcome construct is new to the Brand Authenticity literature. Eventhough there have been models tested in the global literature, the construct demonstrated a less tapped area in the academic research in the Turkish culture; therefore, we extended the literature to a new geographic location. The complementary objectives of this study was to find a Turkish definition of Brand Authenticity as there are different usages in the few academic studies, and to find the first authentic brand rating in the Turkish culture and comparing it with global ratings. All of these objectives aimed at contributing and extending the Brand Authenticity literature and taking researchers' further attention.

Before studying on the methodology and reaching our model, it was critical for us to understand the Brand Authenticity construct from all angles. Therefore, we examined the literature on definition, conceptualization, antecedents and attributes, further cues, and consequences of brand authenticity. While examining more than 70 studies, we explored each of the studies' model, methodology and sample characteristics to understand the current situation in the existing literature. We used four sequential stages in the methodology with exploratory and descriptive techniques to achieve our research objectives. We conducted the main research instrument on 400 people in January 2020, through a professional online survey panel and the gathered data is analysed by Structural Equation Modelling. The findings revealed the positive relationships between all constructs and Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification as intermediate in the casual sequence such that the indirect effect of Perceived Brand Authenticity is higher on Brand Advocacy when the mediators exist. Furthermore, our sample defined authentic brand as “gerçek” and proposed an authentic brand rating. Grounding from the literature survey and new findings, the managerial and academic implications were presented as well in the final sections.

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma, günümüzde ilişkisel pazarlamaya yapılan yatırımın önemini ve güvene dayalı ve gerçekçi müşteri-marka ilişkisinin gerekliliğini dikkate alarak, mevcut literatür çalışmalarınca marka güveni sağladığı ve müşteri-marka arasında duygusal bağ kurduğu tespit edilen Marka Gerçekliği kavramını merkeze alarak kurgulanmıştır. Marka Gerçekliği, pazarlama literatüründeki en yeni kavramlardan bir tanesidir ve 2000’li yılların ortalarından itibaren dünya çapında artan sayıda akademik çalışmaya konu olmuştur.

Çalışmanın öncelikle amacı kendisini içsel olarak gerçek olarak konumlandıran bir markanın sağlayacağı güçlü müşteri-marka ilişkisini incelemek ve Marka Gerçekliğinin kazanımı olarak müşteri ve marka faydalarını sorgulamaktır. Test edilen yapılar arasındaki bu ardışık ilişki vurgulanarak, mevcut literatüre Marka Güveni ve Müşteri-Marka kimliklendirmesi yapılarının, Marka Gerçekliği ve Marka Savunuculuğu arasında aracılık etkisi olarak kullanıldığı yeni bir model kazandırılmıştır. İlave olarak Marka Savunuculuğu ilk kez bir Marka Gerçekliği çalışmasında sonuç olarak çalışılmıştır. Global literatürde bir süredir Marka Gerçekliği çalışmaları yapılıyor olsa da Türkiye temelli akademik çalışmalar henüz çok kısıtlı olduğu için, konu yeni bir coğrafi alana doğru genişlemiş bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın tamamlayıcı hedefleri olarak yapının Türkçe tanımı sorgulanmış ve bu kavrama göre derecelendirilmiş Türkiye’deki ilk marka listesi oluşturulmuştur. Tüm bu hedefler ile Marka Gerçekliği literatürüne katkıda bulunulması, literatürün genişletilmesi ve araştırmacıların konu hakkında dikkatinin çekilmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Çalışmanın yöntemine karar verilmeden önce, mevcut literatür 70’den fazla çalışma kapsamında kavramın tanımı, yapısı, öncülleri ve ardılları başlıkları ile ve araştırma modeli, yöntem ve örneklem özellikleri anlamında incelenmiştir. Yöntem seçiminde birbirine takip eden dört farklı çalışma yapılmış ve ana araştırma aracı 400 kişilik bir örneklem üzerinde, Ocak 2020’de, profesyonel bir çevrimiçi araştırma platformu aracılığı ile test edilmiştir. Toplanan verilerin modelin test edilmesi için Yapısal Eşitlik Modeli kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, tüm yapılar arasındaki olumlu ilişkiyi ve Marka Güveni ve Müşteri-Marka Kimliklendirmesinin aracılık etkisi göstererek, Marka Gerçekliği’nin Marka Savunuculuğu üzerindeki yüksek dolaylı etkisine ışık tutmaktadır. İlave olarak, örneklem grubumuz ‘Gerçek’ ifadesini yapının Türkçe tanımı olarak belirlemiş ve derecelendirilmiş marka listesi oluşturulmasını sağlamıştır. Tüm bu bulgular ve literatür taraması baz alınarak, akademik ve yönetsel sonuçlar da çalışmanın son bölümlerinde okuyucu ile paylaşılmıştır.

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I would like to start my words by expressing how much knowledge enrichment I have personally gained while writing this thesis study. I personally enjoy the systematic thinking in marketing discipline as well as its intersections with other social disciplines such as psychology and sociology. The core subject of my study which is Brand Authenticity was put into words by Mevlânâ many centuries ago as Personal Authenticity through his saying ‘Ya olduĖun gibi gör n, ya da g r nd Ėun gibi ol. /Either appear as who you genuinely are, or truly be the person who you act as’. These intersections always remind me the human side of brands.

I would like to express my first and deep gratitude to my thesis consultant Prof. Dr. Emine  obanoĖlu for her full and detailed guidance, patience during all the difficulties I have faced, kindness in each of our communications and leading me to find my direction through her wise questions. I am deeply honored to have shared this performance with her.

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My last words to the potential readers are that no matter how experienced you are in your professional career and how old you are, the life provides you an endless journey to learn new chapters in your field. Having strong self-awareness regarding your aspirations and motivations that determine which chapters you are willing to explore is the key. Hoping everyone to find their inner realities and aspirations.

İstanbul, 2020

Evren DaĖ Baŗar

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1. INTRODUCTION

We first would like to introduce today's marketing ground to the reader in order to give brands some inspiration regarding the needs and aspirations of the modern consumer. This section also introduces our broad approach which enabled us to filter the corpus of literature to reach our proposed research model.

There have been distinct changes in the marketing eco-system since the industrial revolution which impacts technologies, economies, societies and business practices (Malone & Fiske, 2013). Globalization is at its extreme position creating a whole world with human tribes scattered into diverse geographical locations; however, adapting similar lifestyles, motivations, aspirations and concerns. The advances in communication and information technology impacted the eco-system from the heart; information is no longer at the privilege of a minor group, individualism left its ground to socialism, problems of others become problems of self, human prioritized the well-being of the globe instead of self, economic turbulence at any region of the world has a consequence almost in all globe, communication and distribution channels in business transformed the way business practitioners execute operations and academicians approach their models, new generations has risen with a positively disruptive behavior model and finally consumers adapted new purchase behaviors through not only the influence of new channels, but also the desire to act with their extreme human nature (Kotler et al., 2017).

Before the Industrial Revolution, the markets were smaller than today, and seller and buyer were having very close and direct relationship to each other (Malone & Fiske, 2013; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). The trust between both was a key element of their relationship because any misbehaved action of one party would be told to the rest of the small public with a speed at the expense of that party's image. However, in the course of time Industrial Revolution came to the stage, and mass production and media dominated the markets which resulted in a distance between buyers and sellers. Demand and supply had risen; therefore, brands had millions of consumers resulting in less focus and sensitivity to single consumer perception and feedback. At that period, brands created dissatisfaction in consumer expectations for being trustful, transparent and good intent with a more sensitivity for their larger margins and profits. However, the Digital Revolution changed the prerequisites to make

profit for companies again through digitally connected consumers (Eggers et al., 2013; Vicky, 2016). Consumers more than ever make conscious consumption choices and want to know what is behind the goods and services they purchase in terms of values, accountability, and actions (Urban, 2005). Gallup International and World Economic Forum study (2004) reveals that among 36.000 people from 47 nations, 52% has little or even no trust to large companies and institutions. There is a disbelief of advertising in the name of consumer skepticism (Morhart et al., 2015).

The tunes of transition and ambiguity lead humans to have “skepticism” and search for “trust” as a requirement (Portal et al., 2008; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Delgado-Ballester, 2004; Eggers et al., 2013; Fernandez and Lewis, 2019) which is reflected to consumption roles as well. Consumers question what they pay for through a strong motivation to ensure they contribute to the well-being of the globe, and to reflect their personality and values through the lens of consumption choices (Holt, 2002; Escalas, 2004; Aaker, 1999; Puzakova et al., 2009; Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). The brands are considered to be relational partners in this sense (Fournier, 1998; Fournier, 2012; Aaker, 2004; Fritz and Lorenzo, 2014).

In the light of these facts, we believe it is highly critical for marketing academicians and practitioners to invest in relationship marketing (Fournier, 2012; Portal et al; 2018; Grace et al., 2018; Delgado- Ballester, 2000; Illicic and Webster, 2014). The strategies and tools created in the essence and positioning of brands and the total organization culture executed through all cycles of marketing and communication plan by any single participant of the brand (management, employees, third parties) is critical.

Brand Authenticity has recently been a phenomenon discussed in the Branding literature as a differentiator and sustainable competitive advantage of the new age (Wagner, 2007). As Kotler defines in his book Marketing 4.0 (2017), consumers’ search for Authenticity is one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing. The demand for trustworthy and truthful consumer-brand relationship is rising; therefore, Brand Authenticity is seen as a new pillar to create brand credibility and trust and enhance emotional bonds between consumers and brands. Literature suggests consistent separate findings in that, Brand Authenticity has a positive effect on perceived brand value (Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Riefler, 2020; Newman and Dhar, 2014; Kovacz et al., 2017), brand-self connection (Morhart et al., 2015; Frizzo et al., 2018; Spiggle

et al., 2012; Oh et al., 2019), brand trust (Schallehn et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Busser and Shulga, 2019, Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Napoli et al., 2016), emotional attachment (Assiouras et al., 2016; Pounders and Kowalczyk, 2016), and word of mouth (Morhart et al., 2015; Cheah et al., 2016).

Before giving a deep explanation why this study is proposed, the proposed theoretical framework is provided below which is grounded from the branding literature in order to make the reader better interpret why we approach brand authenticity construct as it is in this study.

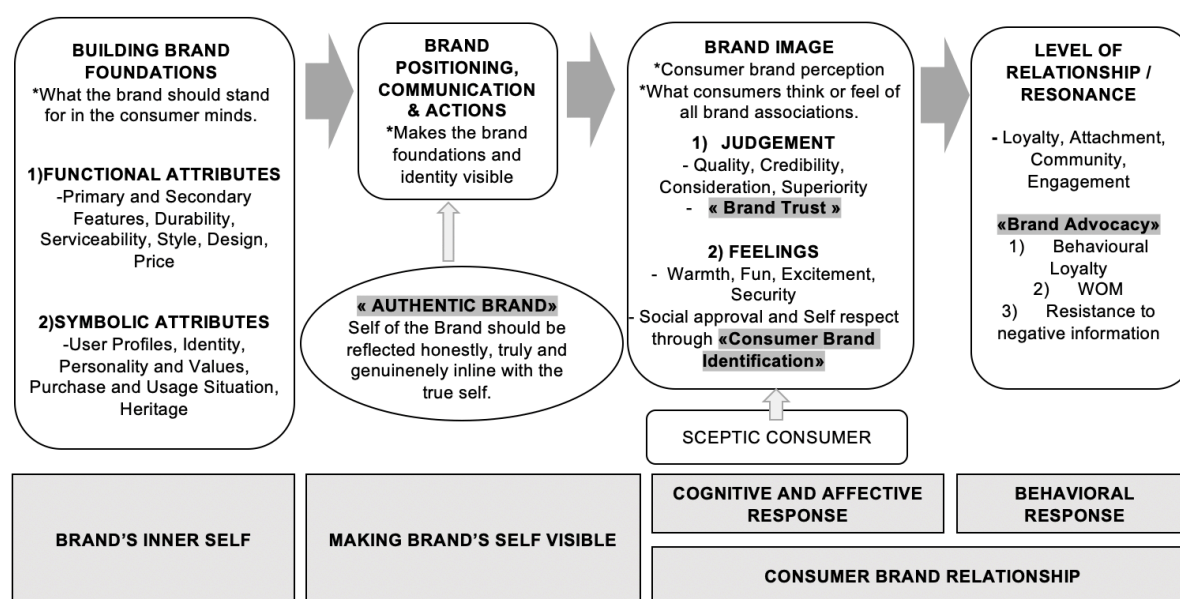


Figure 1.1: Theoretical Framework Proposed for the Research Study

The above figure is inspired from Keller's (2003 p.75-101) customer-based brand equity pyramid and Schallehn et al.'s (2014) explanation of interrelationships between brand identity, brand essence and brand positioning. The constructs of our model are highlighted in the total framework. Keller (2003) in his pyramid propose that a brand is built in the consumer's mind through four sequential stages from identity building to relationship formation. These stages are; Brand identity formation by the brand managers, brand meaning perceived by the consumer, consumer's judgements and feelings about their brand perception, and the formation of depth and breadth of consumer-brand relationship in the name of brand resonance. Schallehn et al's (2014) suggestions intervene in the pyramid from stage 1 and 2. The authors raised

identity-based brand management system which values brand identity and image (Chernatony et al., 2012). Brand identity defines the brand's inner self in terms of functional and symbolic associations. In other words, it is the brand's essence and interior view. The next step in Keller's pyramid is to convey this brand essence and identity to the consumers so that brand associations can be formed in the consumer's mind. This information is conveyed through brand positioning and communication through either direct consumer experience or indirect contact to brand advertising and other communication. Schallehn et al. (2014) claims that while positioning the brand, brand should reflect the true inner self to match interior and exterior view. Origin of the brand promise should not be changed with the exterior forces and brand should stay true to itself. The authors raised an important question here. Identity is not visible, so how is it possible for a consumer to judge authenticity? Kelley's (1973) attribution theory which states perceived brand authenticity depends on its antecedents and attributes in the shape of brand behavior gives the answer. The brand behavior and communication cues play critical role in this sense.

According to the Keller's (2003) pyramid, the third step is forming judgements and feelings to the brand positioning under the brand image perception. We suggest at this point that because brand is perceived in the minds of consumers and the expectations and experiences of the beholder are important, it is critical to consider the sceptic consumer fact of the era that we explained in the first paragraphs. Therefore, in order to form positive judgements and feelings, consumers are likely to quest some specific antecedents and attributes which are embedded in the brand essence. After the brand image is established in the consumer mind, he/she decided the type of relationship he/she will form with the brand. It can be just behavioral loyalty such as repeat purchase and additionally be emotional attachment such as identification, word of mouth and evangelism, affective loyalty through word-of-mouth and evangelism. Keller (2003) defines consumer-brand relationship formation in this final step and for him the consumer judgements and feelings are named as brand response; however, the consumer-brand relationship literature states consumer cognitive and affective responses as dimensions of consumer-brand relationship such as trust, self-congruence, emotional attachment which means that as soon as brand is positioned and brand image occurs at consumers' minds, consumer-brand relationship starts (Fournier, 1998; Fritz and Lorenzo, 2014; Ghani 2016; Aaker 2004; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Holt 2002). We position our study to the later perspective.

1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This section first presents the reasonings behind our valuation of the brand authenticity and consumer-brand relationship constructs, and later explains how our proposed model aims to extend and contribute to existing brand authenticity literature.

This study has a critical role in marketing arena because “Brand Authenticity” which is referred to be one of the corner-stones of contemporary marketing (Brown et al., 2003) and adopted by postmodern consumer culture (Holt, 2002) has been one of the latest concept to be explored in the field. It is said to be a call for all the companies to be relevant in the 21st century (Vossoughi, 2008). It is stated that in the crowded market place where it is even more difficult to stand out for brands, “Quality no longer differentiates; authenticity does” (Wagner, 2007) and “authenticity is the benchmark against which all brands are now judged” (Grant, 1999 p.98). This rise is observed through academic research, social sites dedications and specific indices such as authenticbrandindex.com (Eggers et al. 2013). It is also identified as a key concept in marketers’ response to paradigm changes in the media in the “2011 Digital Leaders Forum” (Choi et al., 2015)

It is argued that authenticity has been quested for several hundred years in other social disciplines but has recently captured the attention of marketing discipline (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). It is an increasing area of research in the marketing discipline because consumers increasingly demand authentic brands in the contemporary age (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Bruhn et al. 2012; Bruhn et al. 2014), in other words consumers just want it (Arnould and Price, 2000). This demand is indeed not constrained to only brands. Companies as a whole are expected to contribute to a more authentic culture as well (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2015).

Almost all of the articles and studies presented in the literature raise two prominent reasons **why brand authenticity is a desired concept of the contemporary age.**

First prominent reason is that, the period of uncertainty and over commercialization increases consumer distrust and skepticism. Based on the corpus of available literature, there is a loss of traditional sources of meaning and self-identity as a result

of postmodernity (Arnould and Price, 2000; Beverland et al., 2010; Morhart et al., 2015). The people universally are claimed to survive in a period of uncertainty as a result of various crises such as financial, political, and environmental (Bruhn et al. 2012). The progressing globalization and homogenization of the marketplace fuels this uncertainty with raising moral and ethical issues (Beverland and Farelly, 2010; Arnould and Price, 2000). The institutional authority in this modern marketplace is in fact, cannot be controlled. These new conditions make a ground for authenticity to be a under threat; thus, it is explicitly required with pressure (Trilling, 1972) Therefore, expertise and authenticity has become even more important in that companies should have an absolute sense of inner self (Arthur, 2007). Consumers' quest for things to trust on that offers them continuity (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017). A specific example says when mass production techniques replace craft-like-hand-made furniture, the connection with the producer is lost resulting to an uncontrolled environment for the consumer. Therefore, as a reaction against mass society and mass production, individuals search for more meaning in their consumption roles (Morhart et al., 2015) and prefer to buy from small not widely known producers for the purpose of self-expression in their anti-mass sensitivity and safety feeling (Carroll & Torfason, 2007). This is said to be a call to remember back human values regarding integrity, work-life balance, community, and passion for the truth (Davis, 2002). Consumers more than ever make conscious consumption choices and want to know what is behind the goods and services they purchase in terms of values, accountability, and actions (Malone & Fiske, 2013). There is actually a general air of consumer mistrust towards businesses (Young&Rubicam, 2013). This less controlled environment lead people to judge more whether actions of the brands match with the mission statement and words as a result of growing demand for reliability (Portal et al., 2018). They also desire to trust the brand through comparing their own values with those of the brand (Puzakova et al., 2009). Trust is an important element more than ever because the ultimate objective of a marketer is to gain loyalty by developing and maintaining enduring relationships which are all outcomes of trust. Trust brings loyalty and the term loyalty is akin converted into the term brand advocacy in today's digitally connected world.

Authenticity is perceived to be a factor that differentiates brands from each other under the uncertain conditions (Beverland et al. 2010). It is an attempt for consumers to change the context surrounding the current markets (Guevremont, 2018).

Do companies and brands answer back to consumers yet about the quest of brand authenticity? It is arguable. Cohne & Wolfe research on 15,040 consumers worldwide in 15 countries reported that less than %20 of the people believe brands are authentic and indicate cues of authenticity (Cohne&Wolfe, 2017). Thus, marketing practitioners should understand how consumers perceive brands as real (Pine and Gillmore, 2010). The main focus of a marketing executive used to be cost and quality; however, in order to gain competitive advantage in the contemporary age it is said to shift as a new business imperative. Looking back, in the agrarian economy the dominant consumer search was availability. However, industrial economy changed the game and decreased the cost of almost every commodity which in turn decreased the prices. Quality became the main focus. It is argued that the increased culture which emphasizes consumption over social participation resulted in a loss of meaning in the brands (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2015). Through the decades, focus has changed again and consumers not just want brands but ‘life-transforming experiences’ fueled with authenticity (Pine and Gillmore, 2010).

According to Beverland (2010) people want authentic objects due to three personal goals. These are; control, connection and virtue. Control defines mastery of self and environment. In this case, the authentic object helps the consumer to master self and external environment. A respondent stated that he regards Apple brand as authentic because it empowers him to cope with duties hard to manage; therefore, permit mastery of events as well as control him/herself. Consumers want to make informed decisions to gain information critical to understand the truth (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Virtue firstly defines being true to a set of moral values. Notions of honesty and lack of ulterior motives are keys. The benefits gained is staying true to one’s morals and the spiritual enrichment for seeing the desired universal values in practice. For instance, a respondent in the study stated that visiting places where people live her values, make her feel she engages in meaningful relationships with local inhabitants that are more genuine and less material.

There is a much emphasize on trust in today’s competitive marketplace because it is a key ingredient to create loyal consumers (Morhart et al.,2015; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017) who repurchase the brand each time and recommend the brand to others. Trust erosion is argued to

occur because there is a weaker link between the statement of organization in terms of its values and goals and actions and achievements of it. This disconnection weakens the brand reputation by creating mistrust. The lack of trust is sourced from the regulative forces of the societies and spreads to the organizations and brands. Only authentic brands are stated to encounter this distrust and create a sustained value for the bottom line of the organization (Eggers et al., 2013). Consumers feel a sense of self control over these brands; in other words, control the outer environment (Beverland, Farrelly, & Quester, 2010). There is a much emphasize on trust in today's competitive marketplace because it is a key ingredient to create loyal consumers (Akbar & Wyemer, 2016) who repurchase the brand each time and recommend the brand to others.

Second prominent reason why brand authenticity is a desired concept of the contemporary age is that consumers' brand choices are seen as an extension of their desired self; in other words, aspirational self-image. Hyper globalization is claimed not only to blur the meaning of the consumption, but also the personalized self (Carrol 2009). It is highlighted that in the social media, the hashtag 'liveauthentic' is linked with over sixteen million photos. Moreover, 'how to be authentic' Google search has over 800.000 results (M.Crain & Kokkoris, 2017).

At this point, it is beneficial to ask why brands exist for. Brands are suggested to be more valuable when they are planned to be a cultural resource which means a person can choose the brand to reflect the self. In order a person to prefer a brand to reflect himself/herself, the brand must be an authentic cultural resource in which an inherent value is found instead of an economic agenda. However, many of the modern brands are perceived to be inauthentic due to high commercialization intent (Holt, 2002).

Consumers desire to use certain brands to achieve self-authentication (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al, 2014) and construct their identity (Guevremont, 2018). Mass-produced commodities and experiences are used as icons for personal meaning and self-narrative (Ratneshwar et al., 2000). In that sense, these brands serve consumer goals (Beverland, Farrelly, & Quester, 2010). As mentioned, consumers seek authenticity in their lives in line with their personal goals; therefore, there is a relationship between personal goals and authenticating acts as a self-reflective behavior to express himself/herself (Beverland et al., 2010). Authentication serves these broad personally relevant goals; feeling of control (feeling a sense of control over

the surrounding and life without only being a part of the process, in other words mastering the external environment thus making informed choices), feeling to get connected (relating to others, culture, time, and community), and feeling virtuous (being true to a set of moral values) (Beverland et al., 2010). In short, consumers link to brand experience to the stories of the self (Arnould & Price, 2000). Personally, a brand is valued authentic due to its role in the consumer's life. When the brand is associated with this/her life narratives, it has more meaning for him/her; thus, perceived to be more authentic (Stern, 1996).

For instance, people's concern in ethical consumption such as environmentally friendly products and services make them search for brands whose sources are transparent (Pine and Gillmore, 2010). Consumers require authenticity to legitimate the consumption experience in that sense.

In addition to all, reflecting self through brands serve individuals to generate status in the society. It is inherently difficult to categorize authentic products and services due to their complexities. When one appears to be knowledgeable about brands through an expert status, such knowledge might result in social approval and status (Carroll & Torfason, 2007). "Authentic" ties an object or service with a deeper meaning to its consumer with a cultural type of interpretation that reflects value (Frazier et al., 2009). Spooner (1986) argues that the social complexity human face in modern era makes individuals seek for ways to enhance self-expression by using objects that reflect personal identities (Spooner, 1986). Therefore, consuming authentic products and services convey quality in personality which in turn makes individual to be appreciated by others. The importance of understanding the membership of consumption communities for authentication acts is claimed to be important as well (Beverland et al., 2010). This approach suggests that authoritative performance is adapted for being a member of a community rather than for acting through self-identity. Therefore, how one behaves authentic is central to the identity of subcultures and collective displays. The values of the community are taken as a means to fit in that community. Thus, individual's social identity is established.

As stated earlier, Beverland (2010) states people want authentic objects due to three personal goals. These are; control, connection and virtue. Control and virtue are explained first. Connection refers to relating to others, time and place and community. The motive is the desire

to develop an authentic self and personal enrichment as an active member of the community. Consumers regard places, events, community, and tradition as part of their identity in their accounts of authenticity (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).

In addition to these prominent reasons, the rise in authenticity is tied to informed digital consumer of the current age. The steep increase in the communication opportunities of internet results in wide spread of information within consumer clusters; therefore, consumers are “informed” (Eggers et al., 2013). This medium enabled individual or clustered consumer network with each other and talk about their consumption experiences (Vicky, 2016). Consumers are busy chasing brands on web that resonate with transparency (Vossoughi, 2008). Cohne & Wolfe (2017) report states that there is no privacy in the current era and none of the brands can hide bad news as data flows everywhere with enormous pace (Beattie and Louise, 2014). The same report states that 7000 tweets, 90.000 You Tube videos and 2.3 million emails sent each second. Societies have encountered with many brand scandals until today and companies faced the reality of why being authentic is important. Additionally, consumers realize being close to the companies personally; thus, yearn for open and truthful relationship with brands. Advisory content, tips, customer reviews and referrals, and user-generated content are all at the core of credible purchase (Martin, 2015). Authenticity therefore is defined to be the currency of the digital age (Voight, 2007).

It can be concluded from all of the above information that; authenticity is the main source of competitive advantage for today’s brands. In fact, there is an increasing awareness among brand academicians and practitioners regarding brand authenticity contribution to brand equity (Beverland, 2016; Napoli et al., 2016), word of mouth (Morhart et al., 2015; Cheah et al., 2016), premium price (Fritz et al., 2017), and brand attitude (Morhart et al., 2015; Miller 2015; Carsana and Jolipert, 2017). In a consumer survey (2017), brand authenticity is found to increase brand affinity. The report of this survey indicates that %86 of the consumers search for authenticity when deciding which brands to support. However, more than %57 of the same consumers think less than half of the current brands create authentic content (Stackla, 2017).

Therefore, in today’s crowded marketplace, companies are increasingly looking for strategies to differentiate themselves in the eyes of consumers. Strategic use of intangible assets of a company level it up above its competitors because they enable the brand to create strong

relationships with consumers. A strong transparent information flow is advocated in the marketplace to gain sustained competitive advantage for the companies (Gupta et al., 2008). Brand authenticity in this perspective serve as an important sustainable competitive advantage and point of difference for organizations. Functional benefits and marketing executions are relatively easier to get copied; however, authenticity cannot be faked and imitated due to its nature as a concept (Beverland, 2005). Therefore, as a brand story it provides an ongoing point of difference.

When a brand is not authentic, consumer's opportunity cost of purchasing other brand increases as the image of the brand does not match the reality (Lee & Chung, 2020). Authenticity is defined as one of the key values of brand image (Nobbs et al., 2006) and a characteristic of brand identity (Beverland, 2005; Kapferer, 2004). Emotional and symbolic attachment with the consumer is critical in today's highly competitive marketplace in which consumers suffer from "over choice". Authenticity in this perspective is claimed to be a key determinant of brand image. Some important articles of brand authenticity literature point the growing trend of authenticity being used as a positioning tool (Beverland, 2005; Bruhn et al., 2012; Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Nobbs et al (2006) argue that consumers with less time but over choice situation simplifies the consumer decision making process and form a reduced set of brands which is also known as consideration set or evoked set in order to reduce the cognitive effort dedicated to purchase situations (Nobbs et al., 2006). A brand to be purchased, it must enter and be a sustained member of this set. The brands in this set have similar functional and emotional benefits which mean in terms of attributes, they draw a homogeneous picture. Therefore, the values of brands to the consumer in this set are likely to be similar to each other. However, brand image by augmenting the perceived benefit of the brand influences the evaluation of benefits derived from each brand in the consideration set; therefore, bias the perceived value gained from purchasing that brand. It is justifiable to comment that in today's brand proliferation, having enduring relationships with consumers is vital (Fournier, 1998; Fournier, 2016; Fritz and Lorenzo, 2014; Aaker, 2004; Morgan and Hunt, 1994).

In a nutshell, those companies who put brand authenticity at the core of the strategies will be rewarded (Illicic and Webster, 2014; Beattie, 2014; Guevremont and Grohmann, 2015; Beverland, 2016; Egger et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Lee and Chung, 2020). **Our study**

therefore presents both a relevant extensions and contribution to branding literature for academic purpose and for managerial implications. These extensions and contributions are given below.

- 1) **None of the studies in the brand authenticity literature presents a literature review that covers both the conceptualization, and the antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity.** Additionally, we presented strategic cues for a brand to be positioned as authentic after making a deep dive into the corpus of literature.
- 2) **Examining the impact of perceived brand authenticity on brand trust and consumer-brand identification separately, we extended the existing literature to a new culture and geographic scope.** There are various studies that studied impact of brand authenticity on brand trust (Portal et al., 2018; Eggers et al., 2013; Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Lude and Prügl, 2018; Assiouras et al., 2015), on consumer-brand identification (Leigh et al., 2006; Guevremont and Grohmann, 2018; Beverland and Farrley, 2010; Oh et al, 2019; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017), on word-of-mouth (Morhart et al., 2015; Cheah et al, 2016) and on purchase likelihood(Assiouras et al., 2015; Park et al., 2016; Lude and Prügl, 2018; Pelet et al., 2020; Fritz et al., 2017; Beverland, 2016). **However, among the studies in the brand authenticity literature, only 2 of them are conducted in Turkey (Demirel and Yıldız, 2015; Yaşın et al., 2017).**
- 3) **Extensive literature survey indicates that none of the studies explored total brand advocacy as a last order construct in the brand authenticity relationship testing with other constructs.** We regard brand advocacy to be a critical construct in today's information and digitalized age and explored it as the final destination in the enduring consumer-brand relationship journey (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Urban, 2005; Kunzel and Halliday, 2008; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Becerra and Badrinarayanan 2013; Wilk et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2019); therefore, added this construct to our model with all of its items.
- 4) **We examined brand trust (a cognitive consumer benefit) and consumer brand identification (an affective consumer benefit) as mediators in the same model**

unlike the majority of literature models. Our proposed model fits in a less tapped area in its methodology and model formation in the brand authenticity literature.

A deep examination of literature models indicates only seven studies with three order constructs that have cognitive and/or affective consumer brand relationship constructs in the middle and behavioral consumer-brand relationship constructs at the end (Lee and Chung, 2012; Eggers et al., 2013; Choi et al, 2015; Pounders and Kowalczyk, 2016; Fritz et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2019; Rodriguez-Lopez et al., 2019). Narrowing down the models further reveals that only three of them constructed their models through mediator factors (Lee and Chung, 2012; Choi et al., 2015; Rodrigues-Lopez et al.,2019) and **none of them together explored the mediator effects of brand trust and consumer-brand identification constructs on the outcome.**

- 5) There is no ‘Authentic Brand Rating’ study that is ever done in Turkey.**
- 6) Because the construct is rarely studied through Turkish academic studies, there is no absolute and agreed direct translation of ‘authentic brand’ in Turkish language. Our study is the first study that explores the perceived translation of ‘Authentic’ brand into Turkish.**

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study initially aims to present the strong consumer brand relationship benefits relevant to the current age when brands intrinsically position themselves as authentic. Therefore, suggest strategies and tactics to the third parties. This thesis further introduces the brand authenticity construct to the Turkish branding literature which is a less tapped area.

While achieving the main objective, our complementary purpose is to extend and contribute to existing brand authenticity literature through a never studied model looking from a different perspective. Our model stresses the role of mediation effects between perceived brand authenticity and brand authenticity. In fact, our mediators brand trust and consumer-brand identification, as well as our outcome brand advocacy are all presented as consumer-

brand relationship constructs in the literature; yet, we aim to stress the sequential and casual relationship between them.

Third, while investigating the relationships between brand authenticity construct and other consumer-brand relationship constructs, we aim to contribute to the existing global brand authenticity literature which suggests that being authentic provides both consumer benefits and brand benefits. Relationship era requires a mutual co-operation between brands and consumers; therefore, brand authenticity as an identity construction and positioning strategy is highly valuable to create win-win strategies between the brands and consumers as the relational agents.

Forth, the study aims to explore which of the specific dimension of brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015) has a relatively higher significance on brand trust and consumer-brand identification constructs. This enables us to present deeper managerial implications to use which authentication cues to enhance which consumer-brand relationship constructs.

Fifth, this study aims to understand which brands that are marketed in Turkey are perceived to be authentic in the local culture. There is no former brand authenticity rating index that is ever studied in Turkish culture. A pool consisting of both global and local brands will be formed. Publishment of these brands is likely to give brand managers inspiring insights regarding their identity formation and positioning strategies.

Last, because brand authenticity is a less explored area both in academic and managerial arena, its absolute Turkish definition is missing. The secondary research indicated a multi-definitional picture, many of which represents only a specific dimension of brand authenticity instead of representing the total construct. This study aims to find the perceived Turkish definition for the construct.

1.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In this thesis, first a comprehensive literature survey will be performed by presenting definitions of brand authenticity from a wide angle, examining the conceptualizations of brand authenticity, and investigating its antecedents and attributes. These sections reveal the multi-

dimensional nature of brand authenticity. Further authentication cues for brands are presented in a sub-section to give inspiration to the reader. Relationships between brand authenticity construct and other branding constructs are presented in the consequences of brand authenticity section. The studies are examined through sets based on industry contexts, so that critical antecedents and selected dimensions of brand authenticity can be more visible depending on the product context.

The third section of this thesis introduce our proposed model and explains our multi-layered methodology in detail. There is a total of 3 pre-studies to achieve the research objectives related to authentic brand rating, Turkish translation of ‘authentic brand’ and pilot test which aims to obtain the most reliable and objective research instrument. Main study tests the relationships in the proposed research model on a sample formed through objective measures and obtained through a professional online panel research agency. The dimension selection and original items’ translation process from English to Turkish language is also explained.

The fourth section presents the data analysis and findings regarding the demographic characteristics of the sample, reliability analysis, authentic brand rating and translation, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Model which is used to test the significance of our proposed research model.

Discussion section interpret the findings and assess them by comparing with the existing literature. Finally, suggestions to the third parties will be made in the name of managerial implications and future directions for further academic research will be highlighted. We encountered some limitations while conducting the study and these limitations will be presented at the end of the thesis study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents an extensive literature review of the Brand Authenticity construct as the core. The last section very briefly introduces Consumer-Brand Relationship construct and its importance in the relational marketing era.

2.1 BRAND AUTHENTICITY

Brand Authenticity literature review initially provides an extensive definition of authenticity both in a multi-disciplinary perspective and branding literature. Next sub-section gives a detailed literature review on conceptualization of Brand Authenticity through its dimensions, and its antecedents and attributes. Consequences of Brand Authenticity is examined upon industry contexts which is a novel approach in the brand authenticity literature.

2.1.1 Definition of Brand Authenticity

2.1.1.1 *Definition of Authenticity from a Multi-Disciplinary Perspective*

The word Authenticity is rooted from the latin words au-thenticus and authentikos reflecting the meaning of trustworthiness (Cappannelli & Cappannelli, 2004), and ‘being one-self’ (Pine and Gillmore, 2010). It is described as conforming to an original (Beverland et al. 2016), and as not imitation and imaginary (Beverland et al., 2016). It is mentioned to have consistent ground for research in various disciplines such as philosophy, anthropology, sociology, geography, communication studies, archaeology, aesthetics, tourism and literary criticism since the beginning of nineteenth century (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Instead of having a single definition, it covers a wide range of associations. In fact, overall the meanings are all in line with each other regarding what authenticity is (Bruhn et al., 2012). It is associated with the term’s consistency, stability, endurance, individuality, trustfulness, credibility, realness, and genuineness as seen from the interpretations made by other disciplines than marketing.

Philosophy discipline connects authenticity with moral behavior (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017) and broadly defines authenticity from the perspective of having bonds to

origin and conventions (Taylor, 1991) and authentic individual is investigated to be true to self without losing identity (Steiner & Reisenger, 2006). Especially existential philosophers Heidegger (1962) and Sartre (1943) claim that individuals are authentic if they are sincere, take responsibility of their choices and actions and rather than accepting socially imposed values and actions, make explicit and value-based choices depending on self (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017).

Sociology discipline claims that authenticity is sought not only in individuals but also in objects. Moreover, it is also sought through experiences among individuals and performances of individuals and objects. Authentic performance and experience are claimed to be sincere, original, credible, natural, genuine, and unaffected (Carroll & Wheaton, 2009; Grazian, 2003). The two questions raised to determine whether an object is authentic or not are;

“Is the object what it appears to be? (Genuineness)” and “Is the admiration given to it is worth? (Positive valuation)” (Trilling, 1972 p.93).

Some sociological observations state that “authenticity” is a socially constructed notion depending on others’ expectations not a ‘real’ thing which could be determined on an objective basis. Therefore, whether an agent or experience is authentic is determined in a particular social context (Carroll & Torfason, 2007). In other words, valuation is made subjectively within the context of a social culture.

According to the literature, both **Philosophy and Sociology** in an agreement present two distinct broad set of meanings for authenticity used for social and cultural objects. The first set of meanings is broadly defined as **Type Authenticity** (Carroll & Wheaton, 2009) and that of second one is as **Moral Authenticity** (Carroll & Wheaton, 2009; Baugh, 1988). **Type Authenticity** is described to be ‘something is an authentic X if it is an instance or member of the class of X.’ (Davis, 2002 p.203). Type authenticity refers that an object conforms to the idealized representation of reality in terms of how it is expected to look and feel (Grazian, 2003 p.10). Therefore, a particular agent or object fits into the classification (genre) it is assigned to and meets the criteria (Carroll & Wheaton, 2009) which means there is a predictable conformity to some category. For instance, an Italian pasta has type authenticity when it evokes the expectations and feelings supposed to be get while eating a real Italian cuisine. Especially in

dining industry such as Chinese, French, etc. restaurants have an expectation in mind in terms of how the environment looks like, how the meal should be served and taste etc. with culturally defined interpretative cues in different criteria such as food type, atmosphere, service type, and ingredients. Another demonstration is from the perspective of art. Authenticity of a painting or text can be judged if the creator can be identified (Poole, 2013). **Moral Authenticity** refers to;

“The credibility or sincerity of a performance [for an object] and its ability to come off as natural and effortless.” (Grazian, 2003 p.10)

These set of meanings clarifies how actions and choices are parallel to the values declared by an object and covers to be sincere, responsible for actions, and to make value-based choices instead of socially imposed values and actions. Choices are made upon set values (Carroll & Wheaton, 2009). For example, an organic food restaurant is expected to source food only from farms that produce upon organic production criteria. Another example could be the Body Shop Company which harmonizes beauty category production and sustainability through delivering the woman consumers best products by respecting the nature through responsible processes as it declares.

Anthropology associates the authenticity concept with preserving cultural values and norms through self; therefore, being natural, untouched, and credible without being fake and imitated (Handler, 1986; Gable & Handler, 1996). Economic anthropology which is a sub-discipline of anthropology stresses that not only individuals, but also economic exchanges have authentication acts either symbolically (the symbolic meaning of the economic exchange for the consumer) or morally (Sahlins, 1976; Veblen, 1899).

Psychology discipline proven through studies that individual's authenticity is a multi-dimensional construct (Lopez and Rice; 2006; Wood et al.; 2008). It reflects one's true self through an accurate portrayal by overcoming the influence of others (Kernis & Goldman, 2006; Lopez & Rice, 2006). Attribution Theory (Asch, 1946) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002) are frequently used frameworks while explaining authenticity in psychology (Kowalczyk & Pounders, 2016). Both of the theories state that authenticity is an outcome of intrinsic motivation. An authentic person is identified to exhibit a rational pattern of attitudes regarding what the person really values and cares about (Helm, 1996). Authenticity is indeed

thought to be a necessary condition of self-governance or autonomy, because this person acts for reasons that are truly her own (Betzler, 2009). Furthermore, literature states that a person is claimed to be authentic;

“if he/she defines his/her nature truly and take responsibility of the kind of person he/she is” (Gerald, 1998 p.20).

“does what make sense in terms of his or her own identity and live in harmony with her convictions and inclination” (Meyers, 1989 p.8).

Psychology discipline presents valuable insights into “Authenticity” concept that makes a good ground to marketing discipline. For instance, in her book Betzler (2009) has distinct and impressive evaluation of authenticity concept. The author names her perspective “Internalist view of Authenticity”. She agrees authenticity to be a multi-dimensional concept but raises the claim that it is somewhat dynamic as well. According to her thoughts in the relevant book section, the unchangeable features of one’s character and his/her personal history must strongly be considered by self for authenticity; however, new valuing systems can be adapted by him/her considering changing conditions that rationally call for revisions. This does not mean the self-changes but self-have the capacity to reintegrate and adapt new evaluative outlook to changes. However, this person makes these re-evaluations in valuing conditions with a back reference to the person he/she is. The adaptation reasons are all grounded on his/her own which means self has an adequate conception of who he/she really is; therefore, can guide him/her. Conceptualization of self is very strong in this sense by determining facts about his/her values, likings, position, ideals, temperament, social status etc. There is an accurate self-conception that helps self to lead his/her life. All these claims indicate that this person is self-governed through authentic self (Betzler, 2009). As rational creatures, human seek reasons for their own actions thus identify themselves with some principles which make up the value system that govern their choices and actions. Therefore, the actions of self is not a will but informed self-conscious deliberation (Korsgaard, 1996).

The author further highlights what it means to ‘being true to oneself’ and ‘owning one’s self’. First, the person needs to have self-awareness which means knowing the facts that characterize him, having enough access to his emotions, values, desires. Second, this person

has to own these facts whether they are desirable or not. Therefore, the identity knowledge is important in this context to be aware of who the self really is. Personal values that specify ways in which you find life worth of living are argued to be embedded within a person's identity (Betzler, 2009).

The same author mentions the 'externalist perspective on authenticity' as well in her book but stated that the internalist perspective criticizes this view. Externalist perspective claim that a person is not authentic if facts about him/her are not socially recognized and constructed based on social circumstances. The relational and contextual circumstances in this perspective mean that a person's authenticity is regarded through one's relation with others. As a result, this person acquires authentic values through his social, cultural, ethnic, religious environment to be appreciated by this outer group instead of his/her own mental attitudes. Internalist view criticize this perspective in that this person cannot own up to facts about him/herself and have no self-governance, so lack the choice to be themselves. Moreover, this person will make inauthentic choices to achieve social advantages (Betzler, 2009).

Social Psychological perspective by challenging the psychological view asserts that humans are social beings; therefore, authentic being is affected by others, therefore, actual self is reformed in the society as relational self (Schmid, 2005). Humans are challenged by external dictates throughout their lives which might conflict or comply with their inner thoughts, feelings, emotions; therefore, they may either cover their own truth with the fear of social disapproval (inauthentic reflection of self) or speak out the real self (authentic reflection of self). The harmony between true self and relational self is key in that regards (Wang, 2016).

Leadership literature as another discipline is said to stress importance on authentic leadership (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2015). Such person is described to result in greater self-awareness and self-regulated behaviors. Authentic leader is described through integrity, credibility, accountability, respect, fairness, transparency, self-regulation, and self-awareness.

In summation, having received interest from various disciplines, authenticity has a shared meaning of consistency, stability, trustfulness, credibility, realness, and genuineness. There is no single definition; yet, a group of definitions exist around same notion. Being true to self in individual context and being true to relational self in social context are key depending on the

specific discipline. The common ground in all disciplines is having a strong inner self reality. However, whether actual self is reformed in the society or governed solely by individual self is still under discussion.

2.1.1.2 Definition of Authenticity in Marketing Discipline

The multi-dimensional structure in the meaning of Authenticity is observed in the branding literature as well; however, the common viewpoint regarding what '**Brand Authenticity**' means by different researchers are as follows (Beverland, 2005; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Beverland et al., 2010; Eggers et al., 2013; Illicic and Webster, 2014; Napoli et al., 2016; Bruhn et al., 2012).

- There is no single definition of 'Brand Authenticity' in the Marketing literature.
- Brand Authenticity deals with authenticity of marketplace offerings not human beings.
- Brand Authenticity is a perceived attribute by individuals depending on their personal evaluations instead of just being related to the inherent attributes of the brand. Therefore, it is equally worded as 'perceived brand authenticity' in the literature.
- It is intrinsic to the object, not 'artificial' and 'superficial'; therefore, cannot be invented.

Below table indicates the definitions found in the literature. Brand Authenticity is a multi-dimensional construct rather than monolithic as evident from this table (Stern B. , 1996);

Table 2.1.1.2.1

Definitions of Brand Authenticity from the Literature*

DEFINITION (Brand Authenticity defined as/ refers to/ relates to...)	AUTHOR (YEAR)
"...what is genuine, real, and/or true (genuineness, reality, truth)"	Arnold and Price (2000)
"...dissociation from commercial motives."	Beverland (2006); Holt (2002)
"...genuineness, evidence and truth."	Grayson and Martinec (2004)
".. brands that are worthy of acceptance, authoritative, trustworthy, not imaginary, false or imitation, conforming to an original."	Beverland and Farrelly (2010)
"...the original and the substantive in other words things that are honest and are what they say they are."	Nobbs (2012)
"...various stakeholders truly experience what they are promised to get."	Eggers and Guldenberg (2013)
"...a brand that produce products and services that do what they say on the package."	Cohne & Wolfe (2014)
"...reliable, respectful, real."	Cohne & Wolfe (2017)
"...the extent to which a brand is considered unique, legitimate, truthful to its claims, and lacking falsity."	Akbar and Wyemer (2017)

* *Designed by the Researcher*

Despite the multiplicity of terms and references applied to brand authenticity in the literature as presented in the above table, it is visible across the literature that brand authenticity scopes what is true, genuine, original, real, truthful, ageless, committed, honest and legitimate. Beverland et al. (2010 p.839) states that

“Despite the multiplicity of terms and interpretations applied to authenticity, ultimately what is consistent across the literature is that authenticity encapsulates what is genuine, real and/or true.”

The term “genuineness” is highly referred when defining the brand authenticity. Akbar and Wyemer (2017), to illustrate postulates brand authenticity construct as the extent to which a brand is considered unique, legitimate, truthful to its claims, and lacking falsity. A contribution to the definition is made through Cohne & Wolfe (2017) study. It is stated that the three R’s of brand authenticity are ‘reliable which means deliver on promises and high quality’, ‘respectful which means treats customers well and cares for them’ and ‘real which means communicates truly, is genuine, is not artificial, and acts with integrity’ (Cohne&Wolfe, 2017). Furthermore,

an authentic brand match words with actions and follow all its commitments (Beattie, 2014). They are transparent; therefore, willingly share information with consumers and other stakeholders. These brands take responsibility of their faults and honestly communicate about their issues. This brand conveys meaningful messages to the consumers and is not advertised everywhere (Goldstein, 2003). In fact, literature states that brand authenticity meaning has two directions; the first stresses the importance of internal consistency of the brand's pedigree and core philosophy and the second raises the external consistency such as quality and standards (Gillmore & Pine, 2007). Eggers et al. (2013) state that it is critical to build organizational cultures which enhance authenticity because authenticity is not about only being genuine in the communication, but also being real and truthful as a whole body of organization.

It is worth to examine varying definitions of brand authenticity upon different conceptualization perspectives. These chief perspectives are objectivist, constructivist, and existentialist perspectives (Morhart et al., 2015). **Objectivist Perspective** defines authenticity as an objectively measurable quality of an entity that can be evaluated by experts (Trilling, 1972; Wang N. , 1999). There is an evidential and objective standard (Keiningham et al., 2019). Beverland et al. (2008) suggest that there is an evidence-based reality which can be rated through verifiable information regarding the ingredients, origin, etc. Therefore, it is a quality inherent to an object which is tested through a set of absolute criteria to validate authenticity claims (Wang N. , 1999). Brands founding date such as Coca-Cola 1916 and Ford Mustang 1964 are given as illustrations (Morhart et al., 2015). **Constructivist Perspective** refers authenticity as the estimation and perception of a person's self beliefs, expectations, and perspectives (Wang, 1999). Thus, it is an output of how one sees other objects or entities through his/her interpretations and perspectives. It is a socially constructed phenomenon (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Leigh et al., 2006). It is believed that there is no absolute and static original on which the authenticity claim would rely on (Wang, 1999). The consumer has an interpretation regarding what the real world looks like depending on his/her expectations and perspectives. He/she accepts something real if it aligns with his/her reality. Infact, brand creates a schematic fit through cues with what consumer believe to be authentic. The term authenticity is conceptualized subjectively through relational and contextual situation, as well as subject's background, values, expectations and wills (Keiningham et al., 2019). It is also believed to be constructed through stereotype images and consciousness exposed in mass media

and social circle (Bruner, 1994; Wang, 1999; Le et al., 2010). Finally, the **Existentialist perspective** is related to self and defines authenticity as being true to self as the entity (Golomb, 1995). In marketing discipline, authenticity can be attributed to a brand if it helps consumer uncover his/her true self. In brief, the brand has identity-related role. The John Deere brand is given as a case from the literature in that, its consumer connects its marketing elements to his or her childhood and feel nostalgia (Morhart et al., 2015). Therefore, contrary to the objectivist and constructivist perspectives which are object-related, existentialist perspective is self-related (Le et al., 2019). To sum up briefly, authenticity is derived from three sources; objects, community and the self (Alexander, 2009).

In addition to these three perspectives, Leigh et al. (2006) raised **Staged/Fabricated Authenticity** that is visible in tourism industry and priorly proposed by Cohen (1988). This type is stated to be a mirror to objectivist perspective explained above. The interpretation in this case is judged through tourists' experiences versus a tangible origin. A touristic experience is stated to be authentic provided that ethnic restaurants, food ingredients, indoor and outdoor atmosphere definitely follows the real tradition (Keiningham, ve diğerleri, 2019). Leigh (2006) furthermore pinpoints Cohen's (1988) **Social Constructionist** perspective which claims there are different interpretations of reality based on consumers' self-perception; therefore, there is no single reference to the origin. Consumers build a symbolic authenticity grounded from their perceptions (Cohen, 1988). This is almost similar to Wang's (1999) constructivist perspective.

Several types of brand authenticity are presented in the literature. Grayson and Martinec (2004) defined two types of authenticity which are indexical and iconic authenticity. **Indexical authenticity** defines that an object is authentic when it is believed to be "the original" or "the real thing" in other words not thought to be a copy or imitation (Bruner 1994, p. 400; Cohen 1989, p. 40; Mac Cannell 1999, p.14) 'Index' refers to cues that have factual link with something else (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Pierce et al., 1998). This can be physical link such as an actor's real handprints appearing in his painting. This indexicality differentiates the real thing from its imitations. To give another example, Californian Milk Advisory Board created the 'Real California Milk Seal' to help consumers identify the dairy products made from real Californian milk. These factual cues are critical especially in luxury and consumer electronics products in which imitations are abundant (Nguyen et al., 2012). Consumers indeed

follow various cues in the brand activities such as advertisements, packages, and events to judge authenticity such as showing traditional craftsmen and depicting production methods (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). As an illustration, when studying beer, Alexander (2009) found that stylistic consistency, relationship to place and downplaying commercial motives are very significant cues (Alexander, 2009). On the other hand, **Iconic authenticity** is used when an object's physical features resemble to another object which is indexically authentic. This type of authenticity is sometimes called as "authentic reproduction" (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Bruner, 1994). The authors exemplified the term by stating that silver pieces in a museum gift shop could be perceived as authentic only if they resemble to those made in the past centuries by Spanish people. These two brand authenticity types suit to the 'type authenticity' mentioned in the philosophy and sociology definitions which was stated as being a member of a class or meet the necessary criteria (Davis, 2002 p.203). To exemplify, a consumer may perceive a Bavarian beer brand to be authentic because is originally brewed in Bavaria. This case is demonstrated as indexical authenticity. The real thing is distinguished by its copies by referring to some factual connections such as the place of production or producer. Whereas, another consumer may perceive a Bavarian beer to be authentic because it conveys the Bavarian culture regardless of where and by whom it is produced by (Fritz & Schoenmueller, 2017). This latter case demonstrates iconic authenticity. Additionally, Carsana and Jolibert (2018) contributes by stating that consumers use indexical and iconic cues to evaluate brand authenticity. Iconic cues refer to communication and marketing mix elements such as brand communication options that convey brand essence. By using locality, heritage, pedigree, historicity, and tradition of the brand in marketing communications, a brand can form authentic image (Beverland, Lindgreen, & Wink, 2008). On the other side, information such as age, country of origin, or actual brand behavior can be used by brands as indexical cues to convey authenticity.

Crain and Kokkoris (2017) developed a framework which proposes three distinct authenticity types. According to their view, authenticity is the degree through which an object, person, performance matches with a referent; in other words, true to something else. The first authenticity type proposed is **true-to-fact** which asserts that the information conveyed regarding the entity corresponds the entity's actual characteristics. To illustrate, a necklace claimed to be real gold is actually made of gold. It is justifiable to state that true-to-fact authenticity judges whether an entity is original or imitation, and whether it is transparent

regarding its actual characteristics. The second authenticity type proposed is **true-to-ideal** which asserts that an ideal is analogous to a consumer's category structure. There is a socially determined standard and the entity corresponds to it. There is a product category ideal such as method of production or origin. The third authenticity type proposed is **true-to-self** which describes one's inner self to be a fixed entity and intrinsically motivated as opposed to extrinsically motivated through social rewards and punishments (Crain & Kokkoris, 2017). Brands in this context are passionate about providing their goods and services by brand managers that direct those (Moulard et al., 2014).

Pine and Gillmore (2010) broadened the types of brand authenticity and defined five genres. Each type has its own judgement criteria in consumer assessment of brand authenticity. The first very type is **Natural Authenticity**. People perceives and object to be authentic provided that it exists in the natural state in or on the earth. Take the case of organic fruits and vegetables. Growers use methods to preserve the natural elements of this food type and avoid chemicals that will change the original nature. The second type is **Original Authenticity**. Products and services which provide unique features and processes that are all new to the world are classified in this type. The authors illustrated Apple brand in that, the brand's core purpose is to think different. The third type is **Exceptional Authenticity**. If a product and service is featured exceptionally well, original, and complemented with human care to its consumer, it is classified in this type. To exemplify, Harley Davidson motorcycle is an exceptionally well designed and original vehicle that is complemented with a community (Harley Davidson Owners Group) connected with special care. The fourth type is **Referential Authenticity**. It can be referred to as connecting with something in the past which is already authentic in nature. To demonstrate, participating in a Chinese tea ceremony. The last type is **Influential Authenticity**. In the case that an entity influences others to strive for a higher purpose in the community, he/she is perceived as authentic. Supporting sustainability programs is stated as a specific example (Pine and Gillmore, 2010).

Beverland et al. (2008) broadened the literature, examined brand authenticity through advertising cues and defined three types of advertising authenticity which are **Pure/Literal Authenticity, Approximate Authenticity, and Moral Authenticity**. The authors state that Pure Authenticity provides consumer guarantee of the genuine article through indexical cues

such as illustrations of crafts people engaged in the production process, and cues that indicate the method of production (images of beer stored in cellars). Approximate Authenticity provides consumer a feeling that this brand will help achieve self-authentication by connecting with place and time through iconic cues such as stylized links with the product and creators and stylized connection with the place of production. Finally, Moral Authenticity provides consumer with a feeling that this brand will help achieve self-authentication through connecting moral values with indexical and iconic cues such as involvement of local producers.

Getting ground from the **Moral authenticity** in psychology discipline (Grazian, 2003), marketing discipline examined core values established on goodness in the brand authenticity literature (Yoganathan et al., 2018). Therefore, having motivations beyond commercial motives is a frequently observed type of brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015; Eggers et al., 2013; Illicic and Webster, 2014). Yoganathan et al. 2018 developed a framework called ‘The Core Value Compass’ in which ‘goodness criteria’ is presented four core values in two axis continuums with extremes contrasting with each other and form a tension. Indeed, brands that do good are claimed to be motivated by clearly set core values. Core values gained importance in the brand authenticity literature because integrity is an important dimension of brand authenticity. The authors who developed the core value compass describes the core values as set of deeply rooted principles that underlie the characteristics of leading corporate brands and guide across organizational levels and divisions. Modern corporate brands who are expected to do good for the society have commitment to form ethical relationships with their stakeholders and with their society. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) approaches are illustrated as a doing good medium in corporate brands because organization acts in conformity with its core objectives. These companies stand out from the competition and gain sustainable competitive advantage.

Below table outlines all the brand authenticity types explained up to now.

Table 2.1.1.2.2

Brand Authenticity Types in the Literature*

Brand Authenticity Type	Definition	Source; Author (Year)
Indexical Authenticity	It is the original, not copy and imitation when taking objective reference with the primary object/entity.	Grayson and Martinec (2004)
Iconic Authenticity	Objects physical feature resembles the original object for reproduction purpose.	Grayson and Martinec (2004)
True-to-fact Authenticity	The information conveyed regarding the entity corresponds the entity's actual characteristics.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
True-to-self Authenticity	The inner self is a fixed entity and intrinsically motivated as opposed to extrinsically motivated.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
True-to-ideal Authenticity	An ideal is analogous to a consumer's category structure in his/her mind.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Natural Authenticity	It takes natural state in and on the earth.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Original Authenticity	Products and services which provide unique features and processes that are all new to the world.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Exceptional Authenticity	Product and service is featured exceptionally well, original, and complemented with human care to its consumer.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Referential Authenticity	Connecting with something in the past which is already authentic in nature.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Influential Authenticity	An entity influences others to strive for a higher purpose in the community.	Crain and Kokkoris (2017)
Pure/Literal Authenticity	Provide consumer guarantee of the genuine article through indexical cues	Beverland, Lindgreen and Wink (2008)
Approximate Authenticity	Provides consumer a feeling that this brand will help achieve self-authentication by connecting with place and time.	Beverland, Lindgreen and Wink (2008)
Moral Authenticity	Provides consumer with a feeling that this brand will help achieve self-authentication through connecting moral values.	Beverland, Lindgreen and Wink (2008)

**Designed by the Researcher*

The definition of, perspectives on and types of brand authenticity are examined so far. It is worthwhile to introduce **Perceived Brand Authenticity** at this point. It is a term almost used

identical to the term 'Brand Authenticity'. Without much discussion, it is stated in the literature that authenticity is something given to brands by consumers instead of brands produce and promote it directly through their will (Bruhn et al. 2012, Grayson and Martinec 2004; Beverland and Farrelly 2010; Napoli et al. 2017). It is regarded to be a consumer-driven concept suggesting any effort to build authenticity is for the enhancement of the authenticity from the eye of the consumer (Le et al., 2019; Kovacs and Lehman, 2014). Portal (2018) states that consumers co-create the meaning of authenticity according to their own understanding of what is real, genuine and true. It is defined to be perceptual which means consumer determines what is authentic instead of the marketer (Beverland et al., 2010). Individuals connect object-based cues and connect them with their self-experiences and aspirations; therefore, authenticity is not only an inherent attribute, but also is subjective (Napoli et al., 2016). Consumers' identity goals underpin assessments of whether a brand is authentic or not. It is further stated that attributing authenticity to an object involves conscious production of brand meaning through actively using brand cues. Therefore, what is real or genuine resides in the minds of consumers which means marketer only makes the brand story, but consumer listens to it and search whether the brand story is confirmed (Beverland, 2005). The intrinsic experiences of a person grounded by his/her purpose makes an object or experience authentic inherently. In other words, brand authenticity exists in the mind of the consumer beholder (Taylor, 2009). This means that authenticity is personally formed and perceived; thus, companies has to adapt strong strategies to understand these personal expectations.

Some studies broadened the literature on brand authenticity and contributed extended concepts of authenticity in marketing and branding. One of these studies introduced **True-to-Self Brand Authenticity** (Moulard et al, 2014). It is defined as the extent to which consumers perceive that a brand is passionate about providing its goods and services. Brand is apparently managed by a group of individuals; thus, their common passion and behaviors are evaluated by consumers on behalf of the brand. This concept has four antecedents which are uniqueness, scarcity, longevity, and longitudinal consistency. A second study is **Authentic Advertising** (Miller, 2015). It is the extent to which consumers perceive an ad to depict the brand in a real manner by the use of indexical and iconic cues in the ad that conveys the attributes and benefits of the brand. A third study introduced **CSR Authenticity** which is defined as the perception of a company's CSR actions as a genuine demonstration of company's beliefs and behavior toward

society apart from legal requirements (Joo et al., 2019). A fourth study raised **Brand extension fit authenticity** (Prados-Pena & Barrio-Garcia, 2018). It defines a brand's extension to convey the cultural values and propositions the parent brand possesses. Lastly, study of Carlton and Cornwell (2019) introduced **Horizontal Marketing Partnership Authenticity**. It is defined as the extent to which the relationship between two or more brands (including human and brand partnership) is perceived by consumers to be genuine and real (Charlton & Cornwell, 2019).

To recapitulate this section briefly, despite the multiplicity of the brand authenticity definition, the common viewpoint is that brand authenticity refers to genuineness, transparency, legitimacy, originality, commitment and honesty through various brand communication cues and it is created in the mind of the individual beholder. Therefore, a specific schema forms in the consumer mind with various angles similar to a brand image. A chief question may arise at this point whether brand authenticity is a functional or a symbolic attribute of a brand. The answer will be searched through the examination of the conceptualization in the next section. However, regardless of the attribute type, its link with the brand image is worthwhile to understand. Few studies examined the relationship between brand authenticity and brand image and indicated the discriminate validity between the two branding concepts (Bruhn et al., 2012). Bruhn et al. (2012) claim that brand authenticity as a concept must be distinguished from various other branding concepts, especially from brand image. It is claimed through an empirical study that "Brand Authenticity" is not identical to "Brand Image". In fact, brand authenticity should be regarded as an important association in brand image which is formed through brand elements (Illicic & Webster, 2014). Therefore, if a brand is perceived to be authentic, it is considered to have a positive influence on the overall brand image. To remind, "Brand image" states consumers' mental picture of a brand through set of associations linked to an offering (Keller, 2003) thus making the brand perception. Various attribute associations through different sources such as advertising and personal product experiences make up this image (Carsana & Jolibert, 2018). Illicic and Webster (2014) asserts that authenticity should be in the brand's DNA which is the core of the brand's identity. It should also compromise the brand values, people, product, services, and all organization. Therefore, it weighs a remarkable portion in a brand's overall image. **Furthermore, this section defined perspectives on and types of brand authenticity. The literature presents no clustering of types under perspectives; yet, some classifications could be asserted.** It is justifiable to argue that

indexical and iconic authenticities can be clustered under objectivist perspective in that, the former defines a factual link to the genre and the latter defines a factual link and criteria with the original entity. Furthermore, true-to-fact authenticity and natural authenticity could be classified under objectivist perspective as well due to the factual links and objective criterion requirements. It is conceivable that true-to-ideal authenticity is clustered under constructivist perspective since ideal is analogous to consumer's category structure and consumer assess the authenticity based on his/her background and expectations. Lastly, true-to-self and influential authenticity types might be clustered under existentialist perspective because consumer seeks identity related connection in these types. Understanding these perspectives help marketing manager to establish relevant cues for his/her brand for authentic perception.

2.1.2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY

A deep literature review is conducted in order to identify the conceptual domain of brand authenticity in this section. Construct's dimensionality and definitions of each dimension are examined detailly for an adequate understanding of the brand authenticity concept. This examination shed more light on how brand authenticity is defined through means of its proposed dimensions upon different studies. Literature published from 1994 to 2020 provides 10 different set of brand authenticity dimensions in total. In fact all of them are identified as concrete dimensions (Akbar and Wyemer, 2016; Busser and Shulga, 2019; Bruhn et al., 2012; Dwivedi and Mc Donald, 2018; Illicic and Webster, 2014; Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2016; Portal et al., 2008; Schallehn et al., 2014; Yao and Wang, 2018; Grohmann and Guevremont, 2015) except one of them is identified as attribute and underlying construct (Eggers et al., 2013).

A critical prerequisite in most of the studies prior to dimension development is to ensure there is a shared understanding of authenticity concept in general. Some different approaches are used at the very beginning of the surveys to achieve this critical step. The general meaning of authenticity is discussed at the very beginning of the surveys. In some studies, participants are asked to bring possessions and pictures of important and valued experiences and not favored objects into the research and these materials are discussed in that whether they are authentic or not and why (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010). Additionally, in some other studies researcher

developed a file of almost 100 images and their authenticity is discussed (Bruhn et al, 2012). Another approach is to select three brands that are authentic and another three inauthentic by the consumers and discuss the reasonings. A last study asked the respondents to select a highly authentic, and a highly inauthentic brand and discussed why (Napoli et al. 2016).

Literature survey reveals that there is a variety of conceptualizations of brand authenticity construct; therefore, there is a fragmentation of dimensions and lack of consensus regarding the conceptualization of the construct (Eggers et al., 2013; Napoli et al., 2016; Akbar and Wyemer, 2016). However, almost all the studies have a consensus that brand authenticity is a multi-dimensional construct (Beverland, 2005; Bruhn et al., 2012; Eggers et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2016; Boyle, 2004). Few studies examine the construct as unidimensional with six items (Schallehn et al., 2014).

Table 2.1.2.1 indicates all the dimensions of brand authenticity construct as well as attributes and underlying constructs of it together with main sources from the corpus of literature. The scale items that are used to measure each of the dimensions and underlying constructs are given in the same table. This table comprehensively indicates the conceptualization studies of brand authenticity in the branding literature. The first column named **set** indicates the total dimensions developed or used in each study as a whole.

Table 2.1.2.1

Dimension and Scale Items of Brand Authenticity, Designed by the Researcher

DIMENSIONS/UNDERLYING CONSTRUCTS OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY	SCALE ITEM (... refers to the brand nominated)	SOURCE	RELATION TO BRAND AUTHENTICITY CONSTRUCT
SET 1			
Reliability	My experience of the brand ... has shown me that it keeps its promises. The brand ... delivers what its promises. ... promises are credible. The brand ... makes reliable promises.	Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Jian 2019 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Jian 2019 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Jian 2019 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018/Jian 2019	dimension
Continuity	I think brand ... is consistent over time. I think the brand ... stays true to itself. Brand ... offers continuity. The brand ... has a clear concept that it pursues.	Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018/Jian 2019 Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018/Jian 2019 Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018/Jian 2019	dimension
Originality	The brand ... is different from all other brands. ... stands out from all other brands. I think the brand ... is unique.	Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018 Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018 Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018	dimension
Naturalness	The brand ... clearly distinguishes itself from other brands. The brand ... does not seem artificial. The brand ... makes a genuine impression. The brand ... gives the impression of being natural.	Bruhn et. al., 2012 & 2017; Portal et. al., 2018; Busser and Shulga 2018 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Busser and Shulga 2018 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Busser and Shulga 2018 Bruhn et. al., 2012/2017; Busser and Shulga 2018	dimension
SET 2			
Credibility	A brand that will not betray you. A brand that accomplishes its value promise. An honest brand.	Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018	dimension
Continuity	A brand with a history. A timeless brand. A brand that survives times. A brand that survives brands.	Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018	dimension
Integrity	A brand that gives back to its consumers. A brand with moral principles. A brand true to a set of moral values. A brand that cares about its consumers. This brand is honest. This brand has a positive influence. This brand is committed to the public good. This brand is reputable. This brand is reliable.	Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018	dimension
Symbolism	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives. A brand that reflects important values people care about. A brand that connects people with their real selves. A brand connects people with what is really important.	Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018 Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann and 2016; Portal et. al., 2018	dimension

SET 3			
Virtue	This brand is inauthentic because of low labor cost for long working hours.	Tran et al., 2018	dimension
	This brand explains the morality and honesty of the particular company.	Tran et al., 2018	
Connection	This brand needs to note friendly environment.	Tran et al., 2018	
	This brand includes most functions that are practical in daily usage and authentic in value.	Tran et al., 2018	dimension
Realism	Advertising of this brand sometimes is too exaggerated so that you feel unreal.	Tran et al., 2018	
	Authenticity of this brand means reliable	Tran et al., 2018	dimension
	This brand prefers to be true to them.	Tran et al., 2018	
	Products of this brand are made genuine & honesty.	Tran et al., 2018	
SET 4			
Congruency(Employee Brand)	My own values are similar or identical with my company's values	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	attribute/underlying construct
	I am committed to my company's values.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	
Consistency (Employee perspective)	We stick to our values rather than run after short-term Our promise to customers follows our values.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	attribute/underlying construct
	The development of our company was determined by We are perceived as 'real'.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	
	Our promise to customers is in accordance with the company's vision and company strategy.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	
	We adhere to our values whenever we come in contact with our customers (advertising, customer dialogues, website, products/services, etc.)	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	
Customer Orientation (Employee)	We always adjust our actions according to the wishes of our customers and other stakeholders.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	attribute/underlying construct
	In order to survive competitively, we always have to act in the interest of our customers.	Eggers and Guldenberg, 2013	
SET 5			
Genuineness	Pretentious or Unpretentious	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	dimension
	Insincere or Sincere	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	Fake or Real	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	Dishonest or Honest	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	Disguised or Undisguised	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
Brand Authenticity	Illegitimate or Legitimate	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	dimension
	My brand stays true to itself	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	My brand clearly stands out from other brands.	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	My brand delivers its promises.	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
Originality	Follower or Pioneer	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	dimension
	Ordinary or Innovative	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
	Copied or Unique	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	
SET 6			
Brand Authenticity	Brand X possesses a clear philosophy which guides the brand promise.	Schallehn et al. 2014	dimension
	Considering its brand promise, my brand does not pretend to be someone else.	Schallehn et al. 2014	
	Brand [X] knows exactly what it stands for and does not promise anything which contradicts its essence and character.	Schallehn et al. 2014	
	Considering its brand promise, my brand does not curry favour with its target group; moreover, it shows self-esteem.	Schallehn et al. 2014	
	Brand X distorts itself to match contemporary needs.	Schallehn et al. 2014	
	The saying "you trim your sails to every wind that blows" describes brand X adequately. (reversed)	Schallehn et al. 2014	
SET 7			
Relational Orientation	Cares about openness and honesty in close relationship with consumers.	Ilicic & Webster, 2016	uni-dimensional celebrity brand authenticity
	In general, places a good deal of importance on consumers understanding who they truly are.	Ilicic & Webster, 2016	
	Wants consumers to understand the real them rather than just their public 'image'.	Ilicic & Webster, 2016	
	Consumers can count on them being who they are regardless of the situation.	Ilicic & Webster, 2016	
SET 8			
Brand Authenticity	Considering its brand promise, my brand does not pretend to be someone else.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	dimension
	My brand knows exactly what it stands for and does not promise anything which contradicts its character.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	
	My brand does not seem to distort itself.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	
	I find the brand as truly authentic.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	
	The brand shows self-esteem.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	
	My brand possesses a clear philosophy which guides the brand promise.	Dwivedi and McDonald, 2018/Manhtiuou 2018	
SET 9			
Brand Heritage	The brand has a strong connection to a historical period in time, culture and/or specific region.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Napoli et.al. 2016; Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand has a strong link to the past, which is still perpetuated and celebrated to this day.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Napoli et.al. 2016; Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand reminds me of a golden age.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Napoli et.al. 2016; Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand exudes a sense of tradition.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Napoli et.al. 2016; Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand reinforces and builds on long-held traditions.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Napoli et.al. 2016; Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
Quality Commitment	Quality is central to the brand.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	Only the finest ingredients/materials are used in the manufacture of this brand.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand is made to the most exacting standards, here everything the firm does is aimed at improving quality.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand is manufactured to the most stringent quality standards.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	It feels like artisan skills and customized manufacturing processes have been retained in the production of this brand.	Napoli et. al.,2013	dimension/cue
	The brand is a potent symbol of continued quality.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The brand is made by a master craftsmen who pays attention to detail and is involved throughout the production process.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
	The firm is committed to retaining long-held quality standards for the brand.	Napoli et. al.,2013/Napoli et.al. 2016/Assiouras et al. 2015	dimension/cue
Sincerity	The brand remains true to its espoused values.	Napoli et. al.,2013	dimension/cue
	The brand refuses to compromise the values upon which The brand has stuck to its principles.	Napoli et. al.,2013; Beverland 2016	dimension/cue
		Napoli et. al.,2013; Beverland 2016	dimension/cue

SET 10			
Maintain the style and standard of	I think the brand always maintains its consistent style	Yao and Wang 2019	dimension
	I think the product design standard of this brand is very	Yao and Wang 2019	
	I think the quality of the brand is always good	Yao and Wang 2019	
Respect the heritage	I pick up this brand of product to remind me of the past	Yao and Wang 2019	dimension
	I think the brand is a genuine product	Yao and Wang 2019	
	I think the brand is very good inheritance	Yao and Wang 2019	
Maintain the essence of the brand	I think the brand has always retained its essence	Yao and Wang 2019	dimension
	I think the brand has always been the same	Yao and Wang 2019	
	I think the brand essence has never changed	Yao and Wang 2019	
SET 11			
Brand Authenticity	...possesses a clear philosophy which guides the brand	Manthiou et al. 2018	dimension
	...knows exactly what it stands for and does not	Manthiou et al. 2018	
	Considering its brand promise, ... does not pretend to	Manthiou et al. 2018	
	Considering its brand promise, ... doesn't favour its target group; moreover, it shows self-esteem	Manthiou et al. 2018	

**Designed by the Researcher*

Bruhn et al. (2012) conceptualization of brand authenticity indicates that an authentic brand is reliable, continuous, original and natural. Authors state their ground rules in conceptualization as brand authenticity dealing with market offerings and based on human evaluation. These dimensions are later used and re-examined by some other authors (Morhart et al., 2015; Portal et al., 2008; Busser and Shulga, 2019; Akbar and Wyemer, 2016; Jian et al., 2019). In order to make a robust identification, Bruhn et al. (2012) organized an open-ended in-depth interview and asked respondents to choose one authentic and one inauthentic brand and asked the sample the reasonings that underlie their nominations. The reasonings are grouped into four overall categories. The second phase of the study developed a brand authenticity scale assigned to these four dimensions. After the item purification and dimension validation stage, a 15 items scale is found finally (Bruhn et al., 2012). Below how each dimension is defined;

i. Reliability Dimension:

Defines a brand keeping its promises and therefore trustworthy. In other words, the brand makes reliable and credible promises to others and deliver on them. There is transparency and honesty towards consumer that there is both ability and willingness to deliver (Bruhn et al., 2012). Reliability is claimed to be identical to credibility in another source and similar items are represented (Morhart et al., 2015). Wal-Mart's always low-price policy and action is

illustrated as an example in this source. Besides, delivering high quality promise is stated to indicate firm being credible. Brands are advised to create a unified communication strategy with consistent statements that they can deliver through congruence between communication and behavior among different tools on a long time basis (Bruhn et al., 2012) since consistency is traditionally defined as the state when marketing mix elements reflect the declared intentions and promises of the brand (Park & Zaltman, 1987).

ii. Continuity Dimension:

Defines a brand having a clear concept that it pursues and staying true to itself. This brand has continuity, stability and consistency over time. The brands foundations, traditions, anniversary, values based on traditions, its connection to its roots all of which symbolize brand heritage offers continuity dimension (Bruhn et al., 2012). This brand has ability to survive against changing trends; therefore, timeless (Beverland, 2005). In order to animate these associations, marketing mix elements are advised to be used such as visuals on pack, wisely written slogans and event marketing with anniversary occasions (Bruhn et al., 2012). Communications and customer experiences should be identical with the identity, vision and value propositions of the organization (Eggers et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015). This brand has ability to survive against changing trends. It reflects timelessness, historicity, and its ability to transcend trends.

iii. Originality Dimension:

A brand with a unique character standing out and distinguishing itself from other brands. Innovativeness association plays a chief role in this dimension (Bruhn et al., 2012). Later, Akbar and Wyemer (2016) re-examined and identified this dimension in their study defined originality as the degree to which a brand is perceived to be unique and lack of imitation. Authors judge brands' characteristics of being pioneer, innovative and unique for a thorough measurement of this dimension.

iv. Naturalness Dimension:

A brand making a genuine impression through being natural and avoiding artificiality (Bruhn et al., 2012).

Morhart et al. (2015) in their study initially aimed to explore meaning and dimensionality of brand authenticity; therefore, conducted in-depth interviews to fourteen consumers. Participants are asked to nominate an authentic brand and bring logos, symbols, and other materials to support their reasonings. Authors' aim was to uncover unconscious meanings at this stage. After the necessary analysis four brand dimensions are identified which are continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism. The authors assert these dimensions to have relations to three perspectives introduced in the corpus of literature; objectivist, constructivist, existentialist.

i. Continuity Dimension:

This dimension delivers the same meaning when compared with Bruhn et al. (2012) continuity dimensions; however, items are worded differently with the same core meaning. A brand with timelessness, historicity and stable against changing trends is asserted to be continuous. In their in-depth interview, a participant mentioned eating Quaker oatmeal since she was a little girl and stressed the never changing taste could be a good illustration (Morhart et al., 2015). Authors explored whether heritage (Wiedmann et al., 2011) can interchangeably be used with continuity dimension. They found through discriminant validity analysis that heritage has no conceptual similarity to continuity. Brand continuity is claimed to have a relation to objectivist perspective since brand establishment date is an indexical cue.

ii. Credibility Dimension:

As mentioned by Bruhn et al. (2012) authentic brands deliver what they say. Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualize brand authenticity as the brands' being honest and transparent to the consumer. This brand has both willingness and capacity to fulfill its claims. Authors claim that this dimension resembles to honesty dimension of Boyle (2004), sincerity dimension of brand personality (Aaker, 1997) and has commonalities with quality performance versus consumers' expectations (Frazier & Lassar, 1996). They further explored whether sincerity, brand quality and trustworthiness (Erdem and Swait 2004) can interchangeably be used with credibility. They found sincerity and trustworthiness to be similar constructs and thus share conceptual similarities with credibility. However, brand quality and credibility are found to have discriminant validities.

iii. Integrity Dimension:

Prior to Morhart et al. (2015) identification of integrity dimension, Holt (2002) identified commercial disinterestedness and Beverland and Farrelly (2010) identified virtue all of which represent similar concepts. Integrity dimension focuses on moral behaviors and ethical acts, as well as brand's responsibility for sincere and passionate care and loyalty for consumers. This brand is both committed to the public good and gives back to its consumers. Moreover, this brand is complemented with wholesome values (Portal et al., 2008). Considering stakeholders' rights, universal rights such as human and labor rights and respect for the environment, sustainable development by considering present and future generations and considering common good for the society are related strategies (Kasper, 2015). Constructivist perspective is asserted to influence this dimension. Authors explored whether partner quality can interchangeably be used with integrity dimension (Fournier, 1994). Their finding is that there is a discriminant validity between integrity and partner quality.

iv. Symbolism Dimension:

As existential perspective asserts, brands have self-identity related role. Morhart et al. (2015) identified symbolism dimension upon this perspective. These brands give symbolic benefit to consumer by defining who they are and provide personal meaning. They help consumers construct their identity, reflect value they consider to be important, and serve as a resource for self by providing self-referential cues representing their values and roles. Authors exemplified an attended connecting John Deere Logo with his life at the farm. It is claimed to resemble identity-related aspect of brand attachment. Portal et al. (2008) states that the brand characteristics resonate with the consumers identity in the case of symbolism dimension.

Akbar and Wyemer (2017) criticized both Bruhn et al. (2012) and Morhart et al. (2015) in that both studies define brand authenticity after they identified dimensions and scales of it. Therefore, the construct is defined through its dimensions such as Morhart et al. (2015, p.203) states;

“Brand Authenticity is the extent to which consumers perceive a brand to be faithful toward itself (continuity), true to its consumers (credibility), motivated by caring and

responsibility (integrity), and able to support consumers in being true to themselves (symbolism).”

However, it would have been more robust and strengthen the conceptualization to develop such a definition prior to identifying the construct before investigating the conceptualization of the construct. Akbar and Wyemer (2017), to illustrate postulates brand authenticity construct as the extent to which a brand is considered unique, legitimate, truthful to its claims, and lacking falsity.

Authors claim that there is a lack of theoretical understanding of Brand Authenticity construct because there is a disjointed body of research with wide variety of conceptualization. In order to provide a unified understanding, authors conducted a thorough examination of literature and extracted forty dimensions of brand authenticity. After a detailed and critical analysis they extracted dimensions which inappropriately refer to the organization instead of the brand (such as quality commitment) (Beverland, 2005), has little relationship with the construct, unlikely to exit within the conceptual domain of brand authenticity (such as momentum and familiarity), act as antecedents or consequences of brand authenticity (such as sustainable (Boyle, 2004), integrity (Morhart et al., 2015), sustainable (Boyle, 2004) may be found in authentic brands but are not essential for a brand to be authentic (such as maintaining the original product and stylistic consistency (Beverland, 2005) and finally applicable to certain types of brands. These analyses excluded dimensions existed outside the conceptual domain of brand authenticity and only two remained within the conceptual domain of the construct. These dimensions are originality and naturalness/genuineness. Authors state that these two dimensions form the construct and describe brand authenticity’s semantic meaning. To conclude, authentic brands should be original and genuine (Akbar and Wyemer, 2017). Another contribution of the authors is that brand authenticity is a reflective first order and formative second-order construct. Therefore, each dimension (genuineness and originality) should be measured with reflective indicators (items) in the main construct brand authenticity. Items are presented below during the dimension definitions.

i. Originality

It is the degree to which a brand is seen to be unique and lack of imitation. It is pioneer,

innovative and unique.

ii. Genuineness

It is the degree to which a brand is seen to be legitimate and truthful. It is sincere instead of insincere, real instead fake, and unpretentious instead of pretentious.

iii. Brand Authenticity reflective items

It is the degree to which brand stays true to itself, clearly stands out from other brands, and delivers what it promises.

Napoli et al. (2013) examined their study through a different set of dimensions which are extracted from the literature. These dimensions are all claimed to reflect the genuineness of a brand and according to the corpus of literature each are highlighted to be cues for consumers to judge whether the brand is authentic or not. These dimensions are; brand heritage, quality commitment and sincerity. These dimensions are named as three interrelated first-order constructs. After doing the necessary item generation, refinement, reduction and reliability analysis, the authors clustered items through confirmatory factor analysis. The remaining items and dimensions are examined through reliability and validity assessment for the construct which is called consumer-based brand authenticity (Napoli et al., 2016). According to their study, quality commitment has nine, brand heritage has six and sincerity has 4 items.

i. Quality Commitment

Authors stated that this brand is a real symbol of high quality. Only finest ingredients are used during manufacturing in which strictly high-quality standards are pursued. Artisan skills, customized processes and craftsmen involvement are part of this manufacturing.

ii. Brand Heritage

Authors found that brand with heritage has strong connection to a historical period in time, culture and specific region which is still perpetuated to this day. It reminds consumers long-held traditions through building in them.

iii. Sincerity

Authors stated that this dimension defines remaining true to and in harmony with declared values.

Eggers et al. (2013) has taken brand consistency, brand customer orientation and brand congruency as underlying constructs of brand authenticity all of which are taken from employee perspective. Their reasoning to select these attributes is due to their focus on small and medium sized enterprises from chief executive officer perspective and their purpose to find the linkages between brand authenticity, brand trust and SME growth.

i. Brand Consistency

In the condition that employees promise according to their fixed values and company's vision and strategy and adhere to these values whenever they contact with customers at every touchpoint such as advertising, instore, product/services, the brand is perceived to be consistent (Eggers et al., 2013). The likely result is all the stakeholders experience the brand values consistent at all contact points (Burmam & Schallen, 2008). Creating such a consistency among all brand elements and activities are critical because it will create trust among stakeholders.

ii. Brand Congruency

In the condition that the employee regards his or her own values identical to the company's values and feel committed to the company, there is a brand and employee consistency (Eggers et al. 2013). When employees fit well in the organization, they are more satisfied with their jobs and more committed which will foster brand trust (Schneider et al., 1995).

iii. Brand Customer Orientation

In the condition that the employee act in the interest of the consumer and adjust actions according to the needs of all stakeholders and consumers, brand customer orientation occurs (Eggers, O'Dweyer, Kraus, Vallaster, & Idenberg, 2013). It is not only understanding the needs of customers, but also satisfying them. Therefore, when the individual consumer benefit is

satisfied as promised, the brand will be perceived authentic by this consumer (Gupta & Melewar, 2008).

Illicic & Webster (2016) introduced celebrity brand authenticity as a construct that represents consumer perceptions of celebrities being “true to oneself” in their behaviors and interactions with consumers. The authors discovered whether the behavioral and relational components of Authenticity Inventory Kernis and Goldman’s (2006). The findings proposed that celebrity brand authenticity is unidimensional and tied to consumers’ perception regarding celebrity’s positive involvement and relations or interactions with consumers. The authentic celebrity is open and honest in close relationship with consumers, cares consumers to identify who they truly are, wants consumers to understand real them instead of their public image, and reveal consumers their true self regardless of the situation.

Schallen et al. (2014) identified brand authenticity to be unidimensional and measured it through six items. According to their study, brand authenticity can enhance the identity-based brand management model. This model suggests that identity of the brand is not visible and can only be communicated through brand positioning and promise (De Chernatony et al., 2011). Companies strive to build brand image and have the risk to position and communicate brand identity according to what external target groups may desire to hear instead of reflecting the true identity of the brand. At this point brand authenticity plays major role. In the case that there is a low brand authenticity, brand positioning does not fit in the real brand identity and brand promise given through brand positioning is directed by external forces. However, in the contrary case, brand positions itself from inside out. Schallen et al. (2014) identifies a brand to be authentic when it possesses a clear philosophy which guides the brand promise, exactly knows what it stands for and does not promise anything which contradicts its character and essence, shows self-esteem, and finally does not distort itself for contemporary needs.

Manthiou et al. (2018) identified brand authenticity as a unidimensional construct as well while investigating how brand authenticity perceptions, impression in memory, lifestyle congruence and brand love interrelate with one another in the context of luxury hotel setting. Brand authenticity is identified through possessing a clear philosophy which guides the brand promise, has a self-awareness and does not promise anything which contradicts this inner self, does not pretend to be something else and indicates self-esteem.

Dwevedi and McDonald (2018) examined the effect of consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications on brand authenticity of fast-moving consumer goods. The authors are among few who used unidimensional brand authenticity scale. According to their study, an authentic brand has a clear philosophy that guides its brand promise, does not pretend to be someone else and considers its brand promise, it does not promise anything which contradicts its character, shows self-esteem and does not distort itself (Dwivedi & McDonald, 2018). Manthiou et al. (2018) used the same unidimensional items in their study which investigates how brand authenticity perceptions, impression in memory, lifestyle-congruence, and brand love interrelate with one another.

Yao and Wang (2018) raised another set of dimensions in their study which aimed to investigate the relationships between the brand strategy after merge and acquisition, brand authenticity and consumer purchase intention. In their study which explored that decline of consumer purchase intention is due to the falling consumer assessment on brand authenticity in the post-merge brand strategy, authors identified three dimensions of brand authenticity. These are; maintain the style and standard of the brand, respect the heritage and maintain the essence of the brand (Yao & Wang, 2018).

i. Maintain the style and standard of the brand

It refers to brand maintaining its consistent style, possess a very good product design style and has high quality. Therefore, this brand provides consumers a consistent concept through unified design and elements (Yao & Wang, 2018); therefore, improve consumers' perception of brand authenticity (Gillmore & Pine, 2007). This dimension is claimed to be critical especially for luxury goods and automobiles (Beverland, 2009).

ii. Respect the heritage

It refers to brand reminding the past and genuine products. Any brand is claimed to be born at a specific time and place which affects its aura; thus, inherent consistency indicates the brand to respect its heritage.

iii. Maintain the essence of the brand

It refers to brand retaining its essence and always stay the same. Brand essence is an important concept because it is stated to provide consumer the core benefits and values which differentiates itself from other brands. As a result, after the merge and acquisition, it is crucial that brand maintains its brand essence to be perceived as authentic.

Spiggle et al. (2012) contributed to the corpus of literature with their study on Brand Extension Authenticity. The authors raised an argument that the authenticity of a brand extension relative to the parent brand affects its acceptance in the marketplace. It refers to the extent that an extension is legitimate and culturally consistent to the parent brand. Conceptualization of brand extension authenticity is done through four dimensions which are maintaining brand standards and dimensions, preserving brand essence, honoring brand heritage and avoiding brand exploitation (Spiggle et al., 2012). Authors inspired from Brown et al. (2003) to give a more extensive demonstration of brand extension authenticity. Internal consistency refers to brand being true to itself and maintains its essential core; whereas, external consistency refers to brand being what it appears to be in terms of sensory images. Extending the brand through new offers should not compromise its core and essential nature; thus, internal consistency underlies brand extension authenticity. An authentic brand extension is claimed to reinforce parent brand meaning, essence and core for internal consistency and resist to short-term trends in the marketplace (Spiggle et al., 2012). As priority stated, first dimension of brand extension authenticity is maintaining brand styles and standards. It is the extent to which brand exhibit a uniformed design and sensory elements, production processes, ingredients which all signal legitimacy to the parent brand standards. Second dimension, honoring brand heritage is the extent to which extension honors parent brands heritage through connecting with its origin in terms of method of production, time and place. Third dimension, preserving brand essence is the extent to which the soul, aura and fundamentals of the brand is reinforced through extension. The brand in this regard is stated to be a singular concept that reflects its identity and replicates itself as market offerings just defined as “reproduction of a same original idea” (Van Rekom et al. 2009, p.7). The final dimension, avoiding brand exploitation is the extent to which the managers of the brand passionately stick to the heritage, quality, and essence of the parent brand by resisting to the external short-term commercial opportunities.

Guevremont (2018) investigated the interpretation authenticity in young brands. The qualitative study identified three dimensions of authenticity which are virtuousness, transparency, and proximity.

i. Brand Virtuousness

It represents the brand having noble values regarding respect, family, generosity, and community and live according to these values on a daily basis. This brand desire to have positive impact at others and society and possesses moral and ethical principles.

ii. Brand Transparency

It represents the brand demonstrating openness in sharing emotions, imperfections, and mistakes. Consumers can easily observe brand's instinctive and emotional nature because it is not hiding anything.

iii. Brand Proximity

It represents the brand exhibiting genuine care to create intimacy in the consumer.

Beattie and Fernley (2014) stated that communicating honestly regarding the company's product and services, environmental impact and sustainability measures, acting with integrity in all cases, being open and truthful to all stakeholders, standing for more than just making money, and having a relevant and engaging story are factors identifying brand authenticity.

Choi et al (2015) identified fashion brand authenticity dimensions through selected two sports brands. These dimensions are stated as; authority, fashionability, consistency, innovativeness, sustainability, origin, and heritage. Among these, authority, consistency, origin and heritage are clustered under indexical authenticity, whereas fashionability, innovativeness and sustainability are clustered under iconic authenticity. This study defines fashionability dimension to the extend brand adopts to fashion, is trendsetter, is contemporary and reflects the consumers' taste. Consistency is defined as having identical images, maintaining consistency in style and consistent price. Innovativeness indicated the extent brand tries new things and

distinguishes itself from other brands. Sustainability indicates the brand's care about the environment, taking social responsibility and having public affairs. Origin defines the brand having a national(regional) identity and having an exotic image. Lastly, heritage defines the brand respecting its history and preserves for a long time (Choi et al., 2015).

To sum up, comprehensive examination of all these studies verifies the multidimensional nature of brand authenticity construct. Even though there is a lack of consensus in the conceptualization as commonly stated in the literature, it can be argued that diverse conceptualization studies present an almost singular brand authenticity construct because almost all of the studies shape the construct through being continuous, reliable, having virtue, being genuine and truthful, delivering promises, being truthful to self and being unique. Furthermore, dimensions of these different conceptualizations can be classified into groups according to their meanings and scale items. Below table demonstrated the groups developed in this thesis by the researcher as a summary. These groups represent content similarities among the dimensions classified together. The first column indicates the set numbers and frame of the group gives the mutual definition of the dimensions that are belong to different sets.

Table 2.1.2.2

Groups of Dimension According to Content Similarities*

	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	GROUP 4	GROUP 5	GROUP 6	GROUP 7
FRAME OF THE GROUP	Truthful to self and deliver its promises	Is honest and align promises and actions in the form of brand elements and communication	Focuses beyond commercial success for society and shows intimate care to the consumer	Is timeless, connected to the time of origin and place, does not compromise the original product	Connect to others through their identity roles and cared values	First mover and unique in the industry	Real with lack of artificiality
SET 1		Reliability		Continuity		Originality	Naturalness
SET 2		Credibility	Integrity	Continuity	Symbolism		
SET 3		Realism	Virtue		Connection		
SET 4		Consistency	Customer orientation		Congruency		
SET 5						Originality	Genuineness
SET 6	Brand Authenticity						
SET 7			Relational orientation				
SET 8	Brand Authenticity						
SET 9		Sincerity	Brand Relationship Quality	Brand Heritage			
		Brand Quality					
		Trustworthiness					
SET 10		Sincerity, Quality Commitment		Brand Heritage			
SET 11	Maintain the essence of the brand	Maintain the style and standard of the brand		Respect the heritage			
SET 12	Brand Authenticity						

**Designed by the Researcher*

An illustration according to the above table is that, cluster two, which is defined as brand being honest and aligns promises and actions in the form of the brand elements and communication is an important sub-construct of brand authenticity with a common perspective among different studies. It is examined by different authors in the name of reliability (Bruhn et al., 2012), credibility (Morhart et al., 2015), consistency (Eggers et al., 2015), sincerity (Napoli et al., 2016), brand quality and trustworthiness (Morhart et al., 2015), and maintain the style and standard of the brand (Yao & Wang, 2018). Another illustration would be cluster four,

which defines timelessness, connection to time of origin and place, and does not compromise the original product examined through continuity (Bruhn et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015), brand heritage (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2016), respect the heritage and maintain the essence of the brand (Yao & Wang, 2018).

2.1.3 ANTECEDENTS AND ATTRIBUTES OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY

An exploration of more than 70 articles and 3 theses published between 2005 and 2020 in the brand authenticity literature reveals 36 variables that contribute to the perception on brand authenticity formation. Due to the fact that some of these studies examine conceptualization, and some others use brand authenticity as a first order construct and studied on its consequences, not each of them examines antecedents of brand authenticity.

Table 2.1.3.1 indicates all the antecedents and attributes of the brand authenticity concept extracted from the aforementioned studies. The scale items of each variable are indicated in the same table as well.

Table 2.1.3.1

Antecedents and Attributes of Brand Authenticity*

DIMENSIONS OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY	SCALE (... refers to the brand nominated)	SOURCE	TYPE OF CONSTRUCT
Relationship to Place	not applicable due to exploratory method	Beverland, 2006; Alexander 2009; Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Quality Commitment	not applicable due to exploratory method	Beverland, 2006; Alexander, 2009	attribute
Commitment to quality and Method of Production	not applicable due to exploratory method not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012 Beverland, 2006; Alexander, 2009; Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Heritage and Pedigree	not applicable due to exploratory method	Beverland, 2006; Alexander 2009; Gundlach and Neville, 2012; Taheri, 2018; Littrell, 1993	attribute
Stylistic Consistency	not applicable due to exploratory method	Beverland, 2006; Alexander, 2009	attribute
Downplaying Commercial Motives	not applicable due to exploratory method	Beverland, 2006	attribute
Company/Craftperson	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Ingredients and Materials	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Esthetics	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Exclusivity	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Uniqueness and Originality	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Experience	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Genuineness/prioritizing craft motives	not applicable due to exploratory method	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	attribute
Brand Clarity	I know what this brand stands for. It is obvious what image this brand tries to communicate.	Fritz et al.,2017; Erdem and Swait, Fritz et al.,2017; Erdem and Swait, 1998	antecedent
Actual-self Congruence	The communicated personality of brand is consistent with how I see myself. The communicated personality of brand is a mirror image of me.	Fritz et al.,2017;Malar et al., 2011 Fritz et al.,2017;Malar et al., 2011	antecedent
Ideal-self Congruence	The communicated personality of brand is consistent with how I would like to be. The communicated personality of brand is a mirror image of the person I would like to be.	Fritz et al.,2017;Malar et al., 2011 Fritz et al.,2017;Malar et al., 2011	antecedent
Brand Nostalgia	I associate the brand ... with experiences from the childhood. I associate the brand ... with experiences from the former times. The communication style of the brand ... reminds me of 'the good old days'. For me, the ... is a symbol of my childhood/youth.	Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017	antecedent
Brand Legitimacy	The brand ... is congruent with the moral principles of the culture I feel close to. The brand ... fits well with my cultural views. The brand ... is compatible with the values and norms of the community I belong to.	Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995 Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995 Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995	antecedent
Social Commitment	... assumes social responsibility. ... invests in the greater community. ... is socially engaged.	Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995 Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995 Fritz et al.,2017;Rifon et al.,2004; Suchman,1995	antecedent
Employee's Passion	I have the feeling that the employees like working for the ... The employees identify themselves with the brand ... I perceive the employees of ... as being motivated. The employees enjoy working for ...	Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017	antecedent
Brand Heritage	... is a brand with tradition. The brand ... is characterized by its own history. The promises of ... is closely linked to its tradition. The brand ... is conscious of its tradition. This brand is very continuous. The products of this brand are part of national treasure. This brand has a strong cultural meaning.	Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Fritz et al.,2017 Morhart et al.,2015;Wiedmann et al.,2011 Morhart et al.,2015;Wiedmann et al.,2011 Morhart et al.,2015;Wiedmann et al.,2011	antecedent explored to have discriminant validity against brand authenticity dimension continuity
Brand Quality	How do you rate the brand on the following product characteristics? (1-low end/7-high end) Prestige or Image of the brand Product Performance Overall product quality	Morhart et al.,2015;Frazier & Lassar,1996 Morhart et al.,2015;Frazier & Lassar,1996 Morhart et al.,2015;Frazier & Lassar,1996 Morhart et al.,2015;Frazier & Lassar,1996	explored to have discriminant validity against brand authenticity dimension credibility

Brand relationship quality (Partner Quality)	This brand takes good care of me. This brand treats me like an important and valuable customer. This brand shows a continuing interest in me. This brand has always been good to me. This brand is reliable and dependable.	Morhart et al., 2015; Fournier 1994 Morhart et al., 2015; Fournier 1994 Morhart et al., 2015; Fournier 1994 Morhart et al., 2015; Fournier 1994 Morhart et al., 2015; Fournier 1994	explored to have discriminant validity against brand authenticity dimension integrity
Brand Antropomorphism	I can easily imagine this brand as a person. I have no difficulties imagining this brand as a person.	Morhart et al., 2015; Aaker & Fournier, 1995 Morhart et al., 2015; Aaker & Fournier, 1995	antecedent / existential cue
Brand Scandals	How often have you heard/read about scandals pertaining to this brand (never/very often)	Morhart et al., 2015	antecedent / indexical cue
Brand-Congruent Employee Behaviour (Indexical cues)	The personal appearance of the employees of this brand is in line with the appearance of the brand. The actions of the employees of this brand are not at odds with what the brand promises. The employees of this brand show brand-congruent behaviour.	Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015	antecedent / indexical cue
Communication style focusing on a brand's roots	The communication activities of this brand focus on: Tradition The communication activities of this brand focus on: Heritage. The communication activities of this brand focus on: Locality. The communication activities of this brand focus on: Country of Origin.	Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015	antecedent / iconic cue
Communication style focusing on a brand's roots	The communication activities of this brand focus on: Delivering its promise to consumers. The communication activities of this brand focus on: The values of the brand. The communication activities of this brand focus on: Connection with consumers.	Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015 Morhart et al., 2015	antecedent / iconic cue
Brand Individuality	The way how ... fulfills its brand promise is very different from competing brands. The way how ... fulfills its brand promise is unique. ... fulfills its brand promise in a distinct way.	Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019	antecedent
Brand Consistency	Brand ... fulfills its promise consistently. The current brand behavior of ... fits to its brand promise. The brand promise of ... and its present actions are in line with each other.	Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019	antecedent
Brand Continuity	In the past, brand ... has already fulfilled its brand promise. The previous behavior of ... fits to its current brand promise. The brand promise of ... and its past actions are in line with each other.	Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019 Schallehn et al. 2014; Fernandez and Lewis 2019	antecedent
Country of Origin	not stated	Newman and Dhar, 2014	
Product Ethnicity		Park et al. 2016	antecedent
Organizational Transperancy	... is honest in addressing any issues about its business practices. I believe ... is open in its business practices. I can rely on ... to solve the business problems. ... openly shares its efforts to improve practices. I can rely on ... to be straightforward in its I believe ... offers access to information about its I believe ... provides enough information about its I believe ... provides useful information about its ... is sincere in addressing any issues about its	Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018 Busser and Shulga, 2018	antecedent
Family firm image	For me, ... is a family firm. I perceive ... as a family firm. ... communicates to its customers that it is a family It is important for me that [brand name inserted] is a	Lude and Prögl, 2018 Lude and Prögl, 2018 Lude and Prögl, 2018 Lude and Prögl, 2018	antecedent

**Designed by the researcher*

Beverland (2006) raised his quests regarding attributes of authenticity in the commercial context. He used a sample of 20 ultra-premium wineries and 30 wine consumers. Six of attributes of brand authenticity are identified as explained below.

i. Heritage and Pedigree

Heritage and Pedigree is the antecedent used most frequently across different studies in the brand authenticity literature (Beverland, 2006; Alexander, 2009; Gundlach and Leville, 2012; Litrell et al., 1993; Fritz et al., 2017; Taheri et al., 2018). As an illustration, in the context of wineries, celebration of the history is stated to be an important public relations and marketing activity appreciated by the consumers (Beverland, 2005). Specifically, a respondent mentioned how much he liked the whole history in his wine brand making wine for 800+ years. This heritage added a further nuance to the brand's meaning and brand reliability because it signaled a consistent level of quality. Wineries strategy of emphasizing the aging ability of their wines are used as a point of differentiation in brand communications inasmuch as it adds value and confidence to the wineries that higher quality wines are produced. Consequently, brand's pedigree will result in a price premium. Beverland's antecedents are stated to have similar variables with Littrell et al.'s (1993) study in the context of tourist crafts. Another study used heritage in the beer industry context as a variable contributing to brand authenticity formation (Gundlach & Neville, 2012). This study conducted qualitative interviews as well. The authors argued previous models to measure attributes of brand authenticity through a less generalizable product markets such as wine and tourist crafts and not fulfilling to measure the context of beer market. Therefore, a conceptual model is developed for a more mainstream and generalizable market and how these variables interact with each other is presented. Different from Beverland (2006) and Littrell et al. (1993) both linking heritage and historic being, this study linked heritage to its origin (relationship to place), design (stylistic consistency), method and craft (method of production and craftsmanship). Consistently all respondents believed that heritage, pedigree and history contributed to directly to authenticity. A well dated logo, a symbol tracing back to the region where its is produced, a story of the history and pictural elements on pack such as brewing equipment and founder's figure are all communication cues that contribute to the perception of authenticity in the beer industry. Fritz et al. (2017) consistent to Gundlach and Neville stated that a company can influence brand authenticity through both indexical and

iconic cues in that heritage can be conveyed through indexical cues. Taheri (2018) examined the influence of formative brand heritage construct on perceived brand authenticity at repaired/reconstructed heritage sites. The author states that brand heritage is a linking glue because it evokes images of continuity, safety and familiarity among consumers as it provides stability and reassurance. The brand in turn is perceived to be more credible and reliable (Taheri et al., 2018).

ii. Relationship to Place

Beverland (2006) express this antecedent as a commitment to terroir which depicts the vineyard geography through its soil and climate. A wine producer narrates this attribute as letting the nature do her work. Communicating every single wine brand to come from a single vineyard and/or committing consumers to source from only the best vineyards is a strategy to adapt this variable. When which grapes are used as a blend is known by the consumers, this situation assures the purchase risk. To illustrate, a consumer in the qualitative study links specific regions in France with generic types of wine such as Cabernet or Shiraz. Another respondent claimed that Chiant type wine could not be made high quality in Tuscany because it is a distinct type of grape produced in Australia. Even culture and values of this specific region is stated to reflect in the wine; therefore, it has a deeper meaning than just geographical link. Due to the whole way of living in that region and creative artists in the production process, the brand has a soul in this context which gives a unique experience in consumption. Alexander (2009) argued in his hierarchy of authenticity attributes that relationship to place is a lens that implies heritage, pedigree, quality commitment and production method which will be later discussed in this section. Similarly, in Gundlach and Leville's (2012) study more than half of the respondents believed that country of origin and manufacture is a critical factor in a beer brand. Germany, Belgium and Holland are listed to be the origin of more authentic beers.

iii. Quality Commitment

Investing effort and time to improve best quality is regarded to be essential for an authentic brand perception (Beverland, 2006). In the case of wine products, high quality is worth to pay price premium because consumers appreciate the quality behind a genuine wine. It takes a lot of time to pick the grapes, select the best labor, blend the wine, reserve more than

one year in oak and left again on the shelf. Therefore, commitment to quality for wineries mean making great wines and commitment to their consumers. Indeed, not all grapes will be the highest quality; thus, in order to utilize larger percentages of the crop, development of second- and third-party labels sold under different brands and channels is a marketing strategy which proves the quality commitment of the main brand (Beverland, 2006). This quality commitment conveys brand values to be accepted as objectively genuine (Alexander, 2009). Additionally, the branded product appears to have consistent features and performance (Gundlach & Neville, 2012). Consumers judgement over such a beer brand; for instance, is a consistent taste each time. The mentioned beer brand has been brewed the same for a long time; thus, standardized.

iv. Method of Production

The reasoning behind the consumer desire to understand the method of production is the need to know what went into producing the final product for authenticity judgement in terms of processing and ingredient (Beverland, 2006). Awareness of how the product is made enhances its authenticity by building a link between the final product and the creative process. In the context of wine production, perception of mass-marketed wines and small batch wines are different. A respondent in Beverland's (2006) study stated that mass-produced wines represented diluted products and boutique wines represent wines from a particular place resulting in a pure expression of a certain grape type and an identifiable craft person in relation to production methods. Similarly, according to Gundlich and Neville (2012) study, an authentic beer tastes better because of a better method of production and same brewing techniques. Some respondents regarded higher price to be an indicator of better taste and method of production. Some respondents even claimed method of production to be the most important factor as it refers to craft, attention to detail, real effort and pride attached to the product. Feeling of hand-made technique and artisan or specialist involved process rather than mass-production methods is highly appreciated.

v. Stylistic Consistency

According to the wine producers, stylistic consistency means slowly evolving the style of the brand rather than fast adapting it to changing consumer trends and fashion (Beverland, 2006). Dilution of traditional style due to the need to be trendy is a concern. This style

represents consistent taste and quality. Wine consumers expect to experience the same thing in each bottle. Alexander (2009) interprets stylistic consistency to be a backstage fact in production which turns to be a representation in front stage.

vi. Downplaying Commercial Motives

Beverland (2006) found that appearing too commercial detracts from brand's value perception. A respondent for instance commented that a wine producer sold his soul to make a lot of money; thus, produced very large amount at the sake of consistent quality. When brands start to appeal to larger markets, they are perceived to lose value. These expectations drive tendency toward a naiver marketing in which the main purpose is to improve the intrinsic qualities of the brand, not overselling. This drives integrity. Thus, downplaying commercial motives in favor of genuine product is appreciated by consumers and deliver authentic perception. Such a brand is perceived to be sincere and has congruence between its real self and its positioning. Truth in claims is priority in terms of its origin, ingredients (Beverland, 2006). Company with such an approach has shared aspirations with the public and engages within a social space in which commercial motives are played down (Alexander, 2009).

Beverland's (2006) six attributes of authenticity is a major ground for latter studies. As discussed earlier, Alexander (2009) re-examined Beverland's attributes in his study which aims to understand the process of creating and maintaining brand auras through the assertion of authenticity. His research objectives formed to understand the values associated with the branding of the sponsoring organization and how the values of this organization articulate within the co-branding relationship. The findings indicated that among Beverland's (2006) six attributes of authenticity, three of them are more significant; stylistic consistency, relationship to place and downplaying commercial motives. He drew a hierarchy of authenticity attributes as shown in below figure.

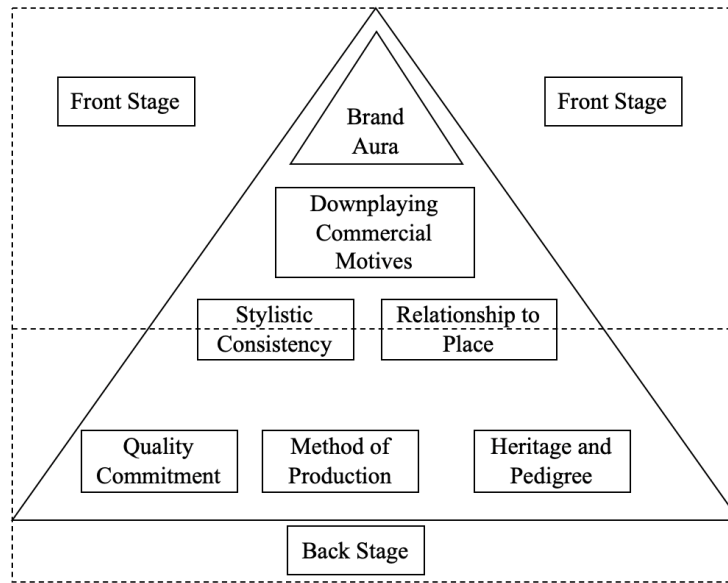


Figure 2.1.3.1 Hierarchy of Authenticity Attributes

Source; Adapted from Alexander, 2009 p.559

According to the above figure, stylistic consistency and relationship to place are lenses to convey quality commitment, relationship to place, and stylistic consistency that are all placed in the backstage. Stylistic consistency is regarded to be a facilitating factor that sharpens authentic brand message. Relationship to place is the core value conveyed in stylistically consistent messages through a representation within a social space in which commercial motives are played down through a tonal presentation and shared aspirations communicated in a noncommercial context. Each of these attributes create an aura that is relevant to the end user.

Gundlach and Neville (2012) identified ingredients and materials, company/craftsperson, esthetics, uniqueness and originality, experience, genuineness/prioritizing craft motives, and exclusivity apart from heritage and pedigree, relationship to place and method of production. They proposed an authenticity continuum through an alternative framework as shown in below figure 2.1.3.2. Their study is conducted in beer product context; therefore, is claimed to be more generalizable compared to Beverland's (2006).

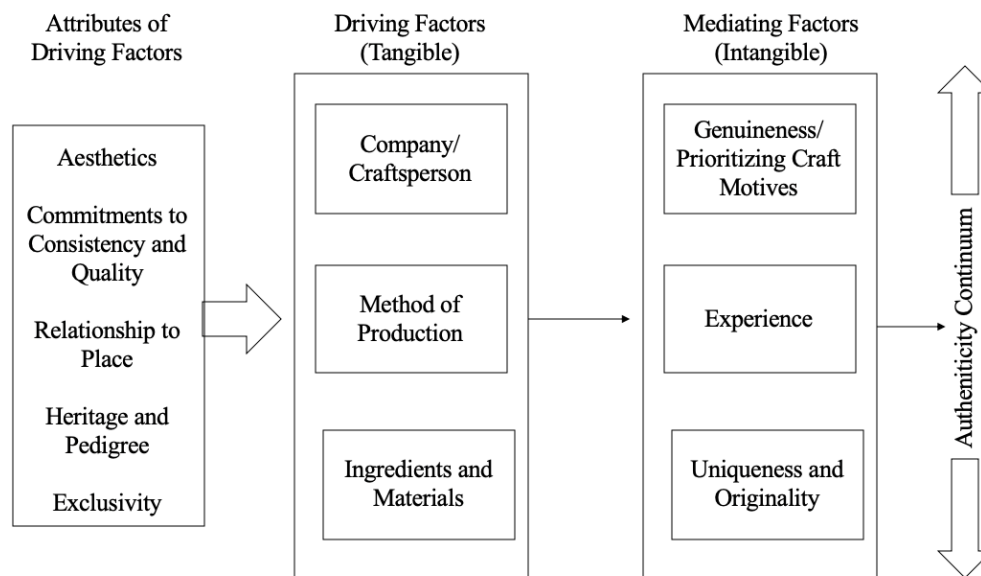


Figure 2.1.3.2: An alternative framework for authenticity

Source; Adapted from Gundlach and Neville, 2012 p.459

Gundlach and Neville (2012), distinguishes method of production and ingredients because ingredients might justify higher price. For example, pure Tasmanian water is considered to be premium ingredient in beer products. Better quality ingredients are explicitly appreciated by the respondents to pay higher price as they provide authentic products. Combination of production method and ingredients complement each other for overall authenticity. Company/craftsperson is another attribute. The authors made a distinction between the owner of the company and the manufacturer or craftsperson in order to bear in mind the case in which company is sold to a new owner. European beer brands now manufactured by Australian breweries is an example. Esthetics is another attribute which takes packaging to the core as beer packaging can should look exotic, be understated and do not have bright colors. Uniqueness and originality attribute are defined in terms of brand ideal, history, taste, and origins all of which cannot be easily imitated. Innovative perception enhances the authenticity perception. Experience is identified as another attribute because respondents in the study spoke the distinct consumption experience through the process of serving beer. This serving starts from the pack opening in that flip-top gives the fulfilling sound as an enjoyment. An additional attribute is genuineness/prioritizing craft motives. This is regarded to be similar

to Beverland's (2006) factor of downplaying commercial motives. The craftsmen motivated by tradition and love are involved in the production more than a sole profit motive. Consumers desire to feel they are consuming something exclusive that is produced with noble motives. Even though the consumers want to feel this exclusivity, they still want to consume something genuine with real country of origin associations through a tangible link not misleading the consumer. As for exclusivity respondents state that authentic beers would not be mass-produced, they should be available in boutique and due to higher quality ingredients and techniques, they are more expensive.

Turning back to the framework proposed above, the authors suggested that each attribute might play different roles in formulating authenticity and there is a relationship between them (Gundlach & Neville, 2012). Craftsperson/ company, method of production and ingredients and materials are stated to be concrete attributes with objective interpretations. Esthetics, relationship to place, commitments to consistency and quality heritage and pedigree and exclusivity are stated to be attributes of these tangible factors. On the other side, experience, uniqueness and originality, genuineness is stated to be intangible attributes that form in the consumer's mind with a subjective perspective. These tangible variables then mediated by intangible factors genuineness and prioritizing craft motives in that whether the craftsperson produces in order to make a profit, or for the love of the craft, experience in a small workshop and uniqueness and originality. This process ends with subjective judgement of authenticity. The authors stated a case through beer Schönbräuhaus. The company uses a brand name that evokes the image of a company/craftsperson of Germanic origin, displays 'Bavarian style premium lager' phrase on pack which suggests method of production, 'no preservatives' claim on pack posits ingredients and portrait of Renaissance figure on pack suggests the heritage and pedigree. These are all tangible factors manipulated by the brewer. Assessment of beer authenticity indeed is mediated by intangible factors such as German words on the pack.

Schallehn et al (2014) developed a model of brand authenticity through socio-psychological attribution theories and identity-based brand management approach and analyzed the antecedents and effects of it. The key antecedents are identified as consistency, continuity and individuality. According to the empirical results, the variable individuality has the lowest influence on perceived brand authenticity which is found to be interesting as being 'original

and unique' is regarded as a major factor in brand authenticity. These antecedents were later used by Fernandez and Lewis (2019). The authors are inspired from identity-based brand management and stated two components as critical; brand identity and brand image (Chernatony et al., 2011). The authors position on brand authenticity is mentioned in the introduction section while we explain our proposed research framework.

i. Individuality

Is defined as the unique way the brand fulfils its promise. In other words, it is the way how brand fulfills its brand promises different than other brands.

ii. Consistency

It is the extent to which brand promise is fulfilled at every single brand touchpoint. Brand behavior fits to its brand promise and actions are in line with each other.

iii. Continuity

Is the extent to which present brand promise reflects past brand behavior so core brand attributes remain stable in the course of time.

Newman and Dhar (2014) studied the effect of 'Country of Origin' on brand authenticity perception. Their understanding of brand authenticity is that the product is true in some properties and dimensions. They found that the products manufactured at the original factory are perceived to be more authentic than those manufactured elsewhere. The reason is attributed to contagion notion which states that products acquire a special aura or essence from their past; therefore, original manufacturing location are viewed as having the essence of the brand. Additionally, it is likely that consumers believe products from the original factory are manufactured with better materials and greater skill or knowledge. The authors stated that there are three mechanism through which the original production source may influence perceptions of authenticity. These are quality expectations, perceived evidence, and contagion.

Morhart et al. (2015) developed an integrative framework for brand authenticity concept and identified credibility, integrity, symbolism and continuity dimensions as mentioned

priorly. The authors further stated that brand authenticity perceptions are influenced by indexical, existential, and iconic cues some of which are moderated by consumers' level of marketing skepticism.

i. Antecedents as indexical cues

‘Brand scandal’ is stated to be the first antecedent in this cluster. In the case that a brand involves in a scandal such as financial, ecological, quality and child labor, it implies that the brand does not adhere to moral principles and places self-interest as a priority. Thus, brand scandals have negative impact on perceived brand dimension integrity.

‘Brand-congruent employee behavior’ is stated to be the second antecedent in this cluster. Employees as representatives of the brand are expected to deliver on brand’s promise. The personal appearance and actions of the employees are expected to be in line with those of the brand. In the contrary situation, the credibility decreases. In the case that employees act in accordance with the brand’s values and mission, they enable the brand ‘walking the talk’; therefore, then the credibility dimension of perceived brand authenticity is positively influenced.

ii. Antecedents as iconic cues

‘Communication style emphasizing a brand’s root’ is stated to be the first antecedent in this cluster. As discussed earlier, iconic cues which are marketing and promotional cues such as advertisement appeals to a schematic fit with a person’s mental picture of how authentic objects should look like is critical. The authors suggest that iconic cues which link brand’s past, origin, tradition, locality, and country of origin link its past and present; thus, increases the perceived brand authenticity dimension continuity.

‘Communication style emphasizing a brand’s virtue’ is stated to be the second antecedent in this cluster. It indicates the brands commitment to go beyond profitability focus. Authors stated that communication style emphasizing brand’s virtue increases perceived brand authenticity dimension integrity. This communication style stresses brand’s social responsibility and moral values, sincerity and caring motivations for the consumer and human.

The communication activities of this brand focus on delivering its promise and values and connecting with consumers.

iii. Antecedents as existential cues

‘Brand Anthropomorphism’ is stated to be the antecedent in this cluster. To clarify, existential brand cues help consumers search for their true selves through consumption because these cues reveals or helps consumers construct their identity. Brand Anthropomorphism, which is personification and humanization of a brand, help consumers associate the brand’s human characteristics as vivid self-referential cues to construct their self-identity. Therefore, higher levels of brand anthropomorphism positively effect perceived brand authenticity dimension brand symbolism.

Park et al. (2016) contributed to the variables by proving that ‘Congruent Product Ethnicity’ positively influences perceived brand authenticity. Product Ethnicity suggest that consumers associate some product categories with one country of origin such as German car, Russian vodka or Italian pasta. These judgements are sourced from stereotypical associations which exist in schemas in consumer mind. Consumers desire products originated from the congruent country inasmuch as these products increase connection to a specific culture, place and community. Such a product is perceived to be real and genuine in its type. In the case that schema-fit does not exist, in other words when country of origin for a particular product is not congruent with the product ethnicity in the consumer’s schema, the consumer cannot judge the existence of authenticity for such a product (Park et al., 2016).

As mentioned earlier, **Fritz et al. (2017)** identified Brand Heritage as an antecedent of Brand Authenticity. They identified many other variables that a company can influence brand authenticity through different approaches. They are inspired from indexical and iconic interpretations of variables as antecedents of brand authenticity (Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

i. Brand Nostalgia

When brands’ communicative appearance involves ‘former’ values and ties with the past, brands perceived to be more authentic. The reasoning behind this positioning is that such a

positioning connotes stability, reliability, continuity, naturalness and uniqueness. Consumers associate this brand with experiences from the childhood, former times and good old days.

ii. Brand Clarity

Consistent brand communication efforts and brand image signals indicate brand clarity. Brand clarity creates reliability within the consumers because it signals that the brand will keep its promises. Authentic brands are stated to present a clear appearance that mirrors the brand as an unambiguous and transparent entity. Consumer know what this brand stands for and what image the brand aims to communicate.

iii. Social Commitment

According to the authors, a company's commitment to social engagement reflects its high moral values thus enhance perception of authenticity (Fritz et al., 2017). This is also defined as virtuousness which refers to brand's integrity and staying true to itself. Being socially responsible and environmentally conscious brand behavior, such as using green strategies increases brand authenticity. Therefore, a brand with social commitment assumes social responsibility, invests in the greater community and is socially engaged.

iv. Brand Legitimacy

Brand's culture fit with the consumers' values, norms and ideals is an antecedent that increases perceived brand authenticity. The reasoning behind this assertion is that brand is perceived as a legitimate entity by representing the values and norms of the consumer to relate with others. When consumer perceives the brand to be congruent with the moral principles of the culture he/she feels close to, fit well with his or her cultural views and be compatible with the values and norms of the community he or she belongs to, this consumer's perception of brand authenticity increases.

v. Actual and Ideal Self- Congruence

As Gillmore and Pine (2008) states, people today purchase on the basis of whether a product conforms to their self-image which by itself determines whether the brand is authentic

or not. Therefore, brands which fits with the consumer's actual self-perception are perceived to be a reflection of an individual's self and thus interpreted as unique, reliable and genuine. This attribute refers to the level of consumer-brand identification which describes the degree to which a consumer views connection between him and the brand. When consumer believes the personality of the brand is consistent with how he/she sees himself/herself as a mirror or with how he/she would like to be, the brand has actual and ideal self-congruence; thus, increase brand authenticity.

vi. Employee Passion

Congruent employee brand behavior is demonstrated to increase perceived brand authenticity because such employees are intrinsically motivated to fulfill a certain role. The authors proposed and verified that employee's passion and brand authenticity have positive relationship. When consumers have the feeling that the employees like working for the company, identify themselves with the brand, perceive the employees as being motivated and enjoy working for the company, they regard employees to have passion.

Busser and Shulga (2018) identified "Organizational Transparency" as an antecedent that promotes brand authenticity with dimensions continuity, originality and naturalness. The purpose of their study was to examine consumer involvement with a popular coffee shop brand's consumer generated advertising and its effects on brand loyalty and trust. In line with the constructivist perspective, Busser and Shulga argued that customers are interpreters of authenticity through their perceptions, beliefs and experiences. To illustrate, Mc Donalds is an authentic restaurant for Americans with the menu and service type. Referring to Bruhn et al's (2012) authenticity definitions examining the brand's clear appearance, transparency and unambiguous communication strategies, the authors claim that these features signal brand's clarity which in turn increases its authenticity. It is critical to note that establishing transparency requires the information is truthful and useful to permit all partners, stakeholders and customers to clarify the problems and solutions. When a company has organizational transparency, it is honest in addressing any issue about its business practices, offers access to information about itself, provides enough information about itself; thus, consumers and all other stakeholders trust that the company in solving the business problems.

Lude and Prügl (2018) identified ‘Communication of the firm’s family nature’ as an antecedent of brand authenticity. Brand Authenticity in this study is a mediator variable for the family firm trust inference. The authors assert that stability dimension of brand authenticity provides longevity as an important variable to manipulate brand authenticity perception. Longevity is defined as the extent to which consumers perceive the brand exists for a long time. This is argued to indicate significant analogy to the perception of family business inasmuch as these firms demonstrate persistence and stability; thus, long term orientation and tradition.

To sum up, the antecedents clarified above are brand cues for both marketers and consumers through which brand authenticity is attributed to a brand. Each of these cues belong to a perspective presented in the ‘Meaning of Brand Authenticity’ section. The below table 2.1.3.2 indicates which antecedent belongs to which perspective. Because objectivist perspective defines variables according to their objectively measurable quality which can be evaluated by experts, craftsmanship, heritage, pedigree, country of origin, relationship to place, method of production, ingredients and materials, congruent product ethnicity and stylistic consistency go under this cluster. Furthermore, because constructive perspective positions brand authenticity from the consumer assessment based on his/her own background and expectations; thus, align them with her reality, organizational transparency, uniqueness, originality, genuineness, experience, brand clarity, communication style emphasizing brand’s roots, communication style emphasizing brand’s virtue, social commitment and employee passion positioned under this cluster. Lastly, because existential cues related to self-identity, brand anthropomorphism, brand legitimacy, actual and ideal self-congruence are clustered under this perspective. Regardless of the perspectives, the commonality of each antecedent is that when used in a brand’s positioning and communication strategy, it mirrors the brand’s inner self. It is critical at this point to position the brand from inside out by reflecting its true inner self because being genuine, truthful and real is a must.

Table 2.1.3.2:

Antecedents Grouped upon Brand Authenticity Perspectives*

	OBJECTIVIST PERSPECTIVE	CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVE	EXISTENTIALIST PERSPECTIVE
ANTECEDENTS	Craftsmanship, Heritage and Pedigree, Country of Origin, Relationship to Place, Method of Production, Ingredients and Materials, Congruent Product Ethnicity, Stylistic Consistency.	Organizational Transparency, Uniqueness, Originality, Genuineness, Experience, Brand Clarity, Communication Style Emphasizing Brand's Roots, Communication Style Emphasizing Brand's Virtue, Social Commitment, Employee Passion.	Brand Anthropomorphism, Brand Legitimacy, Actual and Ideal Self-Congruence.

**Designed by the researcher*

Another conclusion that could be examined from the antecedent's analysis is that, each of the variables imply one or more brand authenticity dimensions according to their authors. To illustrate, brand nostalgia connate with both continuity and reliability dimension as the authors suggest. Communication style emphasizing a brand's virtue and social commitment connate with integrity dimension. Brand congruent employee behavior implies credibility dimension. Actual and ideal self-congruence imply symbolism dimension. Heritage and pedigree imply continuity dimension. The last examples would be relationship to place, method of production, country of origin and craftsmanship that connate credibility and continuity dimensions of brand authenticity.

A final interpretation to the antecedents is made through table 2.1.3.3. It indicates the frequency usage of each variable in the brand authenticity literature studies. It is visible that "Brand Heritage" is the antecedent examined most frequently in the relationship testing. Relationship to place, Quality commitment, Method of production, Brand legitimacy and Social Commitment together follow the Brand Heritage according to the same table.

Table 2.1.1.3 Frequency of Brand Authenticity Antecedents in the Literature; Designed by the Researcher

DIMENSIONS OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY	Littrell, 1993	Fournier, 1994	Suchman, 1995	Aaker and Fournier, 1995	Frazier and Lassar, 1996	Erdem and Swait, 1998	Rifon et al., 2004	Beverland, 2006	Alexander, 2009	Malar et al., 2011	Gundlach and Neville, 2012	Newman and Dhar, 2014	Schulhehn et al., 2014	Morhart et al., 2015	Park et al., 2016	Fritz et al., 2017	Busser and Shulga, 2018	Lude and Prigl, 2018	Taheri, 2018	Fernandez and Lewis, 2019
Relationship to Place																				
Quality Commitment																				
Commitment to quality and consistency																				
Method of Production																				
Heritage and Pedigree																				
Stylistic Consistency																				
Downplaying Commercial																				
Company/Craftperson																				
Ingredients and Materials																				
Ethetics																				
Exclusivity																				
Uniqueness and Originality																				
Experience																				
Genuineness/prioritizing																				
Brand Clarity																				
Actual-self Congruence																				
Ideal-self Congruence																				
Brand Nostalgia																				
Brand Legitimacy																				
Social Commitment																				
Employee's Passion																				
Brand Heritage																				
Brand Quality																				
Brand relationship quality (Partner Quality)																				
Brand Autopomorphism																				
Brand Scandals																				
Brand-Congruent Employee Behaviour (Indexical cues)																				
Communication style focusing on a brand's roots																				
Communication style focusing on a brand's roots																				
Brand Individuality																				
Brand Consistency																				
Brand Continuity																				
Country of Origin																				
Product Ethnicity																				
Organizational Transparency																				
Family firm Image																				

2.1.4 FURTHER BRAND AUTHENTICATION CUES

2.1.4.1 Brand as Human and Brand Anthropomorphism

It is worth to examine **Brand Humanization** and **Anthropomorphism** at this point for a better understanding of how to build closer relationship between the consumer and the brand at the age of consumer skepticism and build the trust bridge for sustainable brand outcomes. Quest for brand authenticity and brand humanization tendency have similar reasonings from the consumers' perspectives as described earlier in introduction. To remind, brand anthropomorphism is identified as an antecedent of brand authenticity (Morhart et al., 2015). Brand Anthropomorphism is indeed one of the many cues through which authentic brand perception can be made. However, it specifies both iconic and existential cues to form brand authenticity formation. Therefore, even though the model proposed for this thesis does not contain brand anthropomorphism construct, it is considered worthwhile to present a section to the reader for further inspiration. Only a few studies that bind brand anthropomorphism to brand authenticity will be examined in this section; in other words, not a deep examination of the construct will be presented.

Humanization of brand is grounded from the Fournier's (1998) basic framework in the consumer psychology literature; yet, the phenomenon is accelerating in the current era with a growing body of literature (MacInnis & Folkes, 2011). It suggests that people relate to brands in similar ways they relate to other people (Fournier, 1998). Brand humanization studies indicate that consumers' motivation to buy a certain brand is the distinct relationship they have with the brands in addition to the features and linked functional and emotional benefits (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004)

What might be the underlying reasons of tendency to humanize the brands is an important question. Most importantly, when consumers have low level of trust, brands with a deep relationship with consumers can succeed (Fournier, 1998). Furthermore, global uncertainties resulting in greater tendency to gain control over the outer world, the skepticism created in global competition which result in unpredictable relationships with people and brands and technological improvements making brands interact with consumers through a humanized form

might motivate consumers to create human schemas on their minds regarding the brands (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). Humanizing a brand is suggested to create positive perception from consumers resulting in benefits such as brand loyalty, brand commitment, word-of-mouth, and brand attachment because consumers realize that the brand accompany himself/herself to accomplish life goals (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). At this point existential perspective of brand authenticity comes into the process. When a brand is humanized, its self-concept, values, ideals and personality is visible; thus, the ground for consumer brand identification forms and increases symbolism (Morhart et al., 2015).

Brand Anthropomorphism

The term anthropomorphism is derived from the Greek words *ánthropo* which means human and *morfe* which means form (Guthrie, 1994). Anthropomorphism refers to the tendency to attribute human like characteristics, motivations, intentions, or emotions to nonhuman agents and objects (Epley et al. 2007); other words, seeing humanness in the nonhuman world (Hart & Royne, 2007). It is an inductive inference about a non-human agent (Epley et al, 2007) , and a way to build relationship with material objects and has extensively been studied in psychological research. Research on anthropomorphism is focused on the process of how people anthropomorphize and how anthropomorphism affects judgments and behaviors as well. The notion dates back to 1990s with the study of Guthrie (1994), claiming that human see animated properties in an unanimated world in order to structure its thinking to have a better sense about the outer world and believe that this animated world is true. These perceptual biases lead human to anthropomorphic beliefs such as seeing faces in natural formations (clouds, moon, etc.); therefore, increase predictability of the outer world for human. It is also suggested that people seek for relationships and companionship so use nonhuman agents and objects to satisfy this need. Anthropomorphism could be found in animals, natural forces, religious notions, and mechanical or electronic devices (Epley et al., 2007).

Anthropomorphism as a phenomenon does not only give a descriptive perception of a nonhuman agent through imagined or observed behavioral attributes (e.g., the tree is kind), but also predict unobservable attributes of the agent such as perception of a mental state, mind, and emotions in the humanized agent (e.g., the tree cares about me) (Epley et al., 2007). This

indicates a process of inference about the unobservable characteristics of a nonhuman agent and an intuitive belief toward the agent. How this inductive inference work might be an important question. There is a cognitive process in which knowledge acquired about humans and self is activated and applied to a given non-human agent. This is described as a Cognitive Mechanism of Elicited Knowledge which contribute as an important base to anthropomorphism (Epley et al., 2007). Cognitive Mechanism of Elicited Knowledge asserts that already existing knowledge about the actual human serve as the ground for the induction. This inductive process occurs for many reasons such as; quick accessibility of the knowledge about human experience compared to physical constraints about non-humans (humans do not know the sensory experience of being a non-human); and mirror neurons priority formed by watching another non-human agent's actions and activated through the actions of new agent to give a reasoning. The person can make a better sense of the actions of this unknown agent, reduces the risks and uncertainties that would arise from that agent, and increase confidence towards this agent through the mentioned predictions. The elicited information guides the person and manages the anxiety of risk driven from interacting with an unknown agent.

Brand Anthropomorphism is an antecedent identified in Morhart et al.'s (2015) study. It has recently been investigated by the marketing academicians aimed at understanding the notion's perceptual influence on brands (Guido & Peluso, 2014; Aggarwal & McGill, 2007). According to the notion, consumers are inclined to attribute human characteristics to brands and perceive the branded product as a human being (Guido & Peluso, 2014). The attributed human characteristics are not only physical features, but also lifestyle and personality (Plummer, 1984). Brand anthropomorphism is further claimed to enhance the ability of consumers to recognize the inherent value of brands (Portal et al., 2008).

Conceptualization and Measurement of Brand Anthropomorphism

A body of research in literature suggests that anthropomorphizing a brand creates the perception that it has a human-like mind with intentions, motives, free will, moral judgments, emotions, impression and evaluation of others. In this context, consumers judge the brand in terms of trustworthiness (brand acting morally and with good intention), fairness (brand acting fair), attributions of credit or blame (consumers' reactions to consumption) and interacting with

the brand as if it has a human mind (having tendency to interact with brands they regard to have human mind) (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017).

Literature presents varying studies that indicate how brand anthropomorphize process occurs at people's minds. A study in the literature defines two perspectives of brand anthropomorphism (Kim & McGill, 2011). The first uses schematic indicators to create cognitive associations with human characteristics such as a brand being trustworthy when it meets the expectations. Because the attribute of trustworthiness is associated with humans, the brand perceived to have a human character. For example, a brand that meets customer expectations is perceived as trustworthy and the quality of trustworthiness which is an attribute reserved for people makes the brand seem more human. The second form of anthropomorphism states that the brand is perceived to have a human like mental and emotional states with a capacity for care and concern. Therefore, consumers evaluate the level of personal relationships they could create with the brands. Brands that can achieve this make it far easier for consumers to draw real comparisons between their interpersonal relationships and their relationships with brands.

An important study about the conceptualization and measurement of Brand Anthropomorphism is the Human Brand Model as shown in below Figure 2.1.4.1. (Portal et al. 2018). This model guides marketing practitioners to understand the notion further and apply the theory of warmth and competence in order to create and execute human like brands. This model proposes that brand traits, brand attributes, brand authenticity are represented as inputs and brand benefits are represented as outputs in order to build a brand that is perceived to be human-like by consumers.

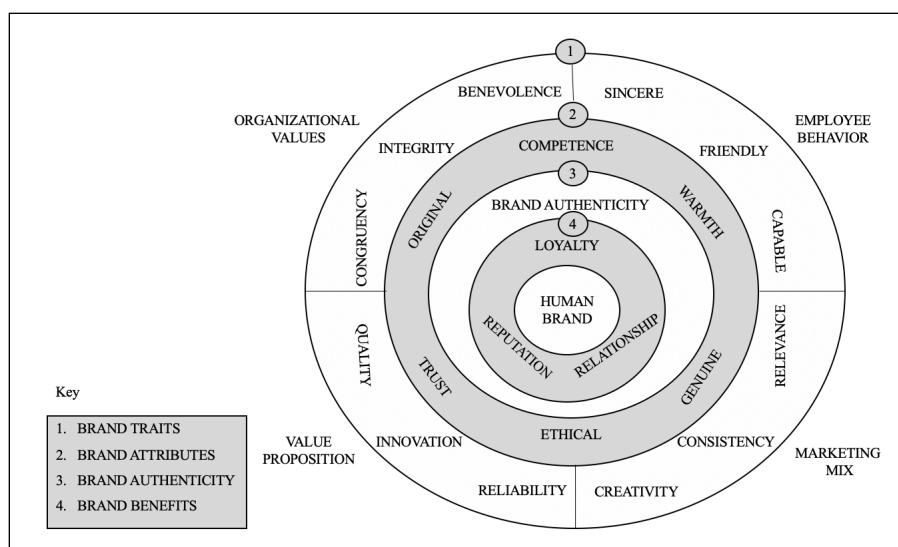


Figure 2.1.4.1: Human Brand Model

(Source: Adapted from Portal et al., 2018, p. 371)

According to this model, brand traits are the basis of human brand formulation and have to be formulated during initial brand design. Brand traits are defined as quality, innovation, capability (all owned as value proposition); creativity, consistency, relevance (to be executed through marketing mix); sincere, friendly, capable (base of employee behavior); congruency, integrity, benevolence (ensuring that organizational values owned and operated through all the functions of an organization). These brand traits in turn will create attributes that relate to human which are; original (being differentiated in the frame of reference), ethical (being honest and responsible in its promises), genuine (being real not an imitation), warmth (having good intentions and acting for the consumers 'best interest), competence (having the required skills and knowledge to deliver its promises), and trust (fulfilling its promises and work for the best interest of consumer) . These six attributes are defined to be connected to each other; therefore, none of them can be ignored. The model further asserts that after the brand traits and attributes are developed, with the given requirement which brand promise is executed at every touch point, the brand is perceived to be authentic by consumers. Authenticity which is the center of subject in this study is mentioned to be the key element of designing a human brand. Finally, the explained inputs have the following brand outputs; reputation (stakeholder image of the brand), customer-brand relationship at a deeper level, and brand loyalty through repeated purchase (Portal et al., 2018).

Consumers are suggested to have relationships with brands which resemble to the relations they formed with their social circles; therefore, they are guided through their social relationship norms (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). Consumers' perception of risk and willingness to interact with an anthropomorphized product is followed by beliefs and expectations exist in human interactions. Therefore, the effect of anthropomorphism will be moderated by the kind of social interaction that comes to mind during the interaction such as having social power against others, the degree of trust to others, and the view of others to be kind or not (Kim & McGill, 2011).

Depicting brands to have social relationship traits with intentions and motives that shape their interactions with consumers is another approach (Kervyn et al., 2012). The most compelling traits in this approach are classified into two broad groups as "Warmth and Competence". Social psychologists argued that primitive human developed two important judgement skills for others in order to survive; 'what are the intentions of others towards me and how capable are they realizing these intentions?'. The former defines the "warmth" and the latter defines "competence" perception for others in this context.

Malone and Fiske (2013) stated that research conducted in nearly 40 countries around globe indicate that warmth and competence perceptions account for more than 80 percent of human judgments and behaviors toward others. In this respect, the perception of warmth and competence towards others lead to admiration and attraction to those people; however, that of coldness and incompetence towards others lead to avoidance and rejection. The other combination of these key perceptions indicates that; cold and competent people are envied; whereas, warm and incompetent people are sympathized, pitied and seemed indifferent. The combination of each perception, resulting emotions and resulting behaviors are indicated in the below table;

Table 2.1.4.1:**Emotional and Behavioral Results of Warmth and Competence Perceptions**

Warmth Perceptions		Competence Perceptions	Resulting Emotions	Resulting Behaviours
Warm	+	Competent	Admiration, Pride	Attraction, Loyalty
Cold	+	Competent	Envy, Jealousy	Begrudging Cooperation, Obligatory Association
Warm	+	Incompetent	Sympathy, Pity	Indifference, Neglect
Cold	+	Incompetent	Contempt, Disgust	Rejection, Disassociation

Source: Adapted from Malone and Fiske (2013)

Suggesting that “Warmth and competence perceptions are the universal foundation for all human behavior and relationships” these perceptions are stated to be key for every aspect of daily lives for centuries (Malone & Fiske, 2013). To exemplify, before the industrial Revolution, the markets were smaller than today, and seller and buyer were having very close and direct relationship to each other. The trust between both was a must perception because any misbehaved action of one party would be told to the rest of the small public at the expense of that party’s image. However, in the course of time mass production and media dominated the markets which resulted in a distance between buyers and sellers. Demand and supply had risen; therefore, brands had millions of consumers in which single consumer demand and feedbacks were not taken into big consideration. At that period, brands fell short of consumer expectation in warmth and competence perceptions by behaving selfish and less transparent considering mostly the larger margins and profits gained. The next innovations e-commerce and social media raised back the importance of social responsibility with empowered consumers because digital connection makes brand judgements to be easily spread across consumer groups; therefore, the perceptions of warmth and competence became a global concern again. Consumers want to know what is behind the goods and services they purchase in terms of values, accountability, actions more than functional features and benefits of these goods and services.

‘Brands as Intentional Agents Model’ explains that “warmth” perception gives an answer to what might be the “intentions” of others to the person such as being cooperative (positive)

or competitive (negative); whereas, “competence” perception gives an answer to “capability” of others to carry out these intentions. The perception of warmth dimension is composed of being trustworthy, good-natured, friendly, well-intentioned helpful and sincere; whereas, the perception of competence dimension is composed of being capable, skillful, intelligent, and efficient. Well-intentioned and high-ability brands result in higher purchase intention and loyalty compared to others (Kervyn et al., 2012).

Malone (2013) suggests that in order to accomplish the perceptions of warmth and competence, the brands need to have self-awareness initially. The author explained the importance of self-awareness by presenting the case of Domino’s Pizza in USA in the late 2000’s. After years of low level of consumer sales, the company conducted a research and encountered the fact that the brand had grown to be cold and incompetent in the eyes of consumers. The company perceived not to care about the quality of the product and service. These findings led the company to renew the recipes and the service strategy and the very most important question was how to make consumers listen the efforts of Domino’s and get convinced while the brand was having distrust. The CEO of the time decided to do something very humanistic. He showed up on broadcast media and apologized from the consumers regarding the low quality and explained the changes and future commitments. This made the public perceive that Domino’s Pizza made a genuine change from the heart which was also proven from the steep increase in store sales starting from the year of public demonstration.

Studies indicate that at today’s age the need for both warmth and competence is needed more than ever due to the perception of lower brand quality and brand trust (Gerzema, 2009 (Malone & Fiske, 2013)). The existence of the warmth and competence together increases the emotional and behavioral benefits for brands. The emotional benefits resulting from the perceptions of warmth and competence have behavioral consequences as well. When brands are attributed the perceptions of warmth and competence, consumer engagement, attachment, trust and loyalty which are important for social brand building will be directly observed (Fournier; 1994).

It is worthwhile to make a brief overview about brand personality construct at this point. Brand anthropomorphism is related to brand loyalty with a moderating effect of brand personality in between; therefore, brand anthropomorphism is an antecedent of brand

personality (human characteristics ascribed to a brand). To exemplify, the design elements used to resemble the branded product to a human appearance and communication strategies executed to emphasize the self-expressive role of these products are claimed to shape the brand personality (Guido & Peluso, 2014). Moreover, brand identity which includes brand personality is a component of identity-based brand management model together with brand image (Schallehn et al., 2014). Brand identity provides the brand's functional and symbolic attributes (such as brand personality and essence) from the perspectives of marketing managers. Marketing managers reflect this inner self through positioning and communication, so brand's self becomes visible. Consumer at this point co-create the brand information and form a brand image. The brands should act authentic at every touchpoint during the positioning and communication, so that the identity, personality and essence is truly reflected for image perception.

2.1.4.2 Brand Personality

Formation of Brand Personality and Identity is a device for anthropomorphic strategies in branding and a deep understanding of brand identity and consumer brand perception is important to further explain how consumers connect with and form relationships with brands. Brand personality serve symbolic benefits rather than utilitarian benefits (Keller, 2003). When consumers humanize brands, they are inclined to perceive them having human like personality traits (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). Literature studies indicated positive correlations between brand anthropomorphism and brand loyalty through brand personality (Guido & Peluso, 2014).

Aaker defines brand personality as follows (Aaker, 1997);

“The set of human characteristics associated with a brand.”

Aaker's above definition directly links brand anthropomorphism to brand personality as both notions state that the brand possesses human attributes.

Under which situations consumers perceive the brands to have brand personality is an important question. First, consumers are said to perceive brands to have personalities when

interacting with their products and employees and exposed to their communication (Caprara et al., 2001). Descriptive user and usage imaginary, the actors, the tone of voice, and the emotions evoked through creative advertisement strategies help consumers to attribute personality to brands (Keller, 2003). Keller also states that for consumers brand personality reflects what the brand does for them with the values it possesses. He defines brand personality as one of the dimensions of brand imagery together with user profiles, purchase and usage situations, values, history, heritage, and experiences that deals with the extrinsic attributes of a brand to meet consumers' psychological and social needs. Second, activation of agent knowledge which means using visual cues that activate a human schema is suggested to be a relevant situation under which consumers form judgements of a brands' personality (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). Literature on Brand Anthropomorphism already suggested the schema-congruity theory (Fiskie et al., 2002) is relevant for understanding how consumers see their products as human and how activating a human-schema in the mind of consumers through brands explain the type of person suggested and evaluate the congruity of the product to that human schema. In this context, "Actual self" refers to how a person perceives himself/herself; "Ideal self" refers to how a person would like to perceive himself/herself; and "Social self" refers to how a person presents himself/herself to others (Sirgh, 1982). Customers look for self-congruity when they decide to purchase a brand because brands are used as symbols for constructing and reflecting their identities (Trump & Brucks, 2016). In this perspective, researchers are examining how brand resembles to the self of the consumer, working to understand the perceived congruity between the brand and the self, and clarifying how much consumers are connected to the brand (MacInnis & Folkes, 2017). Therefore, brands are not only functional goods and services, but also psychological objects that are symbolic of personal and social attributes and goals and enhancing one's self to behave consistent with the image of the person he is or want to be. Consumers are translating these symbols into meanings for themselves, distinguish self with these symbols, and state their social positions with their symbolic choice (Levy, 1959).

Brand personality framework was followed by various studies that continues to link the notion to brand anthropomorphism. Brand personality has been examined as an untapped construct in the consumer behavior literature aimed at explaining how brand personality relates consumer personality and therefore influence consumer preference towards brands (Sirgh, 1982). Brand Personality indeed is agreed to be an important notion in branding literature as it

might be a viable metaphor for understanding consumers' perception of brand images (Caprara et al., 2001).

The notion of endowing brands with human personality has been an area in the consumer behavior literature for several decades (Belk, 1988; Sirgh, 1982) till Aaker presented the first conceptualized framework on the subject. Aaker's 'Dimensions of brand Personality' is the first parallel research conducted for consumer behavior literature and developed a theoretical framework aimed at creating with reliable, valid, and generalizable scale of measurement across product categories (Aaker, 1993). In this study, theoretical human personality scales that might be mirrored to brands, traits already used in marketing and others driven from qualitative research are used as an initial base.

The Big Five Model of human personality Goldberg (1990) is stated to inspire Aaker's (1997) study in which nouns and adjectives that describe human personality regulate social relations. The relevant dimensions in the model are Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness. The meaning of each human personality trait is clearly specified as follows (Caprara et al., 2001 p.380);

“Extroversion is the preference for social interaction and for activity; Agreeableness is the orientation toward compassion and caring about others; Conscientiousness is the preference for goal-oriented activity; Emotional Stability is the ability to cope effectively with negative emotions; and Openness to Experience is the tolerance for new ideas and new ways of doing things, experientially oriented”

At the light of these grounding information, Aaker's Brand Personality Framework suggest that in consumers' perception, brands have five distinct personality dimensions: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness and each of these dimensions have their own sub-set of items. The main dimensions and the relevant subsets are indicated below;

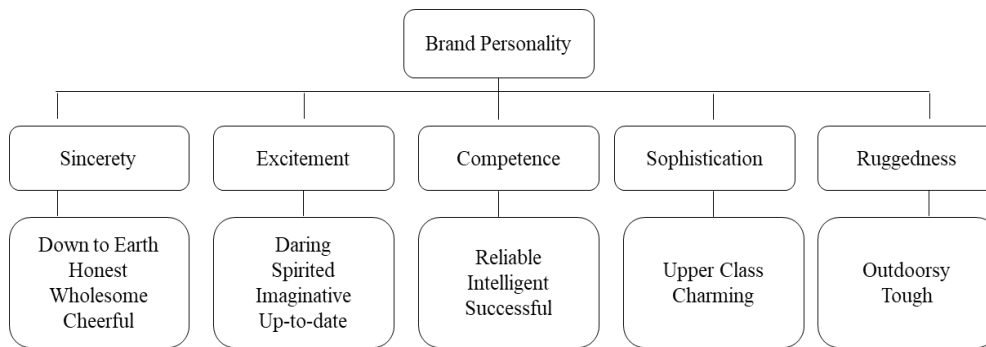


Figure 2.1.4.2: A Brand Personality Framework

Source: Adapted from Aaker 1997, page 352 Figure 1

The Big Five Brand Personality Framework suggests that brand personality dimensions might influence consumer preference for different reasons during self-congruity. To exemplify, Sincerity, Excitement, and Competence are reflecting the innate part of human personality; whereas Sophistication and Ruggedness are reflecting the ideal self (not actual).

The study by Davies et al. (2019) deserves another primary attention in the context of brand humanization in this literature review. Authors with a critical view at human personality underpinning to the brand personality, proposed a theory from human perception, and identify universally generic and relevant dimensions applicable across all contexts (Davies et al., 2019). This study instead proposes the relevance of signaling theory and the stereotype content model (SCM) (with a similar approach to Kervyn et al. 2012) complementary to each other. Referring to the 21 studies published from 1997 to 2016, Davies et al. argued that “sincerity” (e.g. warm, friendly and agreeable) and “competence” (e.g. competent, effective and efficient) are the most mentioned dimensions, and “status” (e.g. prestigious, elegant and sophisticated) is one of the most recent dimensions. All three dimensions are universally accepted according to the literature they stated. The authors of this model argue that brands signal only type of information they believe will be useful in the market and the consumers or employees benefit from these signals in order to maintain self and social image in the society.

As stated formerly, SCM argues that human judge social groups or individuals in terms of their relative warmth and competence (Fiskie et al., 2002). Stereotype Content Model aims to clarify the type of signals human seek and the reason behind this search (Davies et al., 2019)

Davis et al. (2019) states that three common types of signals are found to be important in Stereotype Content Model which are honesty/sincerity, competence, and status. Signal is a proxy information conveying a qualification for a particular attribute (Spence, 1973) and works when an agent has difficult to be observed but likely to be signaled attributes (Bird, 2005). There is an information asymmetry; for instance, the knowledge holder which is the company of the brand has whole information about the brand but the consumer is conveyed only some as companies have a tendency to signal information that would only be judged positively (Davies et al., 2019). There might be tangible attributes of brands to be signaled but also more intangible and symbolic attributes such as brand personality.

As a conclusion, brand anthropomorphism and brand personality are argued to interrelatedly act as cues to contribute to brand authenticity perception. In a world where consumers have low level of trust and desire to gain control over the world, they have high tendency to humanize brands. The existential and iconic cues formed through brand anthropomorphism and brand personality help consumers in forming self-congruency through identity relations and judge the mental and relational state of the brands regarding their warmth and competence levels through reading the signals they distribute during marketing communications. As stated earlier, the examination of brand anthropomorphism and personality are only brief overviews in this thesis for the purpose of giving some additional inspiration for the reader. The constructs need a deeper exploration to make novel arguments.

2.1.4.3 Industry Applications of Brand Authenticity

Both marketing literature and periodical articles present various cases regarding how brand authentication is performed throughout various brands and industries. The cases are demonstrated below through industry clusters.

(1) Clothing and Apparel Industry;

Australian-based Pacific Brands' revival of the *Dunlop Volley shoe* indicates how the brand's authentic response resulted in an improved brand equity with minimum monetary effort. The brand was the number one seller of the 1970's; however, perceived as a

“commodity” by retailers and “old man” by consumers through 1990’s when Nike and other athletic shoe brands shifted consumer expectations by leveraging quality and fashion. The brand however encountered an unexpected situation later in the market while working to design marketing strategies to revitalize itself. During the late 1990s, the hip teens started to use Dunlop Volley shoe symbolically as a semipolitical tool. These teens were borrowing their fathers’ Dunlop Volley shoe as a rejection to Nike and Adidas’s big marketing budgets and high prices. Additionally, these teens acted as a voluntary marketing platform by requesting free shoes from the company for street advertising. Sport magazines asked for free shoes for running ads. Instead of utilizing this opportunity as a retro-marketing tool through a structured marketing effort, Dunlop decided to just response to hip teens’ requests and support the way they communicate the brand. The brand became a reborn local icon of the streets nationwide as an authentic tool indicating the Australian way of doing better with less effort (Beverland M. , 2005).

Grounding a product with heritage and pedigree by ascribing historically proven facts to it such as the patent date and origin helps create brand narratives. To exemplify, visitors of *Wrangler Jeans* website can read the establishment story of the company and 100-years history (Wink, 2008). *Burberry*’s Great War trench coat has a brand story through provenance and culture; therefore, brand legitimacy. *Gucci*’s signature styling of girth strap webbing in colored horse bits is another case through which Aldo Gucci’s family tie to noble saddle making in medieval courts is promoted (Kovacz et al., 2017).

Nike is a brand claimed to put the athletes first and design products that let people performs the edges of their ability. The brand has a love of craft in this sense and provides a unique experience only the brand can provide. This implies downplaying commercial motives, experience, stylistic consistency and craftsmanship. The story told is close to the core of your values, so audiences respect that authenticity. It is said to be a maker brand for its consumer group, helping to form their identity aspirations (Martin, 2015). In fact, in 2002 Nike diversified its business to skateboarding market and developed limited edition skateboarding series with exclusive distribution and recruited staff members from the skateboarding industry. This is regarded as an original and authentic action (Keiningham et al., 2019).

Vintage products in the fashion industry are regarded as authentic as well. These products signal pedigree and a long narrative with faded and pre-worn appearance (Poole, 2013).

The women's clothing store *Anthropologie* has executed a deep psychographic profile for 30+ married women and designed outlets congruent to their adventurous and bohemian-chic ideal-self. This strategy resulted in a growth of 18% in the fourth quarter of 2007 (Vossoughi, 2008).

(2) Entertainment Industry;

Real Groovy Records—the iconic Upper Queen Street store in New Zealand supported local musicians at the expense of its commercial interests and satisfaction of shareholders in the early 1980's. This store decided to sell the local plays at a loss in order to defend this music against global radio plays and supported the Auckland's student run station in which many local musicians gained their first airplay on (Beverland, 2005).

(3) Telecommunication and Computer Industry;

Apple brand is one of the iconic brands regarded to be authentic. It calls people to "Think Different," through a rebellious attitude against the norms of IBM brand in the industry. This style is depicted in 1984 advertisement aired during super bowl and images of rebels such as John Lennon, and Martin Luther King in its stores. Furthermore, new launches of Apple brand reinforce its original production purpose to deliver insanely great and user-friendly products. The brand was executed with love of production initially by Steve Jobs who is known to supervise all the aspects of production (Beverland, 2005).

(4) Dining Industry;

In-N-Out Burgers of Southern California focuses on taste and service passionately, and emphasizes old-fashioned things like care for the product, for the employees, and community. They lack professionalism and act with an amateur spirit; however, they are still passionate on giving the best on what they promise through low prices, few items, fresh- to-order and hand-cut fries and highest wages in the fast food industry. It is a local winner in the industry despite the big rivals, and it has high return on investment and great loyalty (Beverland, 2005).

Reid (2000) stated in his *Authenticity Handbook* referring to beer brewers that local brands gain over big brands because they manufacture on a small scale and source ingredients locally. They consistently tell brand narratives about their brew masters through marketing communication which create unique sense of community. The author claims that empowered consumers access to all kinds of information about the brands they buy and have no tolerance for fake information; therefore, self-awareness and true reflection of it is critical. Authentic companies in this regard have a single coherent personality, don't hide their motivations, transparent about their practices to empower consumers judge themselves, recognize what they do best and what consumer value most. Focusing on consumer experience is an important action for them. Consumers search for deep emotional benefits such as belonging, security, altruism, freedom or happiness. An authentic brand amplifies these benefits from an integrated marketing communication approach in all mediums. To illustrate, ***Taco Bell*** enhances consumer enhancement through fun at social media with taco emojis as its customer base is teenagers and millennials (Reid, 2000).

Starbuck's CEO Howard Schultz employed integrity to make the brand's story compelling when he announced the decline of the brand's sales and invited everyone to help recover it through store improvement ideas via social networking sites. The implied antecedent was transparency in this case (Vossougi, 2008).

Mc Donalds launched an online campaign named 'Our food. Your question' in 2014. Its purpose is to counter misinformation about its ingredients. Mc Donalds admits in the answers that there are 17 ingredients in its fries which are subject to criticism and the cattle which produce its beef are fed with hormones and genetically modified grains. The company indicated that authentic companies are not perfect, they can make mistakes (Reid, 2000).

In an article presented in the *Forbes* magazine, five ways are listed to build brand authenticity and one of these ways is owning your mistakes just like Mc Donalds does. The other ways are presented as sharing inspiration, harness the power of online reviews, and make every employee an ambassador for the company (Vicky, 2016).

(5) Food and Beverages Industry;

Retro marketing is mentioned to rise due to being stable, familiar, and trustable to relive consumers in times of uncertainty by beating innovation through heritage such as *Coca-Cola* relaunching its original bottle and *Jack Daniels* using vintage advertising campaigns. In this perspective brand heritage helps to create brand authenticity (Anon, 2003).

Scharffen Berger is another gourmet chocolate company which focuses on dark chocolate with small batch productions. In this company the beans are selected and roasted personally and depending on their taste profile blend with other ingredients on a customized perspective. This type of authenticity is defined as “Craft Authenticity”. In terms of marketing effort, communication with bakers and word-of-mouth to consumers regarding the brand and educating the public about the chocolate has been the focus (Carrol, 2009).

Australia’s greatest wine, *Penfold Grange*, which is also regarded as one of the world’s iconic wines suggests a great example on sticking to roots for authenticity. The winemaker Max Schubert came up with the passion to produce a wine that shows the uniqueness of Australia and took its place among the greatest wines of the world. However, much later the Penfold was owned by a new corporation which decided to franchise the product through different flavor variety White Grange and formats for discounters. This led to unfavorable criticism over Penfold that the wine was no longer as good as it used to be. The new marketing approach which do not stick to roots obviously damaged the brand equity. The new white wine was perceived to be an expensive chardonnay far from being a unique Australian wine and Schubert was motivated to make profit through it by appealing American market. However, the traditional fans alienated. This was a big lesson for the brand resulting in turning back to its roots with a new campaign announcing “To the Renegades: Max Schubert, winemaking legend and creator of Penfold Grange. To those who do thing for love not money.” slogan.

The beverage brand *Snapple* which formerly owned by Quaker Oats Group is preferred by consumers as a reaction to mass production and mass marketing through its originality. The brand is argued to build its value through its authenticity (Beverland, 2005).

Beer brands use origin, heritage and pedigree for authentication cues in which country of origin and heritage are valued antecedents by the consumers. *Carlberg*, to illustrate, promotes

‘brewed since 1847’ and ‘preserved its fine Danish heritage’ labels on its cans. Similarly, Belgian beer *Stella Artois* associates its brand narrative with the year 1366 and *Heineken* promotes a commercial back to the late nineteenth century saying “unchanged since 1873” (Alexander, 2009). Beck’s beer is another example which promotes original 1873 recipe and German ingredient purity laws of 1516 (Gundlach & Neville, 2012).

Wine brands seek for ways to build authenticity as well and mostly use tradition, love of craft and culture (Wink, 2008).

Glynn and Gobbi (2017) states that telling the story of the brand on pack is an effective strategy. It permits showing the ingredients, freshness, species and herbs to convey the product is healthy. Companies executing packs through this strategy and handwriting on the pack favors the brand authenticity perception. That is because consumers are more inclined to read packages in store ever (Glynn & Gobbi, 2017).

(6) Automobile;

Transparency is considered to be an asset in automobile industry as well during the crisis. **General Motors**, as well as Ford are illustrated to make some difficult announcements. At that time, General Motors were closing a dozen of factories in the USA and eliminating about 30.000 jobs. Ford’s Chairman, being in a similar situation, as a very authentic leader explained American people what Ford is doing and why. He talked directly to people about Ford’s plans, what and why they are doing (Anderberg & Morris, 2006). Contrary, German manufacturer Volkswagen made a big mistake in being authentic and cheated on emission tests. Even though the CEO immediately apologized, the company already lost trust (Reid, 2000).

Athwal and Harris (2018) suggest that rather than building authenticity into brands, the biggest challenge for marketing practitioners is to maintain brand’s sincerity by designing and providing goods and services that meet the needs of consumers and keep a legitimate brand story. Brands are claimed to need different strategies in different stages of their life cycle. Brands in their infancy need to focus on craftsmanship and quality commitment to provide trust and legitimacy. During growth, stylistic continuity is key to imply continuity. During maturity,

communicating brand origins, heritage, integrity and sincerity are important to imply continuity, and credibility (Athwal & Harris, 2018).

To conclude, as brands realize the shift to the ‘experience economy’, they understand that goods and services are no longer enough for them. Consumers look for experiences that engage them in an inherently personal way (Pine and Gillmore, 2010). Identifying the true self, writing a committed mission, delivering on these promises, being consistent, and open data for consumers to indicate that best ingredients are used with the production methods through a genuine care for the consumers are essential to create authentic brands (Wilson, 2017). Companies position themselves as real such as Coke’s slogan ‘the real thing’, Starbuck’s lunchboxes labelled ‘real food’ and coffee labelled ‘original blend’ (Poole, 2013). Being real is the main prerequisite; therefore, brands search for strategies to contribute this perception.

2.1.5 CONSEQUENCES OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY THROUGH LITERATURE STUDIES

A deep examination in the marketing and branding literature indicates that brand authenticity concept has started to be spoken in the late 1990s (Wang, 1999). More than 70 studies published between 1999 and 2020 are extracted from the literature two of which are academic thesis (Coary, 2013; Kasper, 2015) and remaining are academic articles (books, website reports and periodical articles are not included in this section). In order to briefly see all the mentioned studies (including conceptualization and relationship testing) regarding their names, dimensions, industry context, research methodology and data analysis methods and sample features please refer to Appendices 8.9. There is an increasing focus on the concept right after Beverland’s 2005 article with the title ‘Brand Management and the challenge of authenticity’. This article advises brand managers to open up their brands to members of a community, downplay their sole commercial aspirations and identify themselves with the timeless values of that community. Furthermore, by challenging the brand management model which states brand managers provides brand with meanings, the author claims that the brand meaning occurs through interactions of the brand and communities. Shortly, Beverland’s article raised the importance of brand authenticity in mid 2000s and gained impressive attention. Later,

Beverland proposed the first conceptualization study on brand authenticity in the context of wine (2006). Many other conceptualization studies are done following Beverland (2006) in order to better understand the construct and its identifiers (Anderberg and Morris, 2006; Wink et al., 2008; Beverland, 2008; Carrol and Wheaton, 2009; Beverland et al., 2010; Gundlach and Neville, 2012; Bruhn et al., 2012; Stiehler and Tinson, 2015; Gannon and Prothero, 2016; Leigh et al., 2016; Napoli et al., 2016; Garcia-Rapp, 2017; Guevremont, 2018; Yoganathan et al., 2018; Keiningham et al., 2019; Davies et al., 2019). Even though a disjoint body of research is claimed to exist on its conceptualization (Akbar & Wyemer, 2016), there is almost consensus among various studies that brand authenticity is a multidimensional construct as stated in the “Conceptualization of Brand Authenticity” section of this thesis study.

This section’s main purpose is to deeply examine the consequences of brand authenticity through models presented in the literature. A total of 46 studies that ground consequences of brand authenticity are extracted. 5 of these studies has no industry context (Napoli et al., 2016; Park et al., 2016; Yaşın et al., 2017; Frizzo et al., 2018; Jian et al., 2019); 10 of these studies used more than one specific industry context (multi) among the industry pool consisting of sports, apparel, soft drink, automobile, body care, FMCG, durables, services, retail brands, finance, electronics, luxury goods, food and confectionary (Bruhn et al., 2012; Spiggle et al., 2012; Illicic and Webster, 2014; Newman & Dhar, 2014; Schallehn et al. 2014; Kadirov 2015; Miller, 2015; Morhart et al., 2015; Fritz & Schoenmueller 2017; Hernandez-Fernandez & Lewis 2019); 6 of these studies used context of either beer, wine or other beverage (Assiouras, 2015; Lude & Prügl, 2018; Dwevidi and Mc Donald, 2018; Lee and Chung, 2019; Riefler, 2020; Pelet et al, 2020); 3 of these studies used context of dining through food restaurants or coffee shops (Busser and Shulga, 2019; Rodriguez and Lopez, 2020; Rosado and Pinto, 2020); 4 of these studies used context of either clothing, sports and apparel (Choi et al., 2015; Guevremont and Grohmann, 2016; Guevremont and Grohmann, 2018; Oh et al., 2019); 3 of these studies used context of organizations (Eggers et al., 2013; Akbar and Wyemer, 2016; Kovacz et al., 2017); 3 of these studies used context of tourism (Taheri et al., 2018; Park et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020); 2 of these studies used context of luxury goods (Cheah et al., 2016; Manthiou et al., 2018); 2 of these studies used context of luxury goods such as watch, clothing, hotel (Cheah et al., 2016; Monthiou et al., 2018); 2 of these studies used context of computer (Demirel and Yıldız, 2015), human celebrity brands (Illicic & Webster, 2014; Kowalczyk &

Pounders, 2016); and single studies used in the context of retailer brand (Carsana & Jolibert, 2018), airline brand (Portal et al., 2008); beauty blog (Gannon & Prothero, 2016), electronics (Yao & Wang, 2018), personal trainer and hair salon (Matthew et al., 2020).

18 of these studies are conducted in USA, 6 of them are conducted in Korea, 5 of them are conducted in Australia, 3 of them are conducted worldwide, 2 in Turkey, 2 studies are conducted in Belgium, Netherlands, China, Brazil, one study is conducted in England, New Zeland, Europe, Russia, Germany, Canada and Japan and remaining studies indicated no field information in terms of geography. The same table also indicates that both qualitative (essay, in-depth interview, ethnographic and nethographic approach, case study, experimental study, discussion) and quantitative (self-administrative online survey) methods are used as research methodology. Some studies first developed dimensions and scales for brand authenticity and later explored relationships in models; therefore, used both methods. Only 7 points Likert scale is used for brand authenticity scales in all studies. SEM is the most frequently used data analysis method for relationship testing and additionally confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis, anova and manova, single and multiple regression analysis and interpretative approaches are used.

This section will examine models proposed and tested in the brand authenticity literature upon their industry contexts. Because dimensions and antecedents of brand authenticity are priorly examined, main focus in the models will be consequences of brand authenticity and moderator and mediator constructs in the models. The brand authenticity dimensions used in each study are examined in the “Dimensions of Brand Authenticity” section and antecedents are examined in the “Antecedents and attributes of Brand Authenticity”.

2.1.5.1 Models Studied in the Multi-Industry Context

As priorly stated, 10 studies in the literature used multi-industry context among the industry pool consisting of sports, apparel, soft drink, automobile, body care, FMCG, durables, services, retail brands, finance, electronics, luxury goods, food and confectionary (Bruhn et al., 2012; Spiggle et al., 2012; Illicic and Webster, 2014; Newman & Dhar, 2014; Schallehn et al. 2014; Kadirov 2015; Miller, 2015; Morhart et al., 2015; Fritz & Schoenmueller 2017; Hernandez-Fernandez & Lewis 2019). Bruhn et al. (2012)’s conceptualization study and

Spiggle et al.'s (2012) brand extension authenticity are examined in the former sections. The remaining studies of this sub-section will be examined upon the published date sequence.

Illicic and Webster (2014) investigated the relationship between relational authenticity and brand attitudes and purchase intentions through the moderator effects of brand attachment and relationship quality in the context of finance, electronics, luxury goods and food. They claimed none of the studies in the literature discover consumer perceptions of the authenticity of brands in their relationships with consumers and proposed a framework linking relational authenticity to brand attitudes and purchase intentions. They proposed a concept named consumer based relational authenticity. Relational authenticity in this study is adapted from the Kernis and Goldman's (2006) study in the psychology literature. To summarize, Kernis and Goldman's (2006) study is based on Self-Determination Theory which asserts that authentic individuals are intrinsically motivated to act in line with their true-self in their relationships with others and authenticity has four interrelated components which are awareness (knowing own's strengths and weaknesses, motives, feelings, desires), unbiased processing (objectively judge positive and negative attributes of self-concept), behavior (acting in accordance with self's values and preferences without worrying for the outer reward and punishment) and relational orientation (acting with openness, sincerity and truthfulness in close relationships with others so that others see the real you not a fake one). Authors claim that awareness and unbiased processing are agendas of brand managers and they are not visible to consumers; however, consumers experience behavioral and relational components explicitly. Therefore, authors define relational authenticity as consumer assessment of the genuineness of a brand in its relationships with consumers and developed a scale to measure it. Authors of the study further explained that relational authenticity is distinct from the relationship quality and brand attachment as relational authenticity focuses on behavior performed towards others, whereas relationship quality and attachment center on the bond (and strength of the relational bond) exist between two people or a people and an object. Their hypothesis used strong/weak brand attachment as a moderator between authentic/inauthentic brand and attitude and purchase intention. Their structural equation modelling findings proved the hypothesis and results are as follows after the three quantitative studies in Australia; Four items from relational orientation of Kernis and Goldman (2006) can be applied to all brands. Authenticity is distinct from three measures of brand relationships which are attachment, trust and purchase intention. Relational

authenticity is a predictor of brand attitude and purchase intention and brand attachment and relationship quality (trust and commitment) moderates the effect of relational authenticity on the latter constructs. Furthermore, data analysis proved that relational authenticity is a stronger predictor on brand attitude and purchase intention than brand attachment and commitment. Authors advice readers to further investigate whether trust and commitment should be treated as independent constructs or combined to form overall relationship quality. Additionally, advice readers to understand the difference between crafting brand identity and consumer perception of brand authenticity.

Newman and Dhar (2014) investigated how beliefs in contagion (the concept that objects get a special aura/essence o from their past) based on original manufacturing location influence perceptions of authenticity in the context of apparel, gourmet confectionary and luxury luggage by linking to company's original manufacturing location. Authors claim that consumers perceive products from a brand's original manufacturing location than those made elsewhere more authentic through perceived evidence (original manufacturing location verifies the item is original) and contagion (transferred essence from its past). Authors hypothesises that manufacturing location is relating to transferred essence which in turn increases authenticity and perceived value. Furthermore, they investigated the relevant influence of perceived evidence through authorized retailer versus transferred essence through original manufacturing location on perceived authenticity and value.

Conducting five experiments and path analysis, the author's finding are as follows;

First of all, after isolating the effects of transferred essence and perceived evidence, original manufacturing location is found to be mediated by the belief that the product contains the essence of the brand and authorized retailer is found to be mediated by the belief that there is perceived evidence that the brand is authentic. Authors are able to distinguish the factors effecting perceived evidence and contagion in this sense for the first time in brand authenticity literature. Additionally, quality mechanism did not predict the authenticity judgements unlike previous country of origin studies. Secondly, the perceived authenticity and value from original manufacturing location is found to be higher than those from a new location on the original city. This is said to be an evidence that consumers value a specific physical location rather than the same geographic location. Generally, products produced in the original location of the brand

are perceived to be more authentic and have higher value because they are viewed to contain the essence of the brand.

Schallehn et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between brand authenticity (through consistency, individuality, continuity dimensions) and brand trust in the context of beer and fast food market. Perceived authenticity is found to be positively related to perceived brand trust. Authors explained this relationship. Firstly, authentic people are predictable in their future actions as they were consistent with their past behavior in line with their identity. This in turn decreases the perceived risk and increases the trust for the consumer. Secondly, authentic people have personal aspirations to fulfill their promises as a self-achievement and have inner motivation for authentic acts. Brand trust is defined as to extent which brand fulfills its promises through intentions and capabilities; therefore, is reliable. Authors stated that because path coefficient of brand consistency for 'beer market' is greatest, it is essential for beer brands to be consistent at every brand touchpoint and fulfill brand promises at every stage. Similarly, path coefficient of brand continuity for 'fast food market' is greatest. Individuality is proved to be less important dimension to manipulate brand authenticity in this study compared to continuity and consistency.

Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualized brand authenticity and identified credibility, integrity, symbolism and continuity dimensions as stated in the previous sections. This study further demonstrated the influence of perceived brand authenticity on emotional brand attachment and positive word of mouth through indexical, existential and objectivist cues. Skepticism towards marketing is considered as a moderator construct in their model and it is also found that for consumers with high in self-authenticity, perceived brand authenticity drives brand choice likelihood through self-congruence. Defined antecedents which are indexical cues (brand scandals and brand-congruent employee behavior), iconic cues (communication style emphasizing brand's roots and virtue), and existential cue (brand anthropomorphism) are all defined in the 'Antecedents and Attributes of Brand Authenticity section' and the authors proved that these cues are central to the formation of brand authenticity perception.

The authors' findings are as follows;

First of all, the main model is validated in that perceived brand authenticity increases emotional brand attachment and positive word of mouth. Emotional brand attachment is measured through affection, passion and connection in this study and positive word of mouth is measured through recommending the brand to others that seek advice and say positive things about it to others. The study additionally found that integrity, credibility and symbolism have positive effect on emotional brand attachment; however, continuity has low influence on the construct. The authors explain the result as continuity being the least self-referential perceived brand authenticity dimension. Likely, symbolism has low influence on word-of-mouth which might be a likely result that symbolism serves as a private construct to the consumer.

Secondly, the level of marketing skepticism towards advertising is expected to moderate the communication style emphasizing the brand's roots and virtue and PBA; however, less effect is found between brand's roots compared to brand's virtue.

Thirdly, even though the model's final consequences are emotional brand attachment and positive word of mouth, authors demonstrated further evidence for perceived brand authenticity's ability to predict more viable consumer behavior such as brand choice likelihood and actual consumption. This relationship is not demonstrated in the model explicitly. Self-congruence and self-authenticity are described as the mediator constructs of this relationship. Authors define self-authenticity through authentic living and explain that it is living in accordance with own values and beliefs rather than aiming to be popular thus pretend to be someone else. These people value authentication acts through consumption and consume authentic brands more than those having less self-authenticity. This fact is in line with the existential perspective as brands help identity construction. Furthermore, consumers perceive a greater congruence (the extent to which a brand is perceived to be similar to the consumer's self-concept) between self and an authentic brand if they have high level of self-authenticity desire (and lower congruence in the case of low level of self-authenticity). This fact is followed by the fact that when consumers' self-authenticity is high, perceived brand authenticity has a greater influence on self-congruence and brand choice likelihood and consumption subsequently.

Miller (2015) created a measure of ad authenticity and examined its influence on advertising effectiveness in the context of electronics, fast food and confectionary.

Investigating the relationship between attitude on advertising (unpleasant/pleasant, unlikeable/likeable, boring/interesting, tasteless/tasteful, artless/artful, bad/good) and attitude on brand (bad/good, poor quality/high quality, dislike/like, unpleasant/pleasant) is defined to be another goal. It is essential at this point to explain how the author defines advertising authenticity. It is the extent to which consumers perceive an advertising is depicting the brand parallel to its reality by extracting the indexical and iconic cues from the ad about the brand by using rhetorical techniques. It is measured through the scales such as advertisement reflects brand's originality and personality, brand's character can be clearly seen in the advertisement, this is a typical brand X advertisement, I would expect to see this brand in this advertisement. The authors stated Stern's (1994 p.389) words for further definition;

“An advertisement may be considered authentic if the persona conveys the illusion of reality in so convincing a manner that the perceivers are willing to accept the illusion as mimetic.”

The author's findings are as follows; Ads perceived as more authentic will have more positive attitude towards ads than lower authenticity ads. Secondly, advertising credibility and advertising authenticity are identified as antecedents of advertising attitude. Thirdly, advertising authenticity has a significant positive effect on brand attitude.

Kadirov (2015) studied perceived authenticity gap between national and private label brands and examined how perceived authenticity gap influences the effect of marketing (product innovation, distinctive packaging, advertising, price promotion) and manufacturing (private label production by national brands manufacturers, difficulty of producing the products) variables on willingness to pay through the moderator role of brand loyalty in the context of food, beverage and household care products.

The author's findings are as follows; The authenticity gap has a mediating role between marketing factors and willingness to pay through a positive relationship as proposed in the model. Moreover, distinctive packaging perception positively influences perceived authenticity gap, consumer perception of increased price promotion lead to greater perceived authenticity gap and the difficulty of production has a positive effect on the perceived authenticity gap. These finding suggest that not all marketing and manufacturing factors influence the

authenticity gap. Lastly, brand loyalty reduces the strength of the perceived authenticity gap's effect on willingness to pay, whereas it has a positive direct effect on willingness to pay.

Fritz et al. (2017) studied on antecedents of brand authenticity (brand heritage, brand nostalgia, brand commercialization, brand clarity, brand commitment, brand legitimacy, actual-self congruence, ideal-self congruence, and employee's passion) as described in previous sections and examined the relationship of brand authenticity (as influenced by these antecedents) on brand relationship quality and purchase intention, price premium and forgiveness through the moderator effect of brand involvement in the context of FMCG brands, durable products, service and retail brands. In other words, authors presented psychological outcomes before the behavioral outcomes.

The authors' findings are as follows;

First of all, the nine antecedents manipulate the level of brand authenticity as priorly examined and marketers are advised to understand the culture of the target consumer and find symbols and acts which are relevant to the target's values and norms. Secondly, brand authenticity has positive effect on brand relationship quality. Authors explained this finding in that authentic brands enhance the consumer's self-congruence by reinforcing self-identity; thus, consumers appreciate a stronger bond with that brand. Brand relationship quality is measured through love and passion, interdependence, intimacy, and partner quality dimensions in this research. Secondly, brand relationship quality is proved to have a positive effect on the willingness to pay price premium (the extent to which consumer thinks higher price is justified, worth and fair), purchase intention (the extent to which likelihood and willingness of purchasing the brand is high or definite) and willingness to forgive mistakes (the extent to which consumer believes the brand's mistakes are excusable). Unlike the proposed hypothesis, brand involvement which is the extent to which brand is important and relevant to the consumer has no moderator effect between the antecedents and brand authenticity and brand authenticity and brand relationship quality. The authors explained possible reasonings behind this finding as consumers with high brand involvement might pay attention to a spectrum of brand attitudes and give greater importance to those other than authenticity attribute.

Fernandez and Lewis (2019) studied the effect of brand authenticity on perceived value and brand trust in the context of fast food and beer market. As formerly stated in previous sections, the authors identified brand individuality, consistency and continuity as brand authenticity dimensions. The authors presented detailed descriptions for perceived value and brand trust constructs. The perceived value is measured through consumer's perception that the brand is very good value for money, is economical, can be considered a favorable purchase and its price is both acceptable with regard to its quality and correspond to its value. The authors in this study proved that higher perceptions of brand authenticity result in higher perceptions of perceived value. Secondly, brand trust is measured through consumer's reliance and feel safe that brand fulfills its promises. The authors in this study proved that higher perception of brand authenticity results in higher perception of brand trust. Moreover, it is validated that brands with high consistency have high authentic perceptions and authors justify this relationship through taking attention on ensuring consistency on current actions with promises and essence. Likely, brand continuity and brand authenticity have positive correlation because well rooted brands with engaging and stable stories from the very beginning increase perception of is high because the brand demonstrated and fulfills its brand promise in a unique fashion compared to its competitors and present distinct mental associations.

2.1.5.2 Models Studied in no Industry Context

15 studies in the literature specifies no industry context. 7 of them conceptualizes brand authenticity and are examined in previous sections (Holt, 2002; Beverland, 2005; Anderberg & Morris, 2006; Gupta & Melewar, 2008; Mazutis & Slewinski, 2015; Keiningham et al. 2019; Davies et al., 2019). The remaining 8 studies will be briefly examined below upon published date sequence. Please note that 3 of the 5 studies focus on total organizations in the context of non-profit organization and small and medium sized enterprises (Eggers et al., 2013; Kovacz et al., 2017; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017).

Eggers et al. (2013) identified the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust and in turn small and medium sized company (SME) growth from a CEO perspective. Brand authenticity is measured through brand consistency, brand-customer orientation and brand congruency. The authors raised the general trust erosion and claimed that brand trust

positively impacts company's bottom line by acting as a key ingredient to create loyal customers. These customers are mentioned to recommend the brand to others and consider buying it when need arises. The authors provided reasoning to the finding that brand consistency increases SME brand trust as follows; when brand is consistent, company stakeholders experience the brand exactly the same at all touch points and brand's actions align its value promises. Single set of values defined as the essence and conveying actions for stakeholders parallel to these values are seen critical by the authors as the ending benefit is trust. When the brand communication is not connected with what the stakeholders experience, the company is not well-trusted due to that disconnection. Similarly, the authors provided reasoning to the finding that brand congruency increases SME brand trust as follows; employees whose values and passions fit with the organization are commitment to their company's and give more effort to satisfy consumers. At this point authors further reminded the internal brand promises made to the employees and the condition that these promises should match the company declared values. The authors additionally claimed that brand authenticity is not about communicating that the brand is authentic, but it is making the whole organizational culture as authentic.

Napoli et al. (2016) examined the consumer driven value (hedonic, utilitarian, self-authentication, brand love) and brand driven value (better reputation, greater trust, greater brand equity) from authentic offerings along an authentic continuum scale. They have following findings; The more authentic a brand, the greater the UT value, HED value, self-authentication and brand love derived by consumers; furthermore, the more authentic a brand, the more positive reputation in the marketplace, trust, and equity gained by the firm. To briefly explain, authentic brands are suggested to satisfy individuals' both performance-based needs and desire to acquire pleasure and sensory experience and they are used by consumers to display their membership to a culture or sub-culture; therefore, satisfy their self-authentication desires. Furthermore, after the cognitive response to a brand whether it is genuine or not, feelings might arise to those which are authentic and consumer might form emotional attachment; thus, brand love is considered to be another outcome. Reputation is described to form through the signal's marketers send to consumers regarding the qualities, trustworthiness and reliability of a brand and due to the fact that authentic brands are consistent with their signals and actions, they are more likely to have high reputation. Brand trust is explained through Delgado-Ballester's

(2004) framework that a trustable brand has both positive intentions and high capability to fulfill its promises. Because authentic brands are known to realize their promises and act for the best interest of their consumers, they are more trustable. Authentic brands hold unique associations in the mind of consumers and gain loyalty; thus, result in higher levels of brand equity.

Furthermore, authors found that the authenticity cues that predict brand-derived and consumer-derived value will be different for highly authentic brands compared to less authentic brands. The authors at this point defined a brand authenticity continuum along which brands move at the two extremes of being truly inauthentic to truly authentic. Brands should demonstrate specific authentication acts along this continuum. To exemplify, highly authentic brands satisfy higher-order needs such as relating the brand with self; whereas, less authentic brands satisfy lower-order needs such as the ingredient being high quality and product being genuine. This means that consumer value driven will be different and will be influenced by different cues along different points of the continuum. Therefore, different strategies are needed. Germination strategy is essential for novice brands in which strong foundations should be developed for a start in authenticity perceptions. Sincerity is regarded as the most essential dimension at this point to indicate consumers brand has the passion to act to the best interest of the community and can downplay commercial motives. Trust will be formed as a base for consumer brand relationship at this point which in turn established word of mouth and brand loyalty. Cultivation strategy is advised for apprentice brands which have moderate level of authenticity perceptions. Heritage and quality commitment are important cues to be employed at this stage through artisan skills, know-how and time-honored traditions. These will enhance brand performance at the brand level and satisfy consumers' personal needs for pleasure and self-identification at the consumer level. Consolidation strategy is advised for professional brands which already have a well authenticity perception through sincerity and quality commitment. Emphasizing passion and love for crafting and for community and staying true to the essence of the brand is vital. Finally, preservation strategy is advised for master brands who have high level of authenticity. These brands have high levels of quality commitment, sincerity and strong heritage and became iconic and symbolic for their consumer groups. Therefore, further perception is controlled by the consumers and brands' main role is to continue deliver value to consumers.

Park et al. (2016) proved the full mediating role of perceived authenticity between product ethnicity and consumer evaluations of foreign products in terms of product image regardless of the level of product involvement. In other words, congruency between the product ethnicity to the country image is essential. Additionally, the authors proved that perceived product image positively relates to purchase intentions. This study is in the set of studies that investigate the country of origin effects. Product ethnicity is described as the match of a product category with a certain country of origin (such as Italian pasta); therefore, the consumer associates the product with the images of that country. The authors further explained that the impact of country of origin on product evaluations is based on cognitive, affective and behavioral processes. Cognitive processes lead consumers to match product information with the associative network memory model in the consumer's schema on mind that; thus, these products are stereotypically associated. Affective processes lead consumers to use symbolic and emotional cues such as national identity, proper culture and rituals associated with the country image. Consumers in turn match the associations of these products with the associations of the country.

Kovacs et al. (2017) studied how organizational self-claim depicting the company as authentic is perceived by the consumers in the context of restaurant businesses. The authors' finding is that when organizations make self-claims regarding their authenticity, this resulted in lower ratings compared to the no self-claims condition. The authors used general self-authenticity as the self-claim as the first order construct in the model, positive and negative emotions affecting perceived authenticity as the second order construct and value rating as the consequence. The authors measured positive and negative responses through analyzing open response to text-reviews on organizational self-claims. In general consumer perceived value is defined through the overall assessment of the functional and emotional utilities of the product comparing what is expected and what is received; yet, value rating is defined in terms of overall rating provided by the reviewer out of five. The authors explain their findings by emphasizing the Persuasion Knowledge Model of Friestad and Wright (1994). According to this model, marketer is a persuasion agent and when consumer has less knowledge about the situation, he/she reads, he/she is more easily persuaded by the organizational claim written in that document.

Akbar and Wyemer (2017) proved the positive influence of brand authenticity on customer-brand identification (CBI) in the context of non-profit organization. The authors state that customer-brand identification is also known as self-brand connection. CBI refers to customer's integration of the brand to his/her personal identity as an extended self and Coary (2013) indicated that highly authentic brands remind positive characteristics of self; thus, increases CBI. The authors in this study did not present further information or examination on this relationship inasmuch as they focused their study on developing conceptualization.

Yaşin et al., 2017 explored that brand authenticity with reliability, originality and naturalness dimensions have significant effect on overall brand equity.

Frizzo et al. (2018) examined brand heritage as a predictor of self-reinforcing elements (enticing, enabling and enriching the self) and demonstrated that self-brand connection occurs only through the sensory and aesthetics pleasure (enticing the self) the brand offers. In other words, authors found that the relationship between brand heritage and the self-brand connection is mediated by enticing the self. Enticing the self is the extent to which brand is attractive and appealing to the consumer and pleasing to his/her senses. The latter construct self-brand connection is measured through how far the brand is away from who the consumer feels he/she is and whether consumer feels personally connected with the brand. These measures are inspired from Park et al.'s (2013) relationship model through the distance of benefits delivered by the brand and consumers' personal goals. If the distance is close, there is a lesser gap; therefore, the closer the relationship tends to be. Otherwise, consumer feels disconnected from the brand. In the scope of this thesis, the brand incorporates its heritage in the construction of consumers' identity goals. Authors pointed Escalas and Bettman's (2003) argument that consumers construct their self-identity based on the congruence between brand image and self-image and raised Park et al.'s (2003) relationship model which suggest that consumers approach to brands to reinforce their identities through incorporating brand's characteristics to self that is named as brand attachment and enables consumer to expand and reinforce the self. Enticing the self in this sense reinforces self through hedonic benefits (such as sensory pleasure and aesthetics pleasure).

Jian et al. (2019) investigated the relationship among brand cultural symbolism, consumer cultural involvement, brand authenticity and consumer well-being. This is the first

study that investigated the mediating role of brand authenticity on consumer well-being. Their findings are that; brand cultural symbolism positively correlates with brand authenticity and consumer well-being (eudaimonic and hedonic); brand authenticity partially mediates the relationship between brand cultural symbolism and consumer well-being and consumers' enduring cultural involvement (consumer's positive attitude towards a certain culture in enjoying and being a fan of it) has a weakening effect on the relationship between brand cultural symbolism and brand authenticity. Eudaimonic well-being is measured through consumer's perception that brand makes him/her positive, different, positive and close to ideal self and hedonic well-being is measured through consumer's perception that the brand makes his/her life better, more satisfying, happier and more optimistic. Brand cultural symbolism is valid when consumer associates the brand with things in a certain culture and believes the brand is a symbol of and represent a certain culture. Because a brand that carries a symbol for a certain culture help to establish group identity which will create self-realization and improvement through positive emotions and more satisfied life. This help brand establishing legitimacy with a certain culture in the consumers' mind and act with iconic cues; thus, increases brand authenticity which in turn increases consumer's well-being. This is additionally explained through Fritz et al.'s (2017) argument that authentic brand derives trust that brand promise will be realized; thus, enhances life satisfaction and induce positive emotions.

2.1.5.3 Models Studied in the Context of Food and Beverages

10 studies in the literature are conducted in the context of food and beverages (beer, wine and other beverages). 4 of them conceptualizes brand authenticity and are examined in previous sections (Beverland, 2006; Beverland et al., 2008; Alexander, 2009; Gundlach & Neville, 2012). The remaining 6 studies will be briefly examined below upon published date sequence.

Assiouras et al. (2015) investigated the influence between brand authenticity and brand attachment and proved the relationship between the two constructs. Brand authenticity is measured through quality commitment, sincerity and heritage dimensions. The authors explained the brand attachment construct in detail by underpinning the attachment theory of Bowlby (1982) that investigated the relationship between infants and their caregivers and the latter theories that adapted the concept to companies or brands (Paulsen and Fournier, 2007). It

is stated through Thomson et al.'s (2005) study that brand attachment is an emotional link/bond between a consumer and a brand; thus, a psychological outcome followed by separation stress and additionally the consumer feels connection, passion, affection to the brand he/she is attached to. It is further stated through Park et al.'s (2006) study that brand attachment occurs through a link between the brand and the self-concept (including ideals, desires, values and norms). Therefore, the actual self the consumer is or the ideal self the consumer wants to be might lead to emotional attachment to a brand. The authors stated that especially the heritage dimension of brand authenticity plays a major role through connecting with tradition, history, sub-culture; thus, impact brand attachment. Moreover, the authors stated that because consumers have confidence that an authentic brand will act consistently to realize promises and stay on quality commitment; thus, it is trustable which increases the emotional bond to continue with the brand as a partner.

The study further indicated that brand attachment influences consumer purchase intentions, promote the brand and willingness to pay more. The reasoning for this finding according to the authors is that emotional attachment makes consumers to make sacrifices for the party who is bonded with.

Dwivedi and Mc Donald (2018) investigated the influence of consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications on brand authenticity of fast-moving consumer goods in the context of energy drink. Brand authenticity is seen as a facet of brand image based on consumer perceptions and beliefs. The authors' found strong total effect of brand marketing communications on perceived brand authenticity. This study conceptualized evaluation of brand marketing communications as a holistic construct and described it as the knowledge, attitude and judgement in consumer stored memory. The measures of brand marketing communications are taken as advertising (perception of advertising spending and its memorability), sponsorship (judged upon favorability and appropriateness), social media (judged upon favorability and appropriateness), and CSR (judged in terms of firm's commitment to society). These media types are spoken through one voice, in other words there is a totality in marketing communication that each medium complements each other; therefore, is regarded to be judged holistically by the authors. For instance, advertising creates a personality perception, social media create engagement and sponsorship creates experience for

the consumer. The authors further stated that brand marketing communication influence brand authenticity perceptions via direct and indirect effect. They proved that consumer judgements of brand marketing communications have a direct positive influence on perceived brand authenticity. Direct effect is the extent to which marketing communication cues (also named as diagnostic information) are used by consumers to extract cultural meanings (symbolic and imaginary) about the brand. Marketing communication is a visible declaration of marketing efforts of a brand. To illustrate, energy drinks represent speed and risk-taking among young population. This target group consume the relevant brand meaning through the use of preferred brand. Similarly, CSR efforts imply that the brand has a sense of integrity, strong character and philosophy. The communication effort flow through CSR than implies consumers that the brand aims to tell the society what it stands for and how it values its stakeholders. These declarations affect impressions of consumers and affect authenticity judgements. The authors cited Holt's (2002) case that Harley Davidson stays true to its archetypical roots from product design to staged events. The authors additionally proved that clarity of brand positioning mediates the indirect effect of consumer perceptions of brand marketing communication on perceived brand authenticity. Indirect effect implies that the intended positioning of the brand should be clearly presented to the consumer via marketing communication because in some cases the positioning may not be properly conveyed. Clarity of the positioning messages should be very clear in this sense. In order to create a clarity of positioning, the authors advised brand managers to emphasize points-of-difference because it is the only way to create strong brand association in consumer mind that will be differentiated from the clutter and be recalled. The authors explain the indirect effect through associative network memory model (Keller, 1993). The brand information is stored in nodes which are linked to each other and the stronger the nodes and their link with the brand, the clearer

Lude and Prügl (2018) investigated whether using a family business brand influence consumer brand perception in the context of wine product. According to their findings consumer indicate higher trust from the communication of the firm's family nature which in turn results in stronger purchase intentions. Additionally, brand authenticity is found to have a mediating role between communication of family firm nature and brand trust.

This study is based on consumer inference theory proposed by Kardes (1993) and Kardes et al. (2004) which explains how consumers react to family business branding cues. Potential consumers may not reach all the cues to make inferences about the brand; thus, they rely on whatever cue is available. Cues are important because consumers are exposed to informational cues when they encounter a brand and they make judgements and create opinions about the brand based on these cues. Cue utilization theory suggests that when intrinsic cues (those that directly affect the product's appearance and performance such as look, smell and sound) cannot be accessed due to lack of experience, extrinsic cues (those that do not directly affect the product's appearance or performance such as country of origin, price) are relied on to make judgements (Szybilla and Jacoby, 1974). Back to the inference theory, the authors highlighted that some brand features such as whether the brand is trustable or not is not directly accessible by the consumer thus consumer form "if-then" linkages between the available cues and conclusions. Consumers at this point rely on memory-based singular inferences and use prior beliefs between a specific cue and judgement of the brand. For brand managers, understanding inference-making helps to predict consumer behavior and it is important to resolve which familiar cues might lead to positive and negative consumer inferences in the context of family firms.

The study proved that consumers' brand trust is greater for brands with a family firm cue than for brands with no family firm cue. It is explained through family firms long-term oriented nature resulting from the firm's purpose for stability and long-term survival by investing in trustful long-terms relationships and at the same time ability to act with freedom through unique and authentic behavior. Brand trust is said to be the central construct in this proven relationship and stated to be an essential component in building successful consumer brand relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Consumers look for relevant cues integrated in brand's appearance, performance and communication to infer and judge its trustworthiness. Authors defined brand trust through Herbst et al.'s (2012) definition;

"Consumers' confidence that the brand, product, or service firm is dependable and competent" (p. 910).

The finding that brand authenticity has a mediating role between the communication of family firm and brand trust is explained through the fact that a family runs the business for many years

through an intrinsic motivation and self-determination infers authentic actions for consumers; thus, in turn trust and honesty.

Lee and Chung (2019) investigated the relationship between brand authenticity and brand relationship quality for functional health food (defines products manufactured with functional and nutritional ingredients to help body) consumers and their effect on brand loyalty. The brand relationship quality is measured through brand satisfaction, brand trust and brand commitment. It is found that all the brand authenticity attributes measured in the research (over product priority, naturelness, company authenticity, advertising authenticity, communication authenticity, brand originality, price authenticity, health self-efficacy) positively affect each of the brand relationship quality measures except product authenticity on brand commitment and originality on brand trust. The notion self-efficacy in this research defines consumers' control on their own health through consuming functional health foods.

The authors define brand relationship quality as the depth and intensity of the consumer-brand relationship. BRQ indicates the sustainability and strength of the relationship between the consumer and the brand. The quality of relationship is important because it maintains relationships and secures loyal consumers; therefore, provides high return on investment made to those consumers. As priorly stated brand satisfaction is one of the sub-constructs of BRQ measured in this study and is defined through the match of consumer's pre and post-consumption feelings. Trust is stated as another sub-construct of BRQ in this study and stated to be key to maintain a relationship and strengthen consumer-brand relationship. Finally, the latest sub-construct brand commitment is regarded to correlate with brand loyalty. Brand loyalty which is regarded to be a driving force for corporate growth is said to be repeated purchase which includes both behavioral and attitudinal commitment in this study.

A final finding on this study is that total brand relationship quality, brand satisfaction, brand trust and brand commitment separately mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand loyalty in which brand commitment is found to have strongest effect on brand loyalty.

Riefler (2020) investigated consumers' response to authenticity in the context of local versus global beverage brands. The model studied the relationship between perceived brand

authenticity and perceived brand value through the moderation of brand's globalness. According to the findings, authenticity perceptions lead to higher brand value independent of the brand globalness; thus, being a global brand does not become a liability in the case that brand is perceived as authentic and global brands can create competitive advantages in local markets through authentication acts. The authors advise global brands to employ glothentic (global and authentic) strategies through emphasizing the brand's relationship to time, heritage and focus on consumers' desire for genuineness. The authors further stated that examining the conceptual roots of authenticity, brand scarcity which is the extent to which brand does not appear widely accessible is an important dimension (Holt, 2002). However, there is an inconsistency for global brands in this sense inasmuch as global brands produce mass and are standardized. Authors explained that heritage dimension played a major role to resolve this inconsistency. In the case of local brands, because they are already linked to a place of origin, heritage and scarcity, authenticity is a parity association for them. In other words, authenticity is a salient association for all local brands. However, the empirical results of this study indicated that local brands ought to build further associations than solely being authentic and local to compete with authentic global brands.

Pelet et al. (2020) explored the relationship between consumers' perception of the authenticity of wines and purchase intentions in online retailing. Perceived pleasure is investigated as a mediator construct through the moderator role of color types and visuals designs of labels between authenticity and purchase intentions. According to the results, perceived authenticity has a positive effect on pleasure and purchase intent; additionally, labels with vivid colors and low visual complexity has a greater impact of authenticity on pleasure. Pleasure in this study is suggested to increase when quality of wine is assured and presentation of wine through its packaging and label design is enhanced. This emotional response predicts behavioral response such as purchase intention. Authenticity in fact is explained to be mostly related to 'terroir' which is defined as the combination of soil, climate and spirit of the wine producer. Because terroir is an important differentiator between wine brands, its presence increases brand authenticity and buying intentions. Authors finally stated that their finding form important guidelines and cues for wine producers that sell online to manipulate authentic perceptions.

2.1.5.4 Models Studied in the Context of Dining and Hospitality

5 studies in the literature are conducted in the context of dining and hospitality. 1 of them conceptualizes brand authenticity and is examined in previous sections (Guevremont, 2018) and another study explored brand authenticity through a sentiment analysis in online reviews (Rosado-Pinto, 2020). The remaining 3 studies will be briefly examined below upon published date sequence.

Busser and Shulga (2020) investigated consumer involvement in consumer generated advertising and its impact on brand loyalty and trust among both users and non-users in the context of coffee shop. Consumer involvement in this study is defined through cognitive and behavioral intention to co-create for further idea generation and stronger sense of community. The findings revealed that for both users and non-users' involvement in consumer generated advertisement increases both brand loyalty and trust. Therefore, authors advise to execute company-initiated executions to involve consumer groups in generating consumer generated advertisement. This is stated to convert non-users to users and create long-term consumer-brand relationships. The other findings revealed that transparency (defined by sharing open information about the brand to the public) positively influences brand authenticity. Organizational transparency and brand authenticity are taken as antecedents of consumer involvement in consumer generated advertising in this study and both constructs significantly and positively effect brand trust; however, only authenticity impacts loyalty.

Kim et al. (2019) found that consumers' perceived authenticity influences their purchase intention through both restaurant image and positive emotion. Restaurant image in this context is described through emotional and symbolic perceptions and ideas that customers associate with restaurants and purchase intention is defined through revisit of the restaurant and spread positive word-of-mouth. What drives authenticity in a restaurant setting is stated to be discussed through varying studies. To exemplify, authentic sauce and native service staff (Kim and Jang, 2016), story about the origin of the dish and unique food names (Youn and Kim, 2017), ethnic theme in the service ambiance (Wang and Mattila, 2015) are previously studied attributes of restaurant authenticity. However, what drives authenticity in a traditional restaurant setting is for the first time investigated through this study. The findings reveal that local people as

authenticators and chain ownership significantly increases consumers' perceived authenticity in a traditional restaurant setting. Chain restaurants are defined as a multi-unit stores located in different geographic places and owned by the same person. The effect of local people on perceived authenticity is diagnosed high because local people have expertise on local consumers in terms of the taste expectations and their words are organic information source. After the relevant findings, authors advise traditional food restaurants to use high exposure in local media especially on social media and through consumer generated content to be more visible to the local segment. Co-operation is advised with consumers through gift giving for spreading words for their restaurants. Finally, it is advised to invest in restaurant image and conduct surveys to understand the perception of local segments as image enhances purchase intentions.

Rodriguez-Lopez et al. (2020) found that consumers' perception of restaurant brand authenticity on customer-based brand authenticity, both directly and indirectly, through the mediating effect of customer satisfaction and the moderating effect of restaurant type partially moderates the antecedent relationship of customer-based brand equity. They stated according to the findings that restaurant customers provide favorable associations and response to the restaurant only if the food and environment is perceived significantly authentic. A restaurant is perceived to be authentic when both the food and culinary experience is congruent with the relevant culture such as ingredients being exclusive to the particular region, dish is cooked through a traditional manner and the design of the restaurant is congruent with the local culture. A greater degree of restaurant perceived authenticity brings a greater degree of restaurant customer-based brand equity because according to the authors perceived authenticity positively affects some components of CBBE such as awareness, image and quality. Additionally, as stated above, customer satisfaction has a mediating role between the perceived brand authenticity and CBBE. The authors reasoning behind this finding is that customer satisfaction is a psychological notion and is derived from the feeling of pleasure from the difference between expectations of brand and actual consumption or usage outcomes (Pizam et al., 2016). Because several studies indicate that authenticity brings customer satisfaction (Muskat et al., 2019) this mediation relationship is seen viable to the authors.

2.1.5.5 Models Studied in the Context of Fashion and Sports

6 studies in the literature are conducted in the context of organizational authenticity in the context of fashion (includes clothing and apparel) and sports. 2 of these studies conceptualized brand authenticity (Beverland, 2006; Anderberg & Morris, 2006) and the other 4 are briefly examined below upon published date sequence.

Choi et al. (2015) explored dimensions of brand authenticity for sports brands (authority, fashionability, consistency, innovativeness, sustainability, origin, heritage) and examined the effect of each dimension on brand attachment, brand commitment and brands loyalty. Brand attachment and brand commitment are used as mediator constructs between brand authenticity and brand loyalty in their study. The authors claimed brand authenticity to predict brand attachment because there is a strong personal attachment arises from brand trust and emotional experience in the case of brand attachment. It is defined as strong emotion such as affection and passion which consumer feels through a long-term relationship (Fournier, 1998; Thomson et al., 2005). Additionally, brand commitment is a strong emotion attached to a brand; however, there is an added effort to maintain a long-term behavioral relationship such as continue buying the brand (Fournier, 1998). There is an effort and observed behavior to carry a valuable (and commercial) relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) through strong feelings such as love (Thomson et al., 2005). Lastly, brand loyalty is claimed to be a consequence in a relationship between brand authenticity, brand commitment and brand attachment because several studies are illustrated to indicate the relationship between either brand commitment or brand attachment and brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998; Lee and Sung, 2001). The authors presented Tucker's (1964) definition of brand loyalty which states the construct as the tendency to purchase a specific product more frequently compared to others and being deeply attached to it. According the authors' findings brand attachment is predicted by sustainability, innovativeness, fashionability (trendsetting, contemporary, reflect consumer taste) and authority (socially approved, self-confident, easily recognized by people, having a positive image). The most significant predictors of brand commitment are found to be innovativeness, sustainability and fashionability. Finally, brand loyalty is found to be significantly related to brand commitment, brand attachment and all brand authenticity factors; while, commitment is found to more significantly relate to brand loyalty compared to brand attachment. The authors'

final comment according to these studies is that brand authenticity has a major importance for consumer brand relationships as brand authenticity's relationship with brand attachment and commitment are proven.

Guevremont and Grohmann (2016) explored situational (such as need to express the authentic self and need to belong) and individual level moderators (such as personal authenticity and brand engagement in self-concept) to understand under which conditions consumers feel emotional attachment for authentic brands. This approach enabled authors to address the relationship between motivation-based consumption and brand authenticity. The authors used credibility, integrity, symbolism and continuity dimensions for this study and examined affection, connection and passion as dimensions of brand attachment. Affection is measured to the extent consumer regards the brand to be affectionate, friendly, loved, and peaceful; Passion is measured to the extent consumer feels to the brand to be passionate, delighted, captivated; Connection is measured to the extent consumer feels to the brand to be connected, bonded and attached. Their findings suggest that consumers with a high level of brand engagement in self-concept indicate more emotional attachment to authentic brands in the case that they feel socially excluded. The need to belong is described to be a human motive and a motivator to create long-term relationship with others for human and literature in brand authenticity is illustrated to support need to belong through satisfying self-authentication goals (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010), gain connection with others (Gillmore and Pine, 2007) and create a common identification (Napoli et al., 2014). Therefore, authentic brand at this point compensates the lack of relationships with the community. Brand engagement in self-concept at this point is defined as the extent brand is seen as an extension of self-identity. A second finding is that, those consumers with high level of self-authenticity indicates more brand attachment to authentic brands (versus less authentic brands) in the cases that they feel inauthentic. Self-authenticity is defined to be truthful to one's own values and exhibit actions accordingly. Due to their symbolic nature and help in identity construction, authentic brands are instrumental for consumers to express their self-authentication (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Morhart *et al.*, 2015), to stay true to themselves (Arnould and Price, 2000) and realize their morals and principles (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). In the case that consumers have feelings of inauthenticity, their desire for more authentic brands increase to restore the feeling of inauthenticity; thus, they demonstrate greater attachment to those brands. The personal

fulfillment in turn increases brand attachment. Authors claim that their research demonstrates authentic brands to make consumers true to themselves and feel connected to others to create and maintain strong relationship in the form of brand attachment.

Guevremont and Grohmann (2018)'s findings are that an authentic brand image alleviates negative consequences of a brand scandals which influences willingness to pay, affection, perceived brand responsibility for the scandal and perceived hypocrisy. Affection and perceived hypocrisy are found to mediate the influence of brand authenticity on consumers' willingness to pay in the context of a scandal.

Oh et al. (2019) proved that authenticity positively effects self-inforcing assets (enticing the self, enriching the self, enabling the self) and subsequently increase brand-self connectedness (used as a mediator construct and also defined as self-brand distance) and consumers' behavioral intentions in the context of fashion. The authors stated that behavioral intentions are those such as buying the product, visiting a selling point and recommending the product to other people. According to the authors, consumer develop close consumer brand relationships to the brands they have self-extension opportunity gains. How these self-extension opportunities arise are explained by self-inforcing assets which are enticing the self, enriching the self and enabling the self each of which achieve different goals. To examine, enticing the self serves to hedonic and pleasurable benefits such as sensory and aesthetics. Enriching the self serves to symbolic benefits to represent the actual or ideal self. Enabling the self serves to functional an utilitarian benefits so that the product performs to realize consumer's goals. These self-inforcing assets contribute to self-brand relationship as proved in the study. The authors commented that reasoning is the brand attachment mechanism. The positive self-brand connectedness at this point occurs as dependent variable to self-inforcing assets. The authors define the construct as follows;

“The self-brand connectedness is a continuum ranging from feeling distant and disconnected to a brand on a negative end to feeling close and connected to brand in a positive end (p. 234)”.

The authors found that brand authenticity has the strongest effect on enticing the self-compared to others. The authors argued that this finding might result due to the context of fashion industry context in which aesthetic design and sensory pleasure is highly sought.

2.1.5.6 Models Studied in the Context of Luxury Goods

5 studies in the literature are conducted in the context of luxury watch, clothing and hotel. 3 of these studies conceptualized brand authenticity (Stiehler & Tinson, 2015; Athwal & Harris, 2018; Zainol et al., 2018) and the other 2 are briefly examined below upon published date sequence.

Cheah et al. (2016) explored the impact of country-of-ingredient authenticity on product judgement and finally willingness to recommend and willingness to buy luxury branded products. Luxury branding is stated to have a strong relationship with consumer need for authenticity because these products are perceived to have time honored traditions, use natural ingredients and made with artisan skills. Country-of-ingredient authenticity construct is explored through three dimensions which are authenticity of raw materials, authenticity of artisan skills and authenticity of sustainable/ethical considerations. Authors at this point stated that country image effects the quality of the products such as best wine is perceived to be supplied from France, while best tea is supplied from Sri Lanka. Brand attachment is used as a moderator construct between product judgement and willingness to recommend and buy in the author's model. It is defined through the strength of relationship between the brand and the consumer self. The brand is claimed to have a moderator effect on the latest constructs as well. All the relationships are proven as positive. Therefore, authors advise brand managers to stress country's expertise in raw materials and artisan craft skills when speaking for quality and image. Additionally, advise companies to in love in corporate social responsibility actions.

Manthiou et al. (2018) examined and proved the positive role of brand authenticity on brand love through the mediating effect of impression in memory and lifestyle congruence in the context of luxury hotels. The authors used need for uniqueness as a moderator construct in the model; however, the interrelationships between the constructs found not to differ upon high and low need for uniqueness (pursuing differentness relative to others). Impression in memory is defined to have importance because based on script theory (Bozinoff and Roth, 1983)

experiences are stored in memory to be activated later. Similarly, lifestyle is selected as a construct because it indicates a pattern of consumption which reflects how money is spent and identity is formed; thus, lifestyle describes how the brand fits consumers; unique pattern of living. Specifically, in the hospitality setting, lifestyle-congruence refers to what extent the brand help guests express their values and lifestyle. Finally, brand love is described as the degree of passionate emotional attachment for the brand. Authors claimed that hospitality consumers carry brand love when they feel pampered and enjoy superior service.

2.1.5.7 Models Studied in the Context of Tourism

4 studies in the literature are conducted in the context of tourism. One of these studies conceptualized brand authenticity (Wang, 1999) and the other 3 are briefly examined below upon published date sequence.

Taheri et al. (2018) explored the impact brand heritage on perceived brand authenticity at repaired/reconstructed heritage sites. The authors also studied the interrelations between brand heritage, cultural motivation (tendency to attend local festivals and visit museums, art galleries etc.), object-based and existential authenticity, relational value and commitment. It is found that brand heritage stimulates perceived authenticity; thus, increase relational value even if the site is reconstructed and increase visitor commitment to visiting the site. Relational value in this context is defined to be co-created between the site and the visitor during the consumer's authentic experience that aligns with the consumer's preconceptions of brand heritage. Brand heritage at this point is stated to enhance both object-based authenticity and existential authenticity through personal interpretation. The authors stated that their model indicated the increased importance of existential authenticity in situations which historical provenance is reduced. Therefore, it is seen vital to communicate the brand heritage prior to, during and after the visit even the sites are totally reconstructed and thus exhibits a dynamic history. Additionally, in the case that object-based authenticity is low, managers are advised to enhance interactivity during visiting experience such as using digital apps.

Park et al. (2019) studied a three-order construct model by investigating how authenticity affect tourist satisfaction and loyalty (revisit and recommend). It is found that both constructive authenticity and existential authenticity positively affect visitor satisfaction which

in turn increases intention to revisit. Both constructive and existential authenticity are stated to be subjective due to a mutual meaning-making process. Subjective constructivism raised the idea that tourists actively build their own meanings through cultural heritage preferences and expectations. Subjective existentialism defines how open-minded the tourist is in the limited space and time the touristic experience offers to him/her. It is the subjective vision and sense in the context of touristic attraction. Loyalty which is defined as revisit and recommendation is stated to have different phases that are cognitive, affective and conative loyalty. First level cognitive loyalty is defined to be the weakest form and expresses the consumer's evaluative response to the performance of a product in relation to its price. Affective loyalty involves emotions and satisfaction which lead to attitudinal loyalty. Finally, conative loyalty as the strongest predictor of behavioral loyalty is defined to be consumers' behavioral intentions to keep using the brand in the future. The study results suggest that tourist satisfaction directly affect cognitive and affective loyalties; however, indirectly affect conative loyalty.

Chen et al. (2020) proposed a framework for destination brand engagement with destination brand authenticity and destination brand self-congruence drivers and their consequences as revisit and recommendation intention. Their findings suggested destination brand authenticity positively influences destination brand engagement and destination brand self-congruence directly affect revisit intention but indirectly effects recommendation intention. Destination brand engagement as explained by the authors define the relationship between the customer and destination brand with cognitive, affection and activation dimensions. Cognitive processing refers to customer's mental thinking of the brand; Affective processing refers to customer's positive emotions to the brand; Activation processing refers to customer's degree of effort, energy and time committed to the brand. On the other side, destination brand self-congruence is a derivative of self-concept and defines the consistency between the self-concept of a tourist and a destination brand image.

2.1.5.8 Models Studied in other Industry Contexts

Apart from the cluster of studies explained above, there are some single or few models studied in single industry contexts. Demirel and Yıldız, 2015 explored that brand authenticity significantly impact brand choice, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty in the context of

computer brands. Illicic and Webster (2016) studied on authentic celebrity who behaves autonomously and self-determined in relationships. Celebrity brand authenticity is found to be a strong predictor of purchase intentions through increased sense of freedom and connectedness with others. Kowalczyk and Pounders (2016) are other authors that studied in the context of celebrity brands and found that authenticity increases emotional attachment which in turn increases word-of-mouth and purchase likelihood. Carsana and Jolibert (2018) found that brand schematic and indexical cues increase private label brands' perceived authenticity through integrity and credibility dimensions which in turn increases attitudes toward and willingness to buy in the context of retailer brand. Portal et al. (2018) investigated the brand authenticity's influence on warmth and confidence and in turn consumer brand relationship (trust construct) in the context of airline brand. Warmth and competence are used as the mediator constructs and brand trust is used as the last order construct with reliability and intention dimensions. Brand authenticity does have a dominant effect on brand trust, and warmth and competence partially mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust. The author's mentioned Fournier's (1998) statement that consumers relate to brands in the same way they relate to people. This means that the social principles that guide the relationships between people are relevant between people and brands. In this respect, Social Psychology Theory suggests that people make judgements about others by evaluating warmth (being sincere, good-natured, friendly, trustworthy, tolerant) and competence (being capable, skillful, intelligent, confident) dimensions (Fiske et al., 2002). Trust which is defined through reliability and intentions is said to be an important construct in branding since the late 1980's as the importance of relationship marketing increased. It is widely accepted in the branding literature that trust is a key construct to create a successful consumer brand relationship. Finally, Mathews et al. (2020) found that front line service employees who display high level of authenticity generate higher purchase intentions compared to less authentic but higher quality ones.

In the light of these studies, below table 2.1.5.1 is prepared by the author of this thesis to demonstrate the consequences of brand authenticity at a glance as presented in the literature studies. The first column in the table indicates the consequence constructs of brand authenticity and second column indicates what type of construct (second order, last order, mediator, moderator) is the consequence in the relevant model examined. The source of studies is visible in the later columns. The consequences are clustered as consumer benefits of brand

authenticity and brand benefits of brand authenticity by the author of this thesis. As demonstrated in the table, **consumer benefits of brand authenticity are self-authentication, consumer brand identification which is used as brand-self connection/congruence as well, enticing the self, enabling the self, utilitarian consumer value, hedonic consumer value, lifestyle congruence, transferred essence and consumer well-being.** Among these consumer benefits, consumer brand identification/self-brand connection/self-brand congruence is used with the highest frequency in the literature studies with five times (Spiggle et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017; Frizzo et al., 2018; Oh et al., 2019) and self-authentication is used with the second highest frequency in the literature studies with three times (Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2016; Beverland, 2016). Furthermore, the same table demonstrates that brand trust is the brand benefit of brand authenticity with the highest frequency of 8 times (Egger et al., 2012; Schallehn et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Napoli et al., 2016; Lude and Prügl, 2018; Busser and Shulga, 2019, Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Lee and Chung, 2019), buying intention has the second highest frequency with 6 times (Assiouras et al., 2015; Park et al., 2016; Beverland, 2016; Fritz et al., 2017; Lude and Prügl, 2018; Pelet et al., 2020), emotional attachment accompanies buying intention with frequency of 6 times (Illicic and Webster, 2014; Assiouras et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2015; Pounders and Kowalczyk, 2016) and lasly perceived brand value has the fourth highest frequency with 4 times (Newman and Dhar, 2014; Kovacz et al., 2017; Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Riefler, 2020).

TABLE 2.1.5.1: Consequences of Brand Authenticity, Frequency Used in Different Studies, Designed by the Researcher

CONSTRUCTS OTHER THAN BA (Brand Authenticity) IN THE MODEL	ROLE IN THE MODEL	CONSUMER BENEFITS OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY																																				
		Spiggle et al., 2012	Eggert et al., 2013	Schwartz et al., 2014	Iliesiu and Hekimov, 2014	Newman and Chae, 2014	Assouline et al., 2015	Gawronski and Goshwami, 2015	Morhart et al., 2015	Kotler et al., 2015	Dominici and Yozgat, 2015	Chen et al., 2015	Miller, 2015	Park et al., 2016	Brewster, 2016	Chen et al., 2016	Forstner and Kuchta, 2016	Kopp et al., 2016	Kroner et al., 2017	Alwan and Wymer, 2017	Fitz et al., 2017	Yogan et al., 2017	Carasco and Ruyter, 2017	Rein et al., 2018	Dowd and McDonald, 2018	Lude and Pagi, 2018	Mantelero, 2018	Pizzari et al., 2018	Gawronski and Goshwami, 2019	Besser and Shugart, 2019	Fernandez and Lewis, 2019	Oh et al., 2019	Jin et al., 2019	Lee and Chung, 2019	Ritter, 2020	Chen et al., 2020	Rodriguez Lopez and Priet et al., 2020	
Self-Authentication	Moderator/Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Consumer Brand Identification/ Brand-Self Connection/Congruence	Consequence/Last order construct/ Mediator between BA and consequences																																					
Enticing the self	Second order construct after BA																																					
Enriching the self	Second order construct after BA																																					
Consumer Value (Utilitarian)	Second order construct																																					
Consumer Value (Hedonic)	Second order construct																																					
Lifestyle Congruence	Second order construct after BA																																					
Transferred essence	Mediator between manufacturing location and BA																																					
Consumer Wellbeing	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
BRAND BENEFITS OF BRAND AUTHENTICITY																																						
Brand Trust (unidimension/multidimension with reliability and intentions)	Second order construct after BA/Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand relationship quality (Love and Passion)	Second order construct after BA																																					
Brand relationship quality (Interdependence)	Second order construct after BA																																					
Brand relationship quality (Intimacy)	Second order construct after BA																																					
Brand relationship quality (Partner Quality)	Second order construct after BA																																					
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Trust)	Moderator between Relational BA and Brand Attitude/Purchase intention constructs																																					
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Satisfaction)	Moderator between Relational BA and Brand Attitude/Purchase intention constructs																																					
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Commitment)	Moderator between Relational BA and Brand Attitude/Purchase intention constructs																																					
Brand Involvement	Moderator between BA and Brand Relationship Quality																																					
Brand Attachment/Emotional Attachment	Moderator between Relational BA and Brand Attitude/Purchase intention constructs/Second order construct after BA/Mediator between BA and consequences																																					
Scepticism towards Advertising	Moderator																																					
Brand Loyalty	Moderator between Perceived Authenticity gap and Willingness to pay																																					
Perceived Warmth	Mediator between BA and Brand Trust																																					
Perceived Competence	Mediator between BA and Brand Trust																																					
Product Category Involvement	Moderator between Clarity of Positioning and Perceived Brand Authenticity																																					
Product Judgement	Second order construct after BA																																					
Destination Brand Congruence	Moderator between Destination Brand authenticity and last order constructs																																					
Enduring culture Involvement	Moderator between BA and brand cultural symbolism																																					
Brand Commitment	Second order construct after BA																																					
Brand Engagement	Moderator between BA and Brand Attachment																																					
Brand Satisfaction/Customer Satisfaction	Second order construct after BA/Mediator between BA and CBBE																																					
Brand Commitment	Second order construct after BA																																					
Perceived Brand Globalness	Moderator between BA and Perceived Brand Value																																					
Need for Uniqueness	Moderator between BA and latter constructs																																					
Impression in memory	Second order construct after BA																																					
Ad credibility	Second order construct after Ad Authenticity																																					
Pleasure	Second order construct after BA																																					
Product Image	Second order construct after BA																																					
Product Involvement	Moderator between Congruent Product Ethnicity and Authenticity																																					
Brand Equity (Loyalty)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Equity (Quality)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Equity (Awareness)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Willingness to pay for NBs over PLs	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Attitude	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Willingness to buy	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Willingness to recommend	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Consumers' Behavioural Intention	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Attachment	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Attitude Towards Ad	Third order construct after Ad Authenticity																																					
Brand Attitude	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Revisit Intention	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Engagement	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Recommendation Intention	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Perceived Brand Value	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Word-of-Mouth	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Promote the brand	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Brand Choice	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Emotional Brand Attachment (Affection)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Emotional Brand Attachment (Passion)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Emotional Brand Attachment (Connection)	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Premium Price	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Willingness to pay more	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Willingness to Forgive Mistakes	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
SME Growth	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Purchase Intention/Buying Intention	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Purchase Likelihood	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Consumer Based Brand Equity	Consequence/Last order construct																																					
Hedonic Well-being	Consequence/Last order construct		????																																			
Eudaimonic well-being	Consequence/Last order construct		????																																			
Brand Love	Consequence/Last order construct																																					

The above table shed more light on the brand authenticity construct with justifiable links to the framework proposed in this thesis. Consumers have first judgmental and emotional responses, and then attitudinal and behavioral responses to authentic brands as a holistic examination of literature models justify. **Another table is prepared and presented below for the reader to indicate these responses. The first column indicates all the judgmental and emotional responses of consumer responses to authentic brands, and second column indicates attitudinal and behavioral responses of consumer responses to authentic brands presented in the previous literature studies.**

Table 2.1.5.2

Consumer Responses to Authentic Brands in the Literature*

JUDGEMENTAL AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSES	ATTITUDINAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESPONSES
Self-Authentication	Brand Loyalty
Consumer Brand Identification/ Brand-Self Connection/Congruence	Product Judgement
Enticing the self	Brand Commitment
Enabling the self	Brand Equity (Loyalty)
Enriching the self	Brand Equity (Quality)
Consumer Value (Utilitarian)	Brand Equity (Awareness)
Consumer Value (Hedonic)	Willingness to pay for NBs over PLs
Lifestyle Congruence	Brand Attitude
Transferred essence	Willingness to buy
Consumer Wellbeing	Willingness to recommend
Brand Trust	Consumers' Behavioural Intention
Brand relationship quality (Love and Passion)	Attitude Towards Ad
Brand relationship quality (Interdependence)	Brand Attitude
Brand relationship quality (Intimacy)	Revisit Intention
Brand relationship quality (Partner Quality)	Recommendation Intention
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Trust)	Perceived Brand Value
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Satisfaction)	Word-of-Mouth
Brand Relationship Quality (Brand Commitment)	Promote the brand
Destination Brand Congruence	Brand Choice
Brand Attachment/Emotional Attachment (total)	Willingness to pay more
Emotional Brand Attachement (Affection)	Willingness to Forgive Mistakes
Emotional Brand Attachement (Passion)	SME Growth
Emotional Brand Attachement (Connection)	Purchase Intention/Buying Intention
Perceived Warmth	Purchase Likelihood
Perceived Competence	Consumer Based Brand Equity
Brand Engagement	
Brand Satisfaction/Customer Satisfaction	
Ad credibility	
Pleasure	
Hedonic Well-being	
Eudaimonic well-being	
Brand Love	

**Designed by the Researcher*

Some of the models in the literature studies indeed examined either judgmental and emotional responses or attitudinal and behavioral responses; however, some others examined

both responses type in a sequence which judgmental and emotional responses come first, and attitudinal and behavioral responses follow them. As stated in the thesis framework, these studies reveal that after the brand forms its identity and positioning, consumer initiates the image in the form of consumer benefits. These consumer benefits, which are judgmental and affective perceptions are stated to be dimensions of consumer-brand relationships. The consumer later decides the type of relationship he/she will form with the brand which constitutes to brand benefit and outcome in these models.

Before starting to the methodology section, we will give a brief introduction to consumer-brand relationship construct as it makes an important place in our model.

2.2 CONSUMER BRAND RELATIONSHIP

2.2.1 An Introduction to Consumer Brand Relationship

Morgan and Hunt (1994) defined relationship marketing as creating, developing and maintaining successful relational exchanges (p.20). Shimp and Madden (1988) defined consumer brand relationship as the construct which consumers form relations range from antipathy to love with consumption objects. The shortest definition of consumer brand relationship is presented by Keller (2001) as brand resonance (nature of the relationship and how much consumer feels in sync with the brand). He described four types of relationships which are behavioral loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community and active engagement. There are varying views on when consumer-brand relationship (CBR) concept becomes popular. Smith et al. (2007) states that main focus of advertisers and organizations are stated to be acquiring new customers till the beginning of 2000s; however, benefits of creating enduring relationships are later explored (Smit et al., 2007). Ghani and Tuhin (2016) states that foundations of CBR are grounded with Shimp and Maden's (1988) study which is inspired from Sternberg's (1986) triangular theory of love. The peril behind creating a strong relationship marketing is explained through increased competition and the prerequisite for being a strong competitor in the marketplace requires being a strong cooperator with stakeholders. Being a valuable asset for risk management is a plus (Founier & Fetscherin, 2012). Relationship

marketing is regarded to be different than a trade transaction which is said to have a short duration and sharp ending when performance is met and requires commitment and cooperation of both parties (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Brand and consumer are two of the important stakeholders placed a position in this long-term relational exchange. This mutual commitment for the relationship leads to an enduring willingness to maintain a valued relationship. This relationship is in fact guided through shared values which both brand and consumer have common beliefs in what is appropriate and inappropriate. Therefore, explicit declaration of values by brands/companies is regarded vital. These values indicate the human side of the organization, guide the employees and shape organizational culture. Having shared values, relational partners are more committed to their relationships.

Brands are stated to be legitimate relational partners (Fournier, 1998; Fritz et al., 2014) because consumers tend to personify (ascribe human like characteristics and personality) brands and relate to them as the 'other one' (Alvarez & Fournier, 2016). It is stated that interpersonal relationships serve as metaphors to understand consumer-brand relationships (Fournier et al., 2012). Sociology discipline provides empirical ground for relationship theories among human (Hinde, 1979). Four conditions are stated to nominate an actual relationship between people. First one is having a reciprocal exchange and interdependence between relationship partners. Second condition is starting a relationship has a purpose which means aimed at adding meaning to one's life. For instance, relationships are stated to resolve life-themes which are deeply rooted concepts for one's concept of self (Csikszentmihalyi & Beattie, 1979). Third condition is that they provide a range of benefits to the participants. Finally, the fourth condition is that relationships evolve upon contextual environment. Having grounded from this discipline, relationship marketing states that brand is not a passive object in its relationship with the consumer instead it is an active partner (Fournier, 1998). Consumers' tendency to ascribe human-like characteristics to brands is presented as a proof for this active stakeholder perception. The vitality of brand in the relationship is also manipulated by marketers through animism (establishing brand characters with human emotions, voice and behaviors), use of spokesman (a celebrity represents the intrinsic qualities of the brand), personification (cars animated with eyes) and establish brand personality traits. It is still important to note that a brand is not a real vital entity, but the perception arises in the consumer mind. Brands as relational partners framework further states that consumers are not buying

brands only because they function well, but also because they add meanings into their lives. In other words, these brands have a great significance to the person involved in them. These meanings can be either functional and utilitarian or emotional and psychological; however, more meaningful relationships are stated to be qualified by ego significance of the chosen brands which signals the congruence between product attributes and brand personality traits. The perspective that people form relationships with brands in the same way they form relationships with other human also suggests that utilitarian benefits provided by the brands are not sufficient and brands should provide extended benefits in being a good partner of the society and person (Aggarwal, 2004).

De Wulf et al. (2001) specified three fundamentals in interpersonal relationships. First one is interdependence and is defined to the extent to which the relationship has a reciprocal exchange between relational partners. Second one is temporality and defined to the extent to which relationships evolve and change over a series of actions upon the contextual environment. Third one is perceived commitment and defined to the extent both parties are willing to continue the relationship (Smit et al., 2007). The third fundamental is said to be similar to the brand loyalty concept.

Alvaraz and Fournier (2016) claim that personality traits “big five” gave further inspiration to warmth and competence “big two”. Warmth and competence theory (Fiskie et al., 2002) suggests that the principles that guide the relations among human guide relations between consumer and a brand as well. Accordingly, human make judgements regarding other people based on their perceptions about others in their warmth and competence dimensions. These dimensions are used in Portal et al.’s (2018) model to investigate the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust as well. Warmth defines the sincerity and good intentions of the other party and is measured through being friendly, tolerant, good natured, sincere and trustworthy; whereas, competence defines the capabilities to performs these intentions and promises and it is measured through being skillful, capable, confident and intelligent. These measures are proved to significantly correlate with dimensions of brand authenticity which are sincerity, integrity and credibility (Portal et al., 2018). Another important study that contributes to consumer-brand relationship distinguished exchange relationship and communal relationships (Fiskie A. , 1992; Margaret S. & Mills, 1993). According to the exchange

relationship, the main motivation to provide benefit to the partner is to get something back in return, whereas, according to the communal relationship the main motivation is to give a genuine concern and satisfy their needs.

Keller at Fournier et al.'s (2012) book states that strong consumer-brand relationships have a wide range of outcomes for the brand, consumer and society as a whole. To illustrate, the brand enjoys financial benefits through loyal consumers inasmuch as these buyers buy more often and pay premium price. Additionally, they positively evaluate brand extensions and marketing activities and on top of all they advocate brands as brand ambassadors. As for the consumer, the brand serves a personal meaning to enhance the identity and help shape social relations. As for the culture, a brand committed to a society carries its values and norms. Alvarez and Fournier (2016) highlighted that there are strong evidences that strong consumer-brand relationship leads to purchase intentions, word-of-mouth, resistance to negative information and sacrifices done for the brand. Kuenzel (2008) found that consumer-brand identification which is synonym for self-brand connection positively impact word of mouth and repurchase. It is further stated that consequences are acquiring new consumers, reduced marketing costs, customer retention, increased brand equity and greater profits (Smit et al., 2007).

2.2.2 Prominent Dimensions of Consumer Brand Relationship

There are different dimensions of consumer-brand relationship (CBR) construct in the literature which means CBR is a multi-dimensional concept. Fritz and Lorenz's (2010) nine possible dimensions of consumer-brand relationship presents a prominent set of widely accepted in the branding literature (Fritz & Lorenz, 2010). Their study is inspired from social psychology approach to interpersonal relationships in which social interaction processes takes place as transactions evaluated by the individual participants. The nine dimensions are presented below (Fritz, Lorenz, & Kempe, 2014).

- 1) **Interdependence;** It is similar to the same dimension of Fournier (1998) which will be presented below. It defines the mutual dependance between brand and consumer in terms of intensity of individual interaction and variety of brand-related activities such as purchasing brand extensions and frequency of interactions.

- 2) **Relationship duration;** It defines the amount of time the relationship starts and ends between the consumer and brand.
- 3) **Satisfaction;** It defines both the cognitive comparison between what performance is expected from the brand and what is experienced, and affective comparison in how much brand delights the consumer. The consumer is both functionally and emotionally satisfied with the brand.
- 4) **Brand commitment;** The authors presented Morgan and Hunt's (1994) definition for brand commitment which states brand commitment to be the consumer's desire to maintain the relationship with the brand. Grace et al. (2018) states that it is used interchangeably with brand loyalty which underlies the motivations for brand preference and repeat purchase. Both commitment and loyalty are measured through repeat purchase, switching behavior, purchase intentions and word-of-mouth. However, brand commitment provides a deeper understanding on emotional aspects of brand loyalty.
- 5) **Actual behavior;** Consumer's purchase and word-of-mouth action.
- 6) **Equity;** The authors presented Walster's (1978) equity theory definition which states that there is a perception of a balance between rewards and inputs in which rewards are defined through subtracting inputs from outcomes.
- 7) **Brand trust;** It represents consumer's confidence in the brand that it will fulfill his/her expectations. It is measured through benevolence, willingness to resolve problems, integrity and brand reliability.
- 8) **Passion;** It is defined through the intense longing for union with each other.
- 9) **Intimacy;** It is both a cognitive and affective construct in that listener is sympathetic and caring, and the giver is open in feelings and information.

‘Consumer-Brand Relationship Strength’ which is basically defined as ‘durability and impactfulness of the relationship’ (Petty & Krosnick, 1995 p.3) constitutes another set of dimensions for CBR. There are several consumer-brand relationship strength constructs identified in the literature. These constructs are explained below.

- 1) **Brand Relationship Quality** (Fournier, 1998); Fournier's (1998) study is the most widely accepted study in CBR according to Ghani and Tuhin (2016). It defines brand relationship quality through the durability and stability of the brand relationship over time and claimed

to be similar to brand loyalty in this perspective. Fournier (1998) defined 15 different types of relationships between brands and consumers such as committed partnership, marriage of convenience, childhood friendship, kinships, dependencies and secret affairs. Brand relationship quality is defined to offer a richer conceptualization through six dimensions. These are positive feelings which are love/passion and self-connection, behavioral ties which are interdependence and commitment and supportive cognitive beliefs which are intimacy and brand partner quality. Below is how each dimension is defined (Fournier, 1998);

- **Love and Passion;** There is a continuum of consumers' feeling ranging from warmth and affection to passion. In the stronger affective feeling, consumer feels that something very important is missing in their lives. This strong affective feeling leads them to have separation anxiety.
- **Self-connection;** This dimension defines the theme, task, identity-based notion of the brand as correlated with self.
- **Interdependence;** There are strong ties enjoining the brand and self. The brand accompanies the person in his/her daily life and play an important role.
- **Commitment;** This relationship quality dimension stresses the devotion and dedication to the brand. It positions using only the brand committed and not purchasing any other brand. Priorly, Morgan and Hunt (1994) defined is as an enduring desire and effort to maintain a relationship.
- **Intimacy;** This relationship quality dimension positions on being very close to each other as a brand and consumer and knowing personal details about each other. There are deeper levels of information carried about each other.
- **Brand partner quality;** It defines the extent to which the brand as a partnership performs its role. It can be a positive orientation such as being desired, a judgement for being reliable and a felt commitment for carrying accountability for its actions. Aaker et al. (2004) contributes by stating that it is the partner capabilities and efforts to manage the reciprocal relationship through implicit and explicit contract lines such as keeping the promises, solving the problems, supporting each other, being trustworthy and accountable to each other. If these contract lines are violated, this results in an act of transgression which stands as a significant event in relationship history. Aaker et al. (2004) found partner quality to be a mediating

construct between brand personality and transgression and commitment, intimacy, satisfaction, self-connection consequences.

- **Nostalgic connection;** It regards brand as connected to consumer's history and linked to personal memories.
- 2) **Emotional Attachment** (Thomson et al., 2005); It is defined as 'the emotion targets specific bond between a consumer and a brand' (p.77-78). Three dimensions are defined to measure this construct which are specified below.
- **Affection;** It is the extent to which the relationship is perceived to be friendly, peaceful, loved and affectionate by the consumer.
 - **Passion;** It is the extent to which the relationship is perceived to be delighted, passionate and captivated by the consumer.
 - **Connection;** It is the extent to which the relationship is perceived to be connected, bonded and attached by the consumer.
- 3) **Attachment – Aversion** (Park et al., 2013); It conceptualizes brand relationship upon brand- self distance and brand prominence (salience). Brand – self distance is the extent to which brand is perceived to be far away/close the self and self is personally connected/disconnected with the brand. Brand – prominence is the extent to which thought and feelings about the brand come to consumer's mind so naturally that consumer has no much control over them.
- 4) **Self-brand connection** (Escalas, 2004); It is the extent to which consumers incorporate the brand into their self-concept. It is measured through consumer's perception on how much brand reflects who he/she is, how much he/she can identify with the brand, how much the brand being a tool to communicate who he/she is to other people, the extent to which brand helps the consumer become the type of person he/she wants to be and consumer considers the brand to be "himself/herself".
- 5) **Brand – love** (Batra, Ahuvia, & Bagozzi, 2012); It is the consumer brand relationship that goes beyond self-brand connection and attachment. It is measured through passion driven behaviors, self-brand integration, emotional connection, anticipated separation distress.

2.2.2.1 Brand Trust

The introduction of this thesis study explained that there is a lack of trust in the society and consumer is extremely sceptic. Therefore, brand trust which is a dimension of consumer brand relationship is a critical construct in the scope of this thesis and deserves some further examination. Trust has become a popular construct in marketing literature as brand loyalty conditions shifted from quality and satisfaction to relational marketing (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2000). Morgan and Hunt (1994) highlight that relationship marketing requires cooperative behavior; additionally, state commitment and trust to be key and most important ingredients to develop successful consumer-brand relationships. Their major finding is that trust (together with commitment) is a key mediating variable to maintain consumer-brand relationship. Trust develops positive and favorable attitudes which result in commitment to the brand (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2000). In fact, when there is trust, stakeholders desire to commit themselves to this relationship. Trust is regarded to be a requirement in the consumer-brand relationship and central to all relational exchanges. Additionally, it is viewed as the ‘cornerstone of the strategic partnership’ (Spekman 1988, p. 79). Reasoning is that it guides stakeholders to cooperate with each other. In the case of risk, a stakeholder will not act opportunistically for self and motivated with long term-partnership instead of short-term more attractive alternatives. The authors identified trust as one party’s confidence in an exchange partner’s reliability and integrity. The words of one party is relied on (Rotter, 1967 p.651) and he/she is honest, competent, responsible, fair, consistent and benevolent. In addition to all, this party is willing intrinsically to be so. The desire to trust a brand supports the former statements that brand is not only perceived as a mere product, but it has characteristics as a person (Fournier, 1998). Overall satisfaction is found to be one of the antecedents of brand trust because consumption experience indicates brand’s consistency to fulfill its promises and to act in a concerned manner.

It is stated that all the trust definitions in the literature share the same idea as follows (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2000 p.1242);

“Trust in a person is a feeling of security based on the belief that his/her behavior is guided and motivated by favorable and positive intentions towards the welfare and interests of his/her partner.”

Therefore, the party regards lesser risk to form a long-term relationship with the trusted party. The same authors present **two dimensions to measure brand trust**. These dimensions are as follows (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2000).

- 1) **Brand reliability;** It refers to the brand’s capacity and capability to respond consumer’s needs and realize its promises. To illustrate, constant quality explains this dimension. This dimension is measured through the consumer’s expectations to the extent brand meets his/her expectations, he/she feels confidence in the brand, whether brand disappoints him/her and brand name guarantee satisfaction.
- 2) **Brand intentions;** It refers to the brand’s concern on consumer’s vulnerability on purchase and consumption situations. Furthermore, places great interest to consumers’ interest as of his own when unexpected problems arise. This dimension is measured through the consumer’s expectations to the extent brand is honest and sincere in addressing consumer’s concerns. The consumer could rely on the brand to solve the problem, the brand’s effort to satisfy the consumer and compensation in the case of a problem.

Therefore, trust is conceptualized through consumer’s confident expectation and emotional security that brand is both reliable and has good intentions (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). The consumer in this sense will gain positive outcomes through different probabilities of events for relying on a party and exchange relationship with it.

2.2.2.2 Consumer Brand Identification

Introduction of this thesis study explained the consumption role and consumers’ desire to express self- concept. Therefore, consumer-brand identification plays another critical role for the scope of this thesis. As priorly stated self-brand connection is regarded to be a dimension in consumer-brand relationship construct and brands are regarded to enrich, inform and communicate about desirable consumer identities (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). The term is interchangeably used with customer-brand identification and both stress self-brand congruity

which is the harmony between brand-image and self-image belief (Sirgy, 1982). If there is positive self-brand congruity, there is more likelihood that brand will be purchased. Consumers associate a set of brand personality traits, values and norms with their own self-concept. Self-concept is defined through 'totality of the individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object.' (Rosenberg, 1979, p.7). This helps them to convey a self-schema (Aaker J. , 1999) which is important for them to convey their consistency and positivity. Consistency in this perspective defines their stability, predictability and familiarity, while positivity defines the ability to convey their self-concept leads to pride and pleasure.

Product symbolism arises at this point as an important notion in branding. According to Tucker (1957, p.139),

“Consumers can be defined in terms of either the products they use, or the meanings products have for them.”

These products have some image associations through its packaging, price, advertising which are attributed to the typical user. This image can either directly be related to the self-concept or the stereo-type image of the generalized user (Sirgy, 1982). Self-concept at this point is stated to be vital for the individual; therefore, he/she is determined to enhance and protect it and consumption enhances self-concept through the consumption of brands. Consumers' possessions contribute to and reflect our identities (Belk, 1988). Belk (1998) stated anthropologists' position on the owner of a land and the maker of a produce is entitled with his/her product. Brands act as a vehicle on this perspective and psychological and symbolic brand benefits are instrumental to construct consumer's self-identity (actual or ideal), reinforce to be the type of person they are/want to be and connect with others (Escalas J. , 2004). This suggests that consumer brand identification occurs through social identity as well (rooted from Social-Identity Theory) which suggests that social identification is a cognitive state of social categorization and consumer in this perspective perceive himself/herself to be part of a social group (either physical or online community) (Bergami and Bagozzi 2000). Connection with others is critical for the consumers to indicate which community group he/she belongs to; thus, enable social integration and communal consumption. Bacerra and Badrinarayanan (2013) stated social identity theory to make a ground for consumer-brand identification as well. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1985), individuals seek for ways to

define their position in their environment and enhance their self-esteem. There are prototypical characteristics associated with some social categories and its members. When consumers perceive that brands possess characteristics that are in harmony with their self and that represent the social group, they feel identified with these brands. This is a psychological consumer response which demonstrate dedication and intrinsic motivation to work for the benefit of the brand. The behavioral outcome is word-of-mouth communication for the brand.

Stokburger-Sauer (2012) identified six antecedents of consumer-brand identification. Three of them are cognitive variables which are brand distinctiveness, brand-self similarity and brand prestige. The next three antecedents are brand related factors which are brand social benefits, memorable brand experiences and brand warmth. These factors are defined to be motivated with self-definitional needs which are knowing self, feel good about self, and feel relatively unique. Therefore, identification with a brand requires the brand to have a similar personality to own, prestigious and distinctive. In addition to self-definitional needs, there are social needs such as creating interaction with a brand help consumer to connect others who are socially important. This enable consumer to strengthen his/her membership with the group. Extending the view, Kuenzel and Halliday (2008) explained that identification is a perceptual constructive construct and psychological perception by an individual to consider himself/herself important part of a group. This means that the individual does not have to be formal part of the total community (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008).

It is also worth to evaluate Alvarez and Fournier's (2016) finding. The authors state that consumers have limited identity related goals and limited relational capacity; therefore, not many brands can form strong positive bonds with them. Furthermore, strong bonds have some risky consequences in that when the brand cannot perform its promises the consumer feels betrayed.

2.2.2.3 Brand Advocacy

Brand Advocacy which is regarded to be a positive outcome of a strong consumer brand relationship (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Kunzel and Halliday, 2008; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003) is presented by satisfied consumers that are willing to evangelize the brand (Fuggetta,

2012) and defined as the support, defense and promotion of the brand by these consumers to others (Keller, 2007). These consumers support the brand through investing in it (repurchase, buy new extensions, buy stocks), defense it against negative information in the media or given by other consumers in their community, and promote it through speaking word of mouth in online and offline media (Xie, Bagozzi, & Gronhaug, 2019). Brand advocacy is used as a synonym to brand evangelism in some studies (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). Below table which is adapted from Wilk et al. (2018) indicates different brand advocacy definitions;

Table 2.2.2.3
Brand Advocacy Definitions

Definition Summary	Source
Physical brand advocacy: Exhibiting brand-related artefacts.	Mael and Ashforth, 1992; Adjei, Noble and Noble, 2010
Social brand advocacy: A recommendation of a brand to others, defense of a brand when it is attacked or recruiting of potential customers.	Bhattacharya and Sen; 2003, Keylock and Faulds, 2012
Undertaken by highly involved customers who are active in endorsing the brand (through high involvement and WOM).	Wragg 2004
Positive word-of-mouth or recommendations by highly involved or connected to the brand consumer.	Jones and Taylor, 2007; East, Hammond and Lomax, 2008
An active engagement that involves a satisfied and engaged customer spending more effort in promoting a brand.	Keller 2009
The extent to which a consumer is willing to spend time and effort to actively recommend and support a brand.	Jillapalli and Wilcox, 2010
A type of relational worth behavior.	Melancon, Noble and Noble, 2011
Freely given by satisfied customers who go out of their way to evangelize the brands they have experienced to others.	Fuggetta, 2012

** Sourced and adapted from Wilk et al. 2018*

As seen in the table, brand advocacy differs from brand loyalty which is defined to be repeat purchase (Fournier, 1998).

What gave rise to brand advocacy is an important question. Due to the current digitalization channels, consumer to consumer communication has risen; therefore, brand advocacy has become critically important asset (Wilk, Harrigan, & Soutar, 2018). In fact, the societal changes such as explosion in digital media communication and declining trust to companies and credibility of official advertising led word of mouth to be a vital communication channel (Keller E. , 2007). There is now convenient access through mobile phones and tablets which leads consumers to search for and leave comments regarding the brands (Becerra & Badrinarayanan, 2013). Urban (2005) states that through digitalization consumer has gained unprecedented power.

What are the mechanisms that foster brand advocacy to occur? Social Identity Theory is said to be one of the reasons (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Kuenzel and Halliday, 2008). The consumer desires to take actions that will favor the group's interests; therefore, if consumer brand identification occur, he/she will have commitment to the brand which in turn leads the consumer to talk positively about this brand to his/her group, Consumer-Brand Identification is proved to promote loyalty (repeat purchase) and word of mouth in the literature studies (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000). The consumer feels embodied with the brand's community in this situation; thus, act supportively. The behavioral loyalty is illustrated through Harley Davidson customers' purchase of new Harley's over the time. This consumer behavior is precious for the brand because it means customer retention and leads to higher profitability. These findings are consistent to the rest of the literature because successful relationship means acting cooperative the relational partner (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Becerra and Badrinarayanan (2013) defined brand evangelism to represent the same content with brand advocacy and defined it as behavioral and vocal support to a brand through repeat purchase, distributing positive brand referrals and negative competitor brand referrals. The authors investigated the relationship between trust, identification and brand evangelism. Their findings suggest that brand trust enables consumer to create cognitive connections with a brand which states that the brand can be relied on to perform its promises. Additionally, consumer-brand identification enables consumer to create psychological attachment and self-definitional connection with a brand. The former results in purchase and positive referral related outcomes and the latter results in defending the brand and negative referrals for competitor brands.

Urban (2005) in his book claims that consumers' brand advocacy is a product of company's customer advocacy. In other words, this is a reciprocal strong relationship, a partnership and a mutual dialogue. When a company presents transparent and complete information and highest quality products to the customers, customers believe the company acts for its (consumers') best interest; therefore, first trust the company and eventually advocates them by telling others about these companies and continue purchasing from them.

Urban (2005) developed an advocacy pyramid which stated that total quality management and customer satisfaction are at the base standing as necessary conditions for trust and advocacy. This is formulated as follows; if the company has definitely high-quality products that satisfy the customers, then it is worth to be recommended. This relationship is supported through consumer relationship management tools (CRM management) to personalize each message.

Advocacy is beneficial for businesses for many reasons (Urban, 2005). First of all, due to customer retention level there will be reduced customer acquisition costs to the brand. Instead of paying huge amounts each time for advertising for acquiring new customers, existing customers serve as an advertisement tool to be a voluntary advertising medium. Secondly, consumers are ready to pay more for the companies they trust more as their potential risks will be eliminated. Thirdly, trusting and advocating customers are willing to invest further share from their basket; therefore, open to brand extensions. Fourthly, advocacy-based companies pay attention for each customer; thus, conversion rates from light to heavy users will be higher. Finally, advocacy-based companies have deep concern for their customers' unmet needs and wants which fosters their innovation strategies. This increases reputation for these companies.

3. METHODOLOGY

Extensive literature review provides comprehensive insights in the “Brand Authenticity” concept together with its antecedents and consequences. The methodology section presents the proposed model and reasonings that ground the model, hypothesis to be tested, the research design and sampling method, and finally the research instruments.

The research objectives are;

1. How brand authenticity as perceived by consumers strengthen the consumer-brand relationship constructs brand trust and consumer-brand identification; and as a result, impact brand advocacy.
2. Which brands would be rated as authentic for the Turkish sample group.
3. What would be the single translation of ‘authentic brand’ in the Turkish culture.

Proposed model and hypothesis section explain in detail the importance of these research questions and why we focus on them.

3.1 PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESIS

The literature presented important findings regarding the impact of brand authenticity on various consumer brand relationship constructs. Below paragraphs explain how we narrowed down the literature findings to reach our proposed model and how do we contribute to the existing literature.

We explained in the ‘Rise of Brand Authenticity’ section that there is a quest for authentic brands in the current era and authenticity is the new differentiator between companies and brands instead of quality (Holt, 2002; Brown et al., 2003; Wgner, 2007; Vossoughi, 2008). Later we defined different reasons presented for this quest. The postmodernity, over commercialization and period of uncertainty are regarded to be the most prominent reasons (Arnould and Price, 2000; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Bruhn et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015). Additionally, the blurring of personalized self-due to hyper globalization, consumers’

the desire for responsible consumption, and achieve and reflect self-authentication are important reasons (Carrol, 2009; Carrol and Torfason, 2007; Napoli et al., 2014; Morhart et al., 2015; Guevremont, 2018). Digital age is explained to foster the search for authentic brands inasmuch as information flow among consumers enable judgement of transparency and genuineness (Voight, 2007; Vossoughi, 2008; Egger et al., 2013; Beattie and Lousie, 2014; Vicky, 2016).

We extracted from the literature studies that most of the outcomes of brand authenticity are sub-constructs of consumer brand relationship (CBR) except growth, purchase intention/likelihood, premium price and product image (The outcomes are priorly presented in the Table 2.1.5.1, Consequences of Brand Authenticity, Frequency used in different studies. CBR is explained to be an important domain for branding inasmuch as brands are not perceived as mere products but regarded to be relational partners with a reciprocal relationship in between and mutual cooperation (Shimp and Maden, 1988; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Fournier, 1998; Keller, 2001; Fiskie et al., 2002; Fritz and Lorenzo, 2010; Fournier et al., 2012; Fritz et al., 2014; Alvaraz and Fournier, 2016; Bruhn et al., 2017; Portal et al., 2018). According to these studies authentic brands are associated with sincerity and integrity traits which are key determinants in enduring relationships, and they are better partners so present better relationship quality. Important links are explored between the reasons to quest authentic brands, brand authenticity and their consumer brand relationship consequences. Examining the literature studies that ground this model, a set of them explored the **positive relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust** (Eggers et al., 2013; Schallen et al., 2014; Assiouras et al 2015; Busser and Shulga, 2018; Lude and Prügl, 2018; Portal et al., 2018; Fernandez and Lewis, 2019; Lee and Chung, 2019). Another set of studies explored the **positive relationship between brand authenticity and consumer-brand identification/self-brand connection/self-brand congruity** (Leigh et al., 2006; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Spiggle et al., 2012; Beverland, 2016; Akbar and Wyemer, 2016; Guevremont and Grohman, 2016; Bruhn et al., 2017; Frizzo et al., 2018; Oh et al., 2019; Jian et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). **Literature presented brand loyalty, purchase intention and word-of-mouth to be a last order construct of brand authenticity and do not present brand advocacy as a total construct studied** (Spiggle et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015; Cheah et al., 2016; Pounders and Kowalczyk, 2016; Lee and Chung, 2019).

Therefore, the model of this thesis aims to present the consumer brand relationship benefits relevant to the current age when brands intrinsically position themselves as authentic. However, we believe these benefits have a casual sequence and this suggestion is a contribution we make to a less explored area.

Grounded with these relationships, our thesis study proposes the following model:

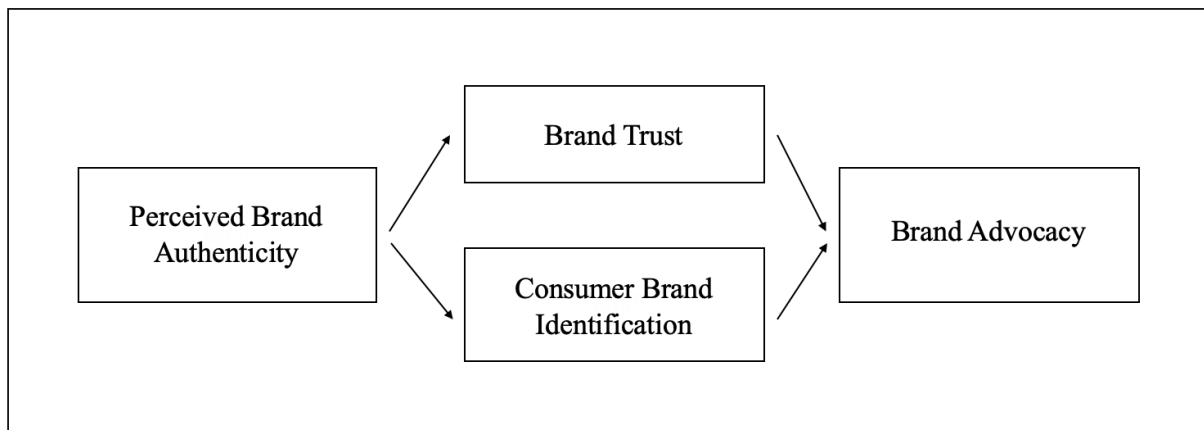


Figure 3.1.1: The Proposed Model of the Research

This model proposes following hypothesis:

- H1: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand advocacy.**
- H2: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand trust.**
- H3: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on consumer-brand identification.**
- H4: Brand trust mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.**
- H5: Consumer brand identification mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.**

Below figure indicates the variable types and relationships among our constructs.

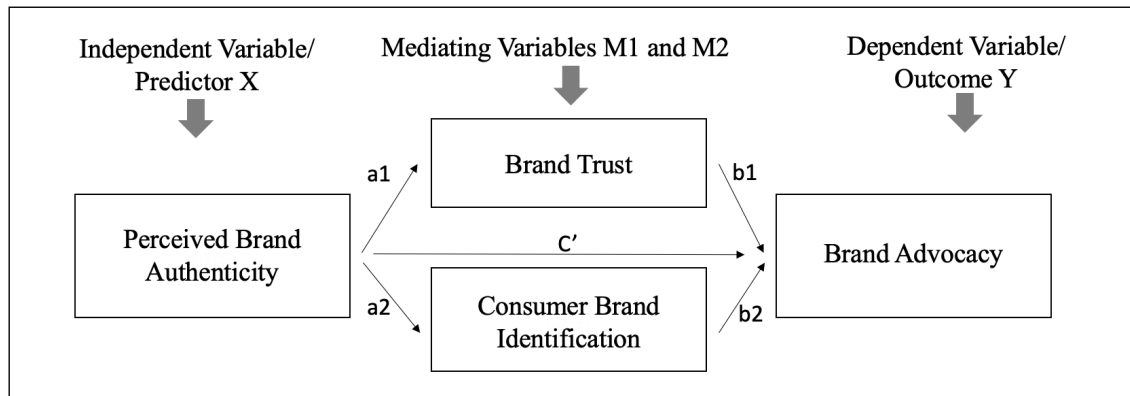


Figure 3.1.2: The Variable Types of the Proposed Research Model

We applied Zhao et al.'s (2010) principles to interpret the mediation model. They criticized Baron and Kenny's (1986) principle which suggests mediation to be strongest when there is an indirect effect but no direct effect between the independent variable and outcome. However, Zhao et al (2010) states that the mediation strength should be measured by the size of the indirect effect versus direct effect. At this point we will give further information regarding the key variables and relationships in a mediation model;

- There is a casual relationship between more than two variables.
- The independent variable X is the predictor and it causes dependent/outcome variable Y.
- However, mediator M1 and M2 in between intervenes in this relationship to regulate the casual relationship.
- M1 and M2 as variables are influenced by predictor X and in turn influence outcome variable Y. This relationship is named as 'indirect effect' (a_1b_1 and a_2b_2 in our model) and is indicated as; $Y: X \rightarrow M \rightarrow Y$
- The second step is to define how much mediation process explains the relationship; therefore, 'direct effect' (c') is also considered between the predictor X and outcome Y. The direct effect ignores the effect of mediator M and directly explore the casual influence

of predictor X on outcome Y. The significance and magnitude of the relationship in direct effect should be compared with those of indirect effects.

- The indirect path c' indicates only the total direct effect regardless of the effect of a mediation.
- The relationships between the independent, the mediator and the dependent variables can be depicted in form of a path diagram/model. Each arrow in a path diagram represents a causal relationship between two variables to which a coefficient or weight is assigned. These coefficients showing the direction and magnitude of the effect of one variable on the other.

Based on above approaches, our proposed relationships in the mediation model are as follows;

1) Independent variable/Predictor X and Dependent Variable/Outcome Y;

- * ‘Perceived Brand Authenticity’ is the independent variable/predictor X, and ‘Brand Advocacy’ is the dependent variable /outcome Y in this model.
- * The direct effect of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy is indicated by c' .

2) Third-variables M with mediating roles;

- * According to the proposed research model, there is an intervention in the outcome of “Brand Advocacy” through “Brand Trust” and “Consumer-Brand Identification”; therefore, there are two mediating variables M1 and M2 included in the study design. In other words, relation between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy is elaborated by third variables “Brand Trust” and “Consumer-Brand Identification”, an explanation why the two variables are related is because of this mediation.
- * Instead of ‘Perceived Brand Authenticity’ directly cause ‘Brand Advocacy’, dependent variable ‘Perceived Brand Authenticity’ cause the mediators ‘Brand Trust’ and ‘Consumer Brand Identification’, and these mediators in turn cause dependent variable/outcome ‘Brand Advocacy’.

- * In other words, the third variables “Brand Trust” and “Consumer Brand Identification” are intermediate in the casual sequence such that “Perceived Brand Authenticity X” causes both “Brand Trust M1” and “Consumer Brand Identification M2” and the two M’s cause “Brand Advocacy Y”.
- * The first specific indirect effect path of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy is $a1b1$, while the second indirect effect path of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy is $a2b2$.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND SAMPLING METHOD

This research design has a multi-layered form. Each layer is conducted to increase the reliability of the subsequent one. Therefore, several sequential studies are conducted prior to the main field research in order to obtain the most effective research instrument finally. Therefore, the research design and field application have several stages aimed at obtaining the most reliable questionnaire. A snapshot of the research stages can be viewed in Figure 3.2.1 below and a more detailed version is presented in Table 3.2.1.

Additionally, in some critical steps to take further opinion a Marketing Professor, a Market Research Director in a global company, and a Senior Research Head in one of the biggest Global Research Agencies are cooperated as well. The field study is conducted through a professional online panel aimed at capturing a representative sample group. This Professional online panel company recruits panel members in exchange for some rewards and points that can be used towards the redemption of products. Attendee to the survey is invited through a call in their social media account which is visible merely by the demographic group representing the sample population.

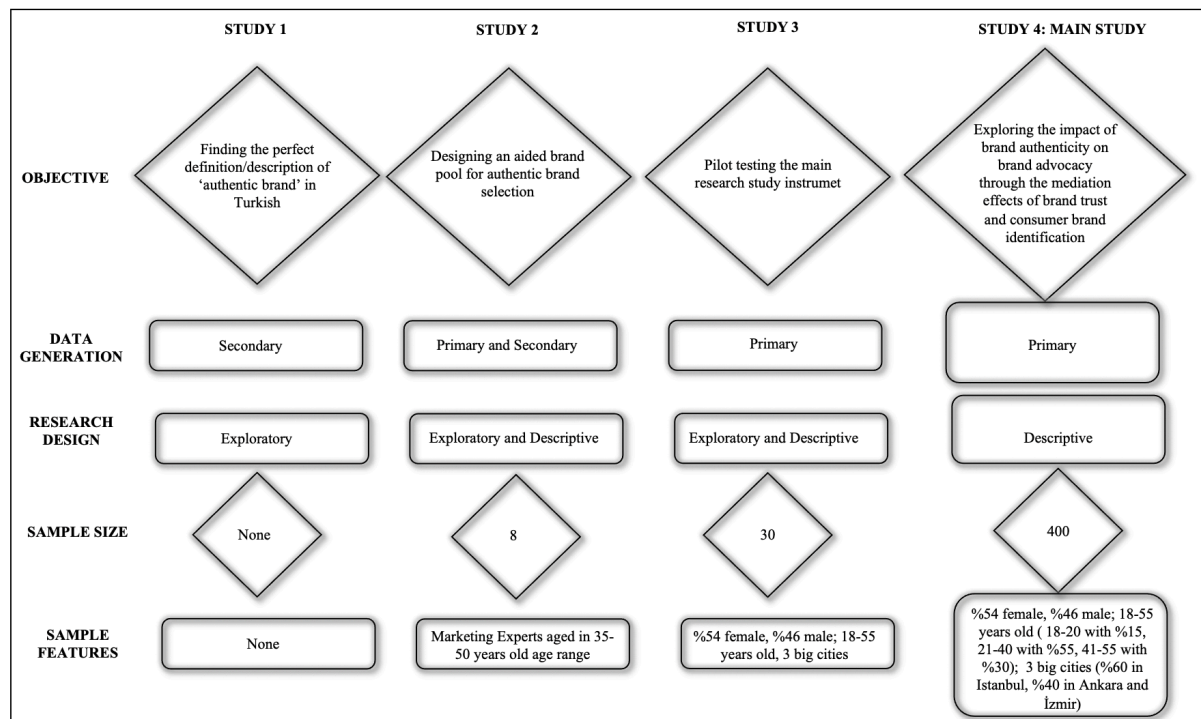


Figure 3.2.1: A Snapshot on Research Stages

TABLE 3.2.1: Research Methodology Upon Sequential Studies

	STUDY 1	STUDY 2	STUDY 3	STUDY 4: MAIN STUDY
SCOPE	A representative word/phrase for how 'Authentic Brand' is defined in the Turkish language.	The aided brand pool through which respondents will rate the relationships proposed in the research model.	Pilot test which explores the clarity, quality and objectivity of the research instrument.	Application of the main research instrument in the field on the sample group
OBJECTIVE	The final research questionnaire measures the model through an initially nominated authentic brand by the respondent. Therefore, "whether respondents perceive the real intended meaning of "Authentic Brand" in exactly the same context the literature presents and this thesis aims to measure" is critical.	To prepare an objective brand pool through which respondents are to select a brand that fits to authentic brand description we identified in pre-research layer 1 and demonstrating this pool to the survey respondents through the most objective approach so to eliminate bias during the brand selection.	To design the best research instrument that objectively measures the relationships our proposed research model attempts to explore. The clarity of the items for the Turkish sample group is a major objective. Additionally, to capture respondents' understanding of our authentic brand description and learn their feedbacks regarding the visual brand pool	To test the impact of brand authenticity on brand advocacy through the mediation effects of brand trust and consumer-brand identification. Additionally, to generate the first authentic brand pool in Turkey and define a Turkish word translation to 'Authentic' brand.
SAMPLING METHOD & SIZE	Secondary Research type and Exploratory method in the Global and Turkish Branding Literature and English-Turkish dictionaries.	Secondary research with exploratory method in web to make a potential brand pool; Primary research with descriptive method through online quantitative survey rated through 5 points likert scale. Non-probability convenience sample of 8 marketing experts answered the survey in 3 days.	Primary Research with both descriptive methods via main questionnaire & exploratory methods via post-evaluation open-ended questions. The pilot test is conducted in 30 respondents with %54 Female, % 46 Male between 18-55 ages; -15 respondents selected through non-probability convenience sampling located in Istanbul	Primary research with descriptive method and quantitative online survey (with few open-ended questions) is applied.. Data is collected electronically through an independent online panel research agency.
PROCESS FLOW	Approaches to make sure there is a shared understanding of brand authenticity among respondents are investigated through the literature. A combination of approaches is selected. Turkish definition/ description of authentic brand is investigated. Agreed description for authentic brand is as follows: «Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir, özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez. Bu öze uygun davranır.»	Cohne & Wolfe Global Authentic 100 Index (2017) and Brand Finance The Most Valuable Brands in Turkey (2019) are filtered. Combining the two studies, 86 brands from technology, apparel, auto, entertainment, and fast moving consumer goods industries are generated. Marketing experts rated each brand according to the agreed authentic brand description in Stage 1.	Original items' translation process Pilot test is conducted on 30 respondents Post evaluation is conducted on the same sample A. Improvements are done in the main study questionnaire upon post evaluation report and main study questionnaire is finalized.	Defining the sample characteristics Defining the sample size Application to the first set 150 respondents Application to the second set 180 respondents Application to the last set 70 respondents
RESULTS		24 brands are obtained in total for the main study as aided brand pool (Note 4). A visual brand pool is designed with brand logo types and two subsets are prepared.		

3.2.1 Study 1, Nomination of Authentic Brand

Objective of this study is to create a representative description for ‘authentic brand’ in Turkish language. It is a vital issue because before investigating the relationships between brand authenticity and other branding constructs, the authors either ask respondents to nominate an authentic or inauthentic brand or propose some brand names and request respondents to indicate the degree this brand is seen to be authentic (Literature sources will be demonstrated below). The literature studies have a consensus to start so because they want to make sure there is a shared understanding of what authentic brand describes among field study respondents.

In our questionnaire, we ask the scale items through an authentic brand as well; however, the term ‘authentic’ in the Turkish branding is rather new and few studies are conducted in the Turkish language (Demirel and Yıldız, 2015; Yaşın et al., 2017). Additionally, the dictionary meanings of authentic brand indicate in a multi-translational picture. Below are the findings that create a base for this pre-research stage.

- **How authentic brands are nominated in the literature and what about our approach;**

There are various approaches in the literature to make respondents nominate an authentic/inauthentic brand. Purpose of all studies is common; to make sure there is a shared understanding of what authentic brand is and truly test the relationships between brand authenticity and other branding constructs. A set of studies give respondents initiative to describe their views of brand authenticity first either through bringing some possessions or pictures, or through verbal explanation (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Bruhn et al., 2012; Fritz et al, 2017). These studies is done as a pre-research stage through a semi-structured in-depth interview method and mostly executed in conceptualization studies. A second set of studies first give definition of brand authenticity such as ‘being genuine, real and honest’ and ask respondents to report truly authentic/inauthentic brand (Napoli et al, 2013; Beverland, 2016). Later, respondents are asked to answer the relationship testing scales by thinking the brand they chose. A third set of studies indicate that the authors define a brand pool by their own without

asking the respondents (Morhart et al., 2015; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017). This pool is formed through a single product context or various product contexts; however, no rationale is given regarding why these brands are chosen in the pool. The respondents are assigned a random brand from the pool or asked to choose a brand they perceive to be authentic (or to be at a given place in the authenticity continuum such as partially authentic). A final approach is to give a single brand to the respondents and ask them first to rate that brand in terms of authenticity dimensions and scales, and relationships with other branding constructs (Portal et al., 2018). Our approach will be a combination of second and third set of studies; however, with some relative originalities compared to literature because we form the brand pool through a rationale which will be explained in the next sub-section.

- Translation and description of authentic brand in the Turkish language;

Upon prior secondary research, it is decided to give the definition of authentic brand to the respondents first and then ask them to choose one brand they perceive to truly fit in this definition from a given brand pool or in the case that they do not select any brand in the given pool, to propose a brand of their choice as an open-ended answer. An important question arises at that point; what the definition of an authentic brand is and how do we make sure we have a common understanding of brand authenticity with the sample group. It is additionally critical that this definition or phrase is consistent with global definition presented in the literature so that we make a real contribution to the branding literature.

A secondary data research on dictionary definition indicates that, authenticity is translated as “Otantiklik, Güvenilirlik, Sahicilik, Hakikilik, Gerçeklik, Samimilik” into the Turkish language (Oxford, 2003). We decided not to select any of them due to the following reasons;

1. These findings reveal a multi-translational result and does not present an absolute Turkish word for the construct.
2. Each translation has some secondary meanings that would distort the real understanding of brand authenticity. To exemplify. ‘otantiklik’ means ‘mere originality through heritage’; however, this phrase defines only a dimension of brand authenticity not the holistic

meaning. Another example is that. ‘güvenilirlik’ could have been perceived to represent brand trust; therefore, we did not want to lead a misconception. ‘Gerçeklik’ directly defined ‘genuineness’; however, it is not a common word used in consumption and brand consideration situations.

Therefore, we decided to take Napoli et al.’s (2013) and Beverland’s (2016) approach by giving a full description of brand authenticity via a sentence/phrase to the respondents instead of giving an absolute definition via word. At this point, we turned back to the literature and searched how brand authenticity is defined as a total construct. “Being genuine, truthful and real”, “Intrinsically motivated to be real”, “Conveying the real self and taking actions and saying words parallel to the inner-self” are frequently mentioned descriptions of authentic brands (Arnould and Price, 2000; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Betzler, 2009; Nobbs 2012). Yasin et al.’s (2017) study conducted in Turkey presented important tools for this specific research problem. The authors used a Turkish questionnaire in which some scales measure total authenticity perception regardless of any dimensions. We selected a scale among these total authenticity perception scales. The scale is as follows;

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir, özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez.” (p.134)

This scale explains that an authentic brand has a self-identity in terms of its values and what it represents and does not give any promises that are not consistent with her inner self and identity. At this point we have taken opinions of another Marketing Professor and Senior Research Head at a Global Research Company and agreed this description to represent what an authentic brand means; however, an important piece was missing. An authentic brand at the same time does not take actions that are not consistent with her inner self and promises; therefore, we decided to embody this phrase to the description. The final authentic brand description we identified in Turkish language is as follows;

‘Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir, özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez. Bu öze uygun davranır.’

The English translation is as follows; **“This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”.**

3.2.2 Study 2, Formation of Brand Pool

Objective of this study layer is to prepare an objective brand pool through which respondents are to select a brand that fits to authentic brand description we identified in pre-research layer 1. As priorly mentioned, our approach is either to make respondents to select a brand from the given pool (aided brand selection), or define a brand that is not in the pool but fits in the brand authenticity description much more than any other brands in the aided list in their personal perception (unaided brand selection). The research problem at this layer was what rationale to make in forming the aided brand pool.

The rationale while forming the aided brand pool;

We considered two brand rating studies to form the potential brand pool. The first study is ‘Cohne & Wolfe Global Authentic 100 Index’ (2017) which measured more than 200 global brands over two months (May to June 2017) to over 15,000 consumers in 15 markets upon dimensions transparency, reliability, integrity, consistency and continuity. 100 top brands are selected from various industries upon their ratings. We selected this study because it is specific to our core construct brand authenticity and the used dimensions are parallel to the dimensions we used in our main study. The second study is ‘Brand Finance, The Most Valuable Brands in Turkey’ (2019). This study is selected because it is one of the most relied brand rating study in terms of objectivity, it is specific to Turkey and it rates Turkish brands which are relevant for our Turkish sample group.

After excluding the brands with no operations and visibility in Turkey from the Cohne & Wolfe study and combining the rest of the brands with Brand Finance Turkey study, a total of 86 brands from technology, apparel, auto, entertainment, and fast-moving consumer goods industries are generated as the potential pool. We name it as potential pool because we will narrow it down in order to make the actual questionnaire brand pool more readable and

manageable during the quantitative study which tests relationships proposed in our model. Please refer to Appendices to see the potential brand pool via ‘Brand Pool Formation Study’.

Narrowing down the potential brand pool through a quantitative survey;

The research problem at this pre-stage is to purify the 86 brands to make the main study questionnaire more readable and manageable. We name this sub-study as ‘Brand Pool Formation Study’. Due to the time and budget constraints, we decided to find a group of marketing experts composed of both academicians and practitioners and conduct the quantitative questionnaire. Therefore, the sample group findings form an expert opinion for us for a purified authentic brand pool. 8 marketing experts indicated willingness to answer our survey. The questionnaire asks respondents to rate the 86 brands through 5 points Likert’s scale. The Turkish description of brand authenticity which is identified in the prior pre-stage is initially presented, a brand they perceive to fit into this description is asked through an open-ended question, and finally the 86 brands are asked to be rated. Please refer to Appendices 8.4 and 8.5 for the Turkish and English versions of the questionnaire.

Brand pool formation study narrowed down the potential brand pool list from 86 to 24. Below are the findings of the study through data analysis and why 24 brands are selected. The data analysis table for the brand pool study can be found in Appendices 8.5

- The unaided brand mentions are as follows; Harley Davidson, Nike (2 mentions), Apple, Tory Burch, Arçelik, Haribo, Audi.
- The data analysis for the 86 brands are indicated in the below table. The brands with mean scores at and above point 4.0 are highlighted with grey color.
- The rating 4 means ‘Agree’ in the 5 points Likert Scale. We decided to omit those brands with mean values below ‘Agree’ because it means the respondents have less than ‘agree’ perception that those brands fit in the authentic brand description.
- As a consequence, we ended up with 24 brands that scored at and above ‘agree’ perception. These 24 brands form our main study aided brand pool through which we ask respondents to select an authentic brand for the relationships testing for our proposed model.

Visualization and location of the brands in the main study questionnaire;

Even though the main objective of the research is not to find the authentic brands, the possibility of obtaining a reliable authentic brand set is considered to be valuable. Consequently, some other research problems appeared after purifying the brand pool. First of all, showing 24 brands at once and expecting respondents to read and percept all of them is not an easy task under a self-administrative quantitative survey. Therefore, we decided to form ‘**a visual master brand pool**’ with logo types. This is expected to enable respondents to associate the visual element of the brand with its name at a glance and increase efficiency while reading and responding the main questionnaire. However, how to show 24 logos at once so that we make sure each logo gained enough concentration was still a question. We discussed with the Senior Research Head working at a Global Research Company at this point. Our final decision is to **show respondents only 12 brand logos at once through two sets**. Our purpose to apply an objective research was still our main concern after this decision; therefore, we decided offset the likely bias occurring from location advantages of the logos and **mix and match the logos during field application by means of two different questionnaires** (only logo locations and sequence in each questionnaire is different; yet, all the scales are absolutely the same). Otherwise, the logo in the golden triangle would be more advantageous. Please refer to Figure 3.2.2 in Appendices 8.7 for the visual master brand pool subsets.

It is worthwhile to emphasize that the above rationale and methodology represents some of the originality of this thesis study specifically in forming the brand pool compared to the existing literature. To remind, a set of studies first discuss authenticity concept through qualitative methods with a short sample and ask them to tell some brands that they perceive to be authentic (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Bruhn et al, 2012; Napoli et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Fritz et al., 2017). They note these brands down and use them as a brand pool in the quantitative study in relationships testing. Another set of studies select single or more industry contexts and the authors define the brands (Webster and Illicic, 2014; Grohmann 2015; Portal et al., 2018). None of the studies used a global and local survey to form a potential pool and apply a quantitative survey to narrow it down to obtain a final short list to be used in the relationship testing in the main study.

3. 2.3 Study 3, Pilot Study and Design of Research Instruments

Objective of this study layer is to design the best research instrument that objectively measures the relationships our proposed research model attempts to explore. The clarity of the items for the Turkish sample group is a major objective because the scale items used in the questionnaire are adapted from the global brand authenticity literature and their original language are English. Additionally, we aimed to capture respondents' understanding of our authentic brand description and learn their feedbacks regarding the visual brand pool. We exposed the original items to a controlled translation process which will be explained in the 'Research Instruments and Measures' section. The selected measures and items, as well as the structure of the questionnaire are detailly explained in the same section as well.

After the research instrument (quantitative) is developed, it is distributed to a sample of 30 respondents. The sample group consists of %54 female and %46 male with an age range 18-55 years old. Respondents reside in three big cities of Turkey. 15 of the questionnaires are applied hardcopy through a convenience sampling method, and the remaining three sent to the respondents via the online survey panel agency.

As priorly stated the objective at this layer is to make sure we design a reliable questionnaire. Therefore, it was critical to take respondents' feedbacks regarding the item's clarity, authentic brand description meaning, and visual brand pool interpretations after they answered our questionnaire. We prepared only three post - exploratory questions to the respondents with this purpose. The 15 respondents that answered the questionnaire through the hardcopy version received these questions via email and the 15 online panel respondents are asked whether they would like to respond a post-evaluation open-ended survey via voice message as soon as they finish and send the survey. Only 5 of the online panel respondents agreed to answer our pilot study post evaluation questions and sent the voice message directly to the online survey panel agency. Below are the exploratory post-evaluation questions;

- 1) Please indicate the clarity and redundancy of the items.**
- 2) What does the description “Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır. / This brand has**

a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self” means for you?

3) Is the presence of the brand pool beneficial for your brand nomination?

We analyzed the gathered data through interpretative approach. Overall feedbacks and applied improvements upon these feedbacks are as follows;

- * Some scale items (B15, B21, B38, B54) are mentioned to be unclear and Turkish translations are reworked to give a better definition in line with the Turkish culture.
- * The authentic brand description is clear, and the description ensures that respondents' have shared and consistent understanding with the intended meaning.
- * Brand pool is perceived to be highly impactful as it reminds the associations of the brands and increase reading pace.

3. 2. 4 Main Study, Testing Proposed Research Model

Our main study at this stage is to test the proposed research model through the research instrument we prepared step by step. As priorly stated the research instrument will be detailly given in the 'Research Instrument and Measures' section. The main focus of this sub-section is to explain the sampling method and sample features with their reasonings.

First of all, the examination of the literature indicates that majority of the studies apply a gender split such as %55 female and %45 male, %60 female and %40 male and half-half. Additionally, majority of the studies which used quantitative survey methods applied a wide age range such as 18-55, 18-44 and 25-60 (Mattila et al., 2015; Stehlor and Tienson, 2015; Choi et al., 2015; Assiouras et al., 2015; Waschter et al., 2016; Gannon and Prethero, 2016; Kowalczyk and Pounders, 2016; Illicic and Webster, 2016; Taheri et al., 2018; Carsana and Jolibert, 2018; Jian et al., 2019; . Therefore, we decided to approach the sample group alike. However, for our future post-article studies, we decided that exploring the generations' (X, Y, Z) position on our model relationships would be precious.

Generations age split;

We decided to focus on generation X, Y and Z for future possible researches. Generation X is born between 1965 and 1979, generation Y is born between 1980 and 1999 and generation Z is born as of 2000 (Kuran, 2018). The research is conducted in January 2020 and right at that date generation X was between 41-55, generation Y was between 21-40 and generation Z was up to 20 years old. Based on this data, we decided to take the age interval from 18 to 55 years old which is a representative of the three generations (with a smaller size of generation Z). However, we re-emphasize that generation differences are not the main focus of this thesis statement and they only guided us to logically decide our age range.

Finding the sample features of the main study;

Exploration of Turkish population's demographic features appeared to be important at this stage because the field study is done within Turkey boundaries and we aim that our sample highly represents the population to generalize the findings to the larger groups and write reliable academic and managerial implication. According to the latest Turkish Statistical Corporation / TUIK (2019) data;

- The gender size split in 18-55 years old age group is equal.
- The big cities İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir together contribute to 32% of the total Turkish 18-55 years old age group population and these cities take local immigrants from other cities for employment and modern city life opportunities which led their population to be a mosaic of general Turkish people (Koramaz et al. 2017).
- İstanbul contributes to 60% and Ankara and İzmir together contribute to 40% of the total population of these three big cities.
- The age split percentile in 18-55 years old group is; %15 in 18-20 years of age, % 55 in 21-40 years of age, and %30 in 41-55 years of age.

Based on the above Turkish population facts, the sample features we defined for the main study are as follows;

Turkish people between 18 and 55 years of age with %55 female and %45 male split in total. %60 leave in İstanbul, and %40 leave in Ankara and İzmir in total. The age range split is %15 in 18-20 years of age, %55 in 21-40 years of age, and %30 in 41-55 years of age.

The gender size split in 18-55 years old age group is equal in Turkey; however, **we observe female gender relative dominance in the brand authenticity literature and female group values both cognitive and affective brand benefits highly compared to male group (Kotler, 2017).** As a result, our target sample weighs female group with a higher percentage compared to male group.

This sample features enabled us to represent the 18-55 years old age group population in Turkey and it was critical to realize the sample features as we planned. As priorly mentioned, the quantitative survey is conducted through online panel by a professional research agency and the agency has the tools to target the required sample features. In order to provide full ensurance, we applied the survey to the total respondents in three sets. After sending to each set, we controlled whether the realized sample feature is consistent with our planned sample features and made necessary adjustments to the latter set of sample such as decreasing the percentage of a sub-group which appeared to be greater than the planned size in the former field application.

Finding the sample size that represents our population;

The same TUIK data (2019) indicates that the population of 18-55 years old age group in Turkey is 48million. Therefore, we applied the population-sample size formula which is applied when the population size is on hand (Özdamar, 2003).

Formulation is as follows; $n = N \cdot t^2 \cdot p \cdot q / d^2 (N-1) + t^2 \cdot p \cdot q$

N: Number of people in the population

n: Number of people in the sample

p: Estimated prevalence

q: 1-p

t: α value (2-sided) for probability of type 1 error

d: $\pm$ Allowable error in estimated prevalence (margin of error)

$$N= 48.000.000$$

$$p= 0,50 \text{ and } q= 0,50$$

$$t= \alpha=0,05 \text{ for } 1,96$$

$$d= 0,05 \text{ for confidence interval \%95}$$

$$n= 48.000.000. (1,96)^2. 0,50. 0,50 / (0,05)^2. (48.000.000-1) + (1,96)^2. 0,50. 0,50) = 384$$

This result indicates that, for our research results to be representative of the total population, we need to conduct the research field to a minimum of 384 people. In case of a questionnaire error, we decided to send our survey to 400 people in line with the identified sample characteristics via online survey panel.

3. 2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND MEASURES

This section examines the measures and items used to test the hypothesis through the main study questionnaire. The final questionnaire is composed of three sections. Below table 3.3.1 briefly illustrates the objectives, scale types, number of questions asked and content of each section. Please refer to Appendices 8.1 and 8.2 for the final questionnaire in Turkish and English. Additionally, please refer to Appendices 8.3 the final questionnaire online survey screen shot proofs.

Table 3.3.1:

The final questionnaire sections in brief *

	Section A	Section B	Section C
Objective	Lead the respondent to select a brand he/she personally perceives to be authentic and specify his/her purchase position for the selected brand.	Measure proposed hypothesis of the proposed research model via the selected authentic brand.	Explore the single word respondents would use to define "authentic brand" in Turkish and understand the demographic variables of the respondents in the study.
Scale used	Nominal	Interval (Likert Scale) with 7 points rating	Nominal
Number of questions	6	41	7
Content	After the "Authentic brand" description is given, the respondent is first presented unaided and aided questions to select a brand and second asked to specify his ever and last purchase situation for that brand.	The items related to Brand Authenticity, Brand Advocacy, Brand Trust, and Consumer Brand Identification are presented.	After the "Authentic brand" description is given, the respondents are given close-ended and open-ended choices to attribute a single word for the definition. Later, gender, marital status, graduation level, age level, working status and annual salary are asked.

**Designed by the Researcher*

Final Questionnaire Section A:

This section directs the respondent to select a brand he/she personally perceives to be authentic and specify his/her purchase position for the selected brand. Below are objectives of each question.

- Question A1 aims to collect the unaided authentic brand selection.
- Questions A2, A3, A4 aims to collect the aided authentic brand selection and as mentioned earlier because showing 24 brands at once would decrease the focus to each brand, the brands are first shown in two sub-sets separately through A2 and A3, and finally combined in A4.
- Questions A5 and A6 aims to measure ever purchase situation and last purchase timing.

Final Questionnaire Section B:

This section measures the items of independent and dependent variables of the proposed research model. Measure proposed hypothesis of the proposed research model via the selected authentic brand. In other words, it measures the independent and dependent variables (predictor, mediators, outcome).

Below are the dimensions selected from the literature for this research study. Please refer to **Table 8.8 ‘Dependent and Independent Variables’ Items’** at in the Appendices section for a full demonstration of construct-dimension-items-sources-item number match.

This section directs the respondent to rate given items with Likert scale points 7 (1. Strongly Disagree to 7. Strongly Agree) by thinking of the authentic brand they selected. **Below are objectives of each question.**

1. Questions from B12 to B31 measure Brand Authenticity through Continuity, Integrity, Credibility, Symbolism dimensions (Morhart et al.,2015). Morhart (2015) dimensions are selected because the dependent variables brand trust, consumer brand identification and

brand advocacy are more related to Morhart (2015) dimensions which are credibility, integrity, symbolism, continuity.

2. Questions from B32 to B39 measure Brand Advocacy through Positive Word-of-mouth, Resistance to negative information, Purchase intentions for extensions (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2015; Price and Arnould, 1999; Fullerton, 2005; Tutan & Ashley 2016; Bilro et al., 2018; Turri et. al., 2013; Wallace et al., 2012; Chiosa & Anastasiei, 2018; Bilro et al., 2019)
3. Questions from B40 to B44 measure Consumer Brand Identification (Akbar and Wyemer, 2017; Escalas and Bettman, 2003; Stokburger-Sauer et al.,2012)
4. Questions from B45 to B52 measure Brand Trust through Reliability and Intentions dimensions (Napoli et al., 2013; Beverland 2016; Portal et al.,2018). Questions B45 and B51 are reverse coded.

Please note that, we mixed the constructs in the questionnaire sequence such that brand authenticity questions presented first, brand advocacy questions presented second, consumer brand identification questions presented third and brand trust questions presented last. We aimed to increase the reliability of the answers related to the relationships in this way. Secondly, we mixed brand advocacy constructs' items in order to eliminate the recency impact due to items asking very similar questions. To illustrate, the 'positive word-of-mouth' dimension of the brand advocacy construct has 5 items with two latter items are very similar to the former 3; therefore, we placed 'resistance to negative information' and 'purchase intention for extensions' questions between the two sets.

Original Items' translation process;

Because all the items are originally English, a very careful translation process is required to keep the reliability of the questionnaire. We followed a detailed translation process to achieve the reliability. The process is indicated in the below figure 3.3.1.

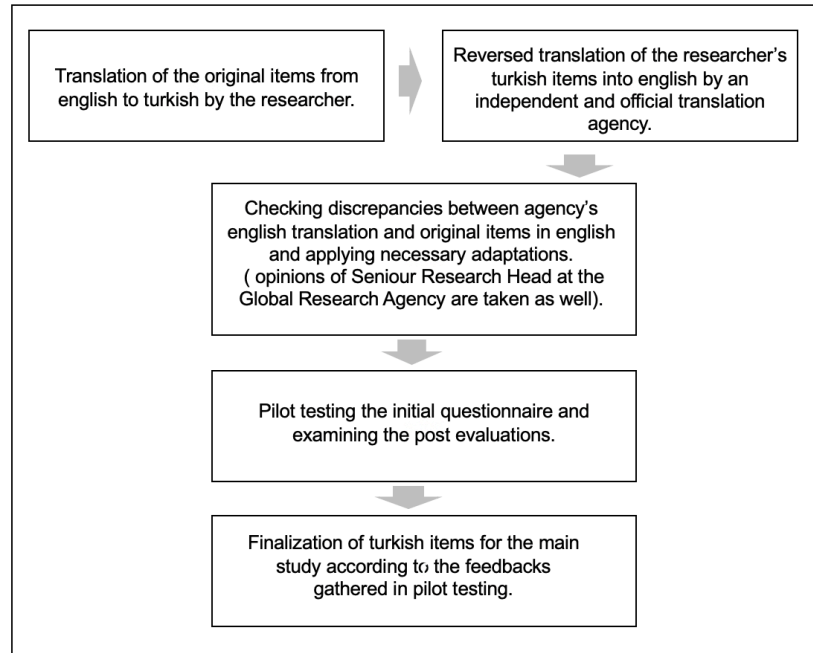


Figure 3.3.1:

Process Flow of Items' Translation from English to Turkish, *Designed by the Researcher*

As it is demonstrated in the above figure, initially the selected items are translated into Turkish by the researcher. These Turkish items are given to an independent and official translation agency who is responsible to translate back the Turkish items into English without seeing the original English items. After this dual translation, the original English items and Agency English items are compared to see whether there are discrepancies between the two English versions. Only a few discrepancies are identified (5 in total 41 items) and critical adaptations are applied (Please refer to Table 3.3.3 'Original Items' Language Translation Process' in the Appendix section to see the adaptations). This version of the Turkish items are tested through the pilot testing (study 3). After the post-evaluations of the pilot questionnaire are interpreted, the questionnaire for the main study is finalized.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section presents the data analysis after the research field is conducted in Turkey, in January 2020 to the relevant sample. The general characteristics of the sample's demographic indicators, reliability test, one-way anova, t-test and exploratory factor analysis are analyzed using SPSS 24. Structural Equation Modelling is done for confirmatory factor analysis and proposed research model testing through Lisrel 8.7.

We used Zhao et al.'s (2010) procedures to build a model with mediator and conduct the data analysis accordingly. The authors state that Structural Equation Modelling is one of the strongest approaches to test a proposed mediation model. The first reason is that, SEM allows to distinguish a true 'direct' effect from an omitted mediator effect resulting from errors. The positive and existing direct effect might be misleading and actually result from an omitted mediator in the model. In order to stress this omitted mediator fact, the authors illustrated Morgan and Hunt's (1994) study which found omitted mediators between relationship marketing and consumer behavioral outcomes. SEM analysis is positioned to eliminate such omitted mediators and give 'true' direct effect. The second reason is that, mediator in some cases may not be conceptually different than independent variable and discriminant validity of as a scale and factor analysis become critical. SEM allows the researcher to do confirmatory factor analysis at this point and confirm the factor model fit. This article; therefore, gave further inspiration to us to conduct our proposed model testing with Structural Equation Modelling. In fact, SEM analysis is a very common data analysis method in especially last 10 years' brand authenticity studies (Pelet et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2020, Matthews et al., 2020, Jian et al., 2019; Busser and Shulga, 2019; Oh et al., 2019; Davis et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2019; Park et al., 2019; Lee and Chung, 2019; Carsana and Jolibert, 2018; Dwivedi and Mc Donald, 2018; Frizzo et al., 2018; Fritz et al., 2017; Akbar and Wyemer, 2017; Yaşın et al., 2017; Cheah, 2016; Illicic and Webster, 2016; Kowalczyk and Ponders, 2016; Cheah et al., 2016; Demirel and Yıldız, 2016; Assiouras et al., 2015; Miller, 2015; Illicic and Webster, 2014; Napoli et al, 2014; Schallehn et al., 2014; Eggers et al., 2013; Bruhn et al., 2012)

Aimed at giving a short reminder, Structural Equation Modeling is a statistical modeling technique that is widely preferred in behavioral sciences. It includes various traditional techniques such as factor analysis, regression analysis, discriminant analysis and path analysis.

Path diagrams are a common visualization method for data analysis. Path diagrams are indicated as output figures consisting of boxes and circles that are connected to each other via single and double headed arrows. Latent variables are indicated in circles/ellipses and observed/measured variables are indicated in square or rectangular boxes. Double headed paths indicate correlations without a causal relationship; whereas, single headed paths indicate regression coefficients (Hox & Bechger, 1998).

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

As priorly calculated, the questionnaire is sent to 400 people (minimum requirement is 384 people) via online survey panel through three sets each of which follows the former in order to ensure we reach the exact sample characteristics. Our careful management of the survey distribution enabled us to reach almost the exact sample characteristics we planned. Below tables one by one demonstrate the realized sample characteristics. Comments for each table are presented in the paragraphs right after the relevant table.

Table 4.1.1

Gender Frequency Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Male	184	46	46
Female	216	54	100
Total	400	100	

According to the above table 4.1.1, the sample is composed of %46 male and %54 female among 400 respondents. The planned sample was %45 male and %55 female; thus, the gender simple is realized as almost planned.

Table 4.1.2

Age Range Frequency Distribution

Age range	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
18-20	71	17,8	17,8
21-40	217	54,2	72
41 +	112	28	100
Total	400	100	

According to the above table 4.1.2, the sample is composed of 18 to 20 years old subjects with %17,8, 21 to 40 years old subject with %54,2, and 41-55 years old subjects with %28. As priorly stated, the age splits are determined based on the birth years that determine the generations X, Y, Z. Please note that the age level is asked via close-ended answers that indicate the age ranges; thus, we do not report a mean age. The planned sample projected %15 for 18-20 years old subjects, %55 for 21-40 years old subjects, and %30 for 41 and older years old subjects; thus, the realized sample in terms of age range split is very close to the planned sample.

Table 4.1.3

Geographic Location Frequency Distribution

Geographic Location	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
İstanbul	247	61,8	61,8
Ankara	94	23,4	85,2
İzmir	59	14,8	100
Total	400	100	

According to the above table 4.1.3, %61,8 of the respondents are from İstanbul versus the planned %60, and %38,2 of the respondents are from total Ankara and İzmir.

The methodology section indicated the planned sample characteristics as;

Turkish people between 18 and 55 years of age with %55 female and %45 male split in total. %60 live in İstanbul, and %40 leave in Ankara and İzmir in total. The age range split is %15 in 18-20 years of age, %55 in 21-40 years of age, and %30 in 41-55 years of age.

The realized characteristics in terms of gender, age split and geographical location are in line with the planned percentages with some minor differences.

The research instruments asked some further questions in section c regarding the sample characteristics that do not have planned targets. These sample characteristics can be examined in the below table for a deeper understanding of the sample.

Table 4.1.4
Marital Status Frequency Distribution

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Single	245	61,3	61,3
Married	155	38,7	100
Total	400	100	

According to the above table 4.1.4, the sample is composed of %61,3 single and %38,7 married subjects.

Table 4.1.5
Education Level Frequency Distribution

Education Level	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Primary	40	10	10
High School	108	27	37
University Graduate	201	50,2	87,2
Masters & PHd Graduate	51	12,8	100
Total	400	100	

Above table 4.5.1 indicates the education level split of our realized sample. As demonstrated, majority of the respondents hold university degree (%50,2). Subjects that hold

high school degree (%27), masters and PhD degree (%12,8), and primary school degree (%10) follow one another.

Table 4.1.6

Working Status Frequency Distribution

Working Status	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Working	263	65,7	65,7
Non-working	137	34,3	100
Total	400	100	

Above table 4.1.6 indicates that majority of our respondents with %65,7 are working.

To recapitulate the findings given in this section, the realized characteristics of our sample group is realized as follows;

Turkish people between 18 and 55 years of age with %54 female and %46 male split in total. %61,8 live in İstanbul, and %38,2 leave in Ankara and İzmir in total. The age range split is %17,8 in 18-20 years of age, %54,2 in 21-40 years of age, and %28 in 41-55 years of age. %50,2 of these subjects are university graduates, %27 are high school graduates, %12,8 are masters and PhD graduates and %10 are primary school graduates. Finally, %65,7 are working, while %34,3 are non-working, and majority are single with %61,3 and the remaining %38,7 are married.

4. 2 RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

This section examines the reliability analysis of the research instrument through the four scales investigated. Internal consistency for each of the scales is assessed through Cronbach's Alpha values according to the below ranges (Kalaycı, 2018);

- $0.0 \leq \alpha < 0.40$ means internal consistency is unacceptable and scale is not reliable.
- $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$ means internal consistency is low and scale has low reliability.

- $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$ means internal consistency is acceptable and scale has pretty good reliability.
- $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$ means internal consistency is good/excellent and scale has high reliability.

Table 4.2.1

Reliability Statistics of the 4 Scales

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Brand Authenticity	0,915	20
Brand Trust	0,882	8
Consumer Brand Identification	0,896	5
Brand Advocacy	0,910	8

Above table 4.2.1 indicates that all the scales are highly reliable with Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.80. Therefore, these scales can be used for correlation analysis, regression analysis, t-test, and Anova.

4. 3 AUTHENTIC BRAND RATING

In order to eliminate a bias in favor of brands that are visualized in the first places and golden triangle, we designed two different placements of brand logo elements. Therefore, as shown in the figure 3.2.2 located in the Appendix section, there are two different questionnaire types upon the placements of logos in section a. It is critical to remind that authentic pool selection questions initially asked unaided selection, yet for respondents who does not have an unaided answer, an aided brand pool is formed through study 2 as explained in the methodology part (for those who presented an unaided answer do not see the aided pool and directly skips into purchase behavior questions). Therefore, we will first present the unaided answers and their frequency, second aided answers' frequency, and combine each answer types in order to explore the highest frequency brands nominated to be authentic.

Table 4.3.1**Frequency of Unaided Authentic Brand Selection**

Frequency	Brand Names
10	Ülker, Samsung
8	Apple, Arcelik
7	Vestel, Eti
6	Algida, Beko
5	Mavi Jeans, Nike, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Koton
4	Anadolu Efes, Adidas, Coca-Cola, Migros, Yataş
3	Asus, Burger King, Doritos, Gratis, Sensodyne, Zara
2	Avon, Çaykur, Colgate, Defacto, Duracell, Elidor, Fenerbahçe, Flo, Grundig, İpekyol, Kahve Dünyası, Avea, Dell, Lenova, Mercedes, Pınar, Teknosa, Mango, Pepsi, Uludağ, Volkswagen, Bellona, Cafe Nero
1	Akbank, Adıyaman Çiğköfte, Armina, Atlas Psikoloji, Audi, BMW, Bosch, Cafe Nero, Dankek, Divaressse, Durex, Elseve, Fotomaç, Galatasaray, Gediz, Hepsiburada, Hürriyet, Ikea, Adel, Barilla, BIM, Calgon, Çiçek Sepeti, Clear Men, Damla, Danone, Doğuş, Dominos, Elle, Falım, Fanatik, İpana, Jelibon, Knorr, Lassa, Letgo, Koteks, Lancome, Lc Waikiki, Toyota, Trakya Birlik, Opel, Nikon, Yeni Rakı, Yemeksepeti, US Polo, Torku, Toshiba, Türkiye İş Bankası, Pegasus, Youtube, OMO, OXXO, Nestle, Mediamarket, Tuborg, Vodafone, N11

**A total of 234 unaided brand responses are given; yet, 10 of them has error due to spelling mistakes*

The above indicates there are a total of 224 reliable unaided responses and 105 distinct brand responses are given. The highest frequency is 10 which is attributed for Ülker and Samsung separately. The second highest frequency is 8 which is attributed for Apple and Arçelik separately. The third highest frequency is 7 with Vestel and Eti brands. The other frequencies and relevant brand sets can also be seen in the table. This pool measures the unaided brand responses; therefore, we regard the findings to have strong association with authentic brand perception. The top three frequency sets which are composed of Ülker and Samsung, Apple and Arçelik, and Vestel and Eti. Important highlights are as follows; **They demonstrate both global and local brands, they demonstrate both high and low involvement product categories, and lately two of them are from FMCG food, two of them are from technology and the other two are from durable and electronics industry contexts.**

Secondly, the below table 4.3.2 indicates the authentic brand selections from the aided brand pool. Because 234 respondents presented unaided responses, the remaining 166 respondents made their selections from the aided pool.

Table 4.3.2

Frequency of Aided Authentic Brand Selection

Questionnaire Type 1, First 63 subjects' aided selections		Questionnaire Type 2, Second 103 subjects' aided selections		Total Questionnaires, 400 subjects' aided selections		
Brand	Frequency	Brand	Frequency	Brand	Frequency	% in Total
Adidas	2	Adidas	1	Adidas	3	2%
Amazon	1	Amazon	3	Amazon	4	2%
Anadolu Efes	1	Anadolu Efes	2	Anadolu Efes	3	2%
Apple	4	Apple	14	Apple	18	11%
Arçelik	4	Arçelik	2	Arçelik	6	4%
Audi	3	Audi	7	Audi	10	6%
BMW	6	BMW	8	BMW	14	8%
Colgate	3	Colgate	3	Colgate	6	4%
Disney	1	Disney	3	Disney	4	2%
Google	3	Google	2	Google	5	3%
Harley-Davidson	2	Harley-Davidson	5	Harley-Davidson	7	4%
Hilton	2	Hilton	1	Hilton	3	2%
IKEA	5	IKEA	5	IKEA	10	6%
Türkiye İş Banka	4	İş Bankası	5	İş Bankası	9	5%
Lego	2	Lego	2	Lego	4	2%
Loreal	3	Loreal	9	Loreal	12	7%
Mercedes-Benz	1	Mercedes-Benz	4	Mercedes-Benz	5	3%
Migros	1	Migros	1	Migros	2	1%
Nescafe	1	Nescafe	4	Nescafe	5	3%
Nike	1	Nike	4	Nike	5	3%
Samsung	2	Samsung	4	Samsung	6	4%
Starbucks	9	Starbucks	10	Starbucks	19	11%
YouTube	2	YouTube	3	YouTube	5	3%

3M	0	3M	1	3M	1	1%
	63		103		166	1,0

The above table indicates that there are total of 166 aided responses. The table examines the brands in two sets because we aimed to observe the differences in frequencies when brands are located differently. In questionnaire type 1, the brands in golden triangle are Nike, Harley Davidson, Adidas, Youtube, 3M, Colgate, Loreal, Lego; while, BMW, Starbucks, Ikea, Apple and Arçelik are the brands with the highest frequencies. In questionnaire type 2, the brands in golden triangle are Audi, Apple, Amazon, BMW, Anadolu Efes, Starbucks, Türkiye İş Bankası and Youtube; while, Apple, Starbucks, Loreal, Audi, and BMW are the brands with the highest frequencies. The questionnaire type 1 most frequent brands do not coincide with the brands in the golden triangle; yet, those in the questionnaire type 2 do. Therefore, it is questionable whether the results have a bias based on the brands locations brands presented.

Examining the total 166 aided brand selections regardless of the questionnaire type, the brands with highest frequencies are as follows (the frequency for each is shown in the parenthesis); Starbucks (19), Apple (18), BMW (14), Loreal (12), Audi (10), İkea (10).

As a final table, we analyze the unaided and aided brand responses together. The data is shown in below table 4.3.3.

Table 4.3.3

Frequency of Total Authentic Brand Selection

Brand (s)	Frequency
Apple	24
Starbucks	19
BMW	15
Arçelik	14
Loreal	12
Audi	11
IKEA	10
İş Bankası	10
Nike	10
Ülker	10
Adidas	7
Anadolu Efes	7
Harley-Davidson	7
Mercedes-Benz	7
Samsung	7
Vestel	6
Eti	6
Colgate	6
Migros	6
Google	5
Nescafe, You tube, Mavi Jeans, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Koton	5
Total Responses	390

The above table could be examined upon different perspectives and these perspectives might seem subjective. First of all, because there are only 10 brands with frequency 10 and above that contributes to %35 of the total brand responses (135 responses out of 390), we believe this is a favorable result in advantage of these brands. Therefore, the following brands could be selected as the champions of the first official authentic brand list study in Turkey according to our findings;

Apple, Starbucks, BMW, Arçelik, Loreal, Audi, İkea, İş Bankası, Nike and Ülker.

Furthermore, Apple brand beats any other brand with a frequency of 24 selections in total. Apple brand corresponds to highest frequency selected brands both in unaided and aided authentic brand selection. Ülker brand presented important achievement because even though

it was not in our aided list, it is a local brand selected as an unaided choice and mentioned 10 times. Loreal brand was among the potential brand pool during study 2; yet, was eliminated after the brand pool formation study and it deserved to be placed in the top authentic brands of Turkey list thanks to unaided brand selections. We regard these results to be the fruit of series of different studies starting from secondary research and ending with a wide sample size primary research. Lastly, we observe a wide range of product context in the top authentic brand selection.

4.4 TURKISH TRANSLATION OF AUTHENTIC BRAND

One of the important contributions of this thesis study is exploring an absolute Turkish definition for ‘authentic’ brand. Below tables indicate the frequency for each close ended response, respondents’ selection through open-ended responses, and the frequencies based upon gender and age split type.

Table 4.4.1

Frequency Analysis of Turkish Translation of ‘Authentic’ Brand

Turkish Definition	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gerçek	153	38,3
Samimi	92	23
Hakiki	67	16
Sahici	52	13
Other	36	9,0
Total	400	100

As shown in the above table, 364 of the total 400 responses are among the closes-ended choices. Majority of the respondents chose “Gerçek” with %38,3 and the second set chosed “Samimi” with %23.

Table 4.4.2

Unaided Definition of Authentic Brand in Turkish

Other Turkish Definitions - unaided	Frequencies
Beğeniyorum	2
Güzel / Mükemmel/ Hoş / Cazibeli / Samimi / Güç / Sağlam	1
Total	10

Even though 36 respondents chose “other” for the answer of Turkish Brand definition, 27 of them has spelling errors and not readable. Among the 9 left, the answers are spread as shown above with very low frequency in the total 373 responses.

Table 4.4.3

Gender Split in Frequency Analysis of the Turkish Translation of ‘Authentic’ Brand

Turkish Definition	Male		Female	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gerçekçi	70	38,0	83	38,4
Samimi	39	21,2	53	24,5
Hakiki	34	18,5	33	15,3
Sahici	28	15,2	24	11,1
Other	13	7,1	23	10,6
Total	400	100	400	100

The above table indicates that the sequence of each translation based on the frequencies do not indicate a difference with male and female groups. ‘Gerçek’ is the most preferred translation both for male and female gender groups.

Table 4.4.4

Age Split Frequency Analysis of the Turkish Translation of ‘Authentic’

Turkish Definition	18-20 Years old		21-40 Years old		41 Years old and above	
	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gerçek	24	33,8	72	33,2	57	50,9
Samimi	16	22,5	53	24,4	23	20,5
Hakiki	12	16,9	41	18,9	14	12,5
Sahici	9	12,7	32	14,7	11	9,7
Diğer	10	14,1	19	8,8	7	6,3
Total	400	100	400	100	400	100

The above table indicates that the sequence of each translation based on the frequencies do not indicate a difference with age split either. However, for 41 years old and older age group, ‘Gerçek’ has a higher frequency compared to other age groups with %50,9.

According to all above findings, ‘Authentic Brand’ can be translated as ‘Gerçek Marka’ in the first rating. When the Turkish word ‘gerçekçi’ is translated back to English, it defines ‘genuineness’ which is one of the most frequent description of total brand authenticity. The second rating is given to ‘Samimi Marka’ in which ‘samimi’ means ‘sincere’. As examined in the literature review part, ‘sincere’ is one of the dimensions of brand authenticity but do not cover to its holistic definition.

4.5 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

In this part initially, **Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Barlett Test of Sphericity** are taken into consideration for all variables to see whether the data set is convenient for factor analysis. In the next step **Exploratory Factor Analysis** is done in order to define interrelationships between items with a smaller number of factors.

4.5.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Authenticity

The analysis starts with our main construct Brand Authenticity.

Table 4.5.1.1:

KMO and Bartlett's Test Values for Brand Authenticity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0,930
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	5600,026
	df	190
	Sig.	0,000

According to above table, KMO value measured for this study is 0,930. This value points out perfect adequacy and homogeneity. According to Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, the measure being $>0,5$ signifies that the correlation matrix is appropriate to be applied to principal component factor analysis (Zivadinovic, 2004). In other words, this **data is convenient for conducting factor analysis with value 0,000** that is smaller than 0,050. Therefore, the next step is to analyze the 'Total variance explained'.

Table 4.5.1.2:

Total Variance Explained When Eigenvalues > 1 , Brand Authenticity

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9,904	49,522	49,522	9,904	49,522	49,522
2	2,080	10,400	59,922	2,080	10,400	59,922
3	1,082	5,408	65,331	1,082	5,408	65,331
4	0,968	4,839	70,170			

Above table indicates **brand authenticity to have 3 factors** upon eigenvalues greater than 1. In order to identify the relevant item sets, rotated component matrix with varimax method is used. The results are shown in the below table.

Table 4.5.1.3:

Rotated Component Matrix (and factor loadings) when Eigenvalues greater than 1, Brand Authenticity

Literature Component	N of Q	Item	Component*		
			1	2	3
Credibility	B12	An honest brand.			0,757
	B13	A brand that will not betray you.			0,783
	B14	A brand that accomplishes its value promise.			0,676
integrity	B15	A brand that gives back to its consumers.	0,813		
	B16	A brand with moral principles.	0,753		
	B17	This brand has a positive influence.	0,751		
	B18	This brand is committed to the public good.	0,780		
	B19	This brand is reliable.	0,762		
	B20	This brand is reputable.	0,752		
	B21	A brand that cares about its consumers.	0,770		
	B22	This brand is honest.	0,769		
	B23	A brand true to a set of moral values.	0,654		
Symbolism	B24	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.		0,680	
	B25	A brand that reflects important values people care about.		0,617	
	B26	A brand that connects people with their real selves.		0,596	
	B27	A brand connects people with what is really important.		0,595	
Continuity	B28	A brand that survives times.		0,725	
	B29	A brand with a history.		0,768	
	B30	A timeless brand.		0,684	
	B31	A brand that survives brands.		0,617	

*According to rotated component matrix, three types of situations must be evaluated

- If one factor includes one item, it must be removed from the analyses
- If an item is lower than 0,50, it must be removed.
- If an item has a close rating under two factors, it must be removed.

Considering the conditions to be examined in a rotated component matrix; our items from **B12 to B14** are classified as **the first set**, from **B15-23** as **the second set** and from **B24 to B31** as **the third set**. Therefore, the analysis indicates 3 components in total. Symbolism and Continuity are placed under the same condition; yet, the corpus of literature explained these

two dimensions to be different upon conceptualization studies (Morhart et al., 2015). Due to the fact that these conceptualization studies are conducted in different cultures, we interpret the total meaning of items for double check. Items from B24 to B27 represents the brand connecting with the self-concept; whereas, items from B28 to B31 represents the brand having a deep and long history. **Therefore, we conclude that items from B24 to B27 should be placed under ‘Symbolism’, and items from B28 to B31 should be placed under ‘Continuity’ as parallel to the literature.** Total variance is re-analyzed at this point with ‘based on number of factors 4’. Finally, **the below tables 4.5.4 and 4.5.5 together indicate that Brand Authenticity is explored to have 4 factors according to our thesis study.**

Table 4.5.1.4

Total Variance Explained When Number of Factors is 4, Brand Authenticity

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9,904	49,522	49,522	9,904	49,522	49,522
2	2,080	10,400	59,922	2,080	10,400	59,922
3	1,082	5,408	65,331	1,082	5,408	65,331
4	0,968	4,839	70,170	0,968	4,839	70,170

Table 4.5.1.5

Rotated Component Matrix (and factor loadings) When Number of Factors is 4, Brand Authenticity

Literature Component	N of Q	Item	Component			
			1	2	3	4
Credibility	B12	An honest brand.	0,713			
	B13	A brand that will not betray you.	0,792			
	B14	A brand that accomplishes its value promise.	0,684			
integrity	B15	A brand that gives back to its consumers.	0,812			
	B16	A brand with moral principles.	0,752			

	B17	This brand has a positive influence.	0,750
	B18	This brand is committed to the public good.	0,779
	B19	This brand is reliable.	0,760
	B20	This brand is reputable.	0,750
	B21	A brand that cares about its consumers.	0,769
	B22	This brand is honest.	0,768
	B23	A brand true to a set of moral values.	0,653
Symbolism	B24	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.	0,726
	B25	A brand that reflects important values people care about.	0,760
	B26	A brand that connects people with their real selves.	0,635
	B27	A brand connects people with what is really important.	0,732
Continuity	B28	A brand that survives times.	0,638
	B29	A brand with a history.	0,726
	B30	A timeless brand.	0,765
	B31	A brand that survives brands.	0,685

To conclude, explained variance to define Brand Authenticity scale through 4 factors is %70. The below table presents the summary findings of this sub-section and indicates Cronbach's alpha of each of the four factors as well.

Table 4.5.1.6

Finalized Factors of Brand Authenticity

Variables / Factors	Items	Eigen value	Explained Variance (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Credibility	B12-15	9,904	49,522	0,827
Integrity	B16-23	2,08	59,922	0,89
Symbolism	B24-27	1,082	65,331	0,853
Continuity	B28-31	0,968	70,17	0,821
Brand Authenticity	B12-31	-	-	0,915

4.5.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Trust

This sub-section explores the factors of brand trust which is one of our mediators in the proposed research model.

Table 4.5.2.1:

KMO and Bartlett's Test Values for Brand Trust

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0,884
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1645,517
	df	28
	Sig.	0,000

According to the above table. **KMO value of Brand Trust is 0,884 which points out very good adequacy and homogeneity.** Additionally, **Bartlett's Test** indicates that this **data is convenient for conducting factor analysis with value 0,000** that is smaller than 0,050. Therefore, we look at the total variances when eigenvalue is greater than one.

Table 4.5.2.2:

Total Variance Explained When Eigenvalues >1, Brand Trust

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4,485	56,058	56,058	4,485	56,058	56,058
2	1,034	12,931	68,989	1,034	12,931	68,989

Above indicates **brand trust to have 2 factors** upon eigenvalues greater than 1. In order to identify the relevant item sets, rotated component matrix with varimax method is used. The results are shown in the below table.

Table 4.5.2.3:

Rotated Component Matrix (and factor loadings) when Eigenvalues > 1, Brand Trust

Literature Component	N of Q	Item	Component	
			1	2
Reliability	B45	The brand (never) meets my expectations (reversed)		0,756
	B46	I feel confidence in the brand.		0,780
	B47	The brand never disappoints me.		0,774
	B48	The brand name guarantees satisfaction.		0,688
Intentions	B49	The brand would be honest an sincere in addressing my concerns.	0,781	
	B50	The brand would make any effort to satisfy me.	0,840	
	B51	I could (not) rely on the brand to solve the problem (reversed)	0,730	
	B52	The brand would compensate me in some way for the problem with the product.	0,820	

The rotated component matrix placed the items to the factors parallel to the literature (Napoli et al., 2016; Beverland 2016; Portal et al.,2018; Delgado-Ballester, 2004). To sum up, according to the results of the EFA for Brand Trust, the items of the scale formed in 2 factors as Reliability and Intentions with a cumulative percentage of %68,9. Below table is a summary of finalized Brand Trust factors.

Table 4.5.2.4:

Finalized Factors of Brand Trust

Variables	Items	Eigen value	Explained Variance (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Trust, Reliability	B45-48	4,485	56,058	0,823
Brand Trust, Intentions	B49-52	1,034	68,989	0,854
Total Brand Trust	B45-52			0,882

4.5.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Consumer-Brand Identification

This sub-section explores the factors of consumer-brand identification which is the second one of our mediators in the proposed research model.

Table 4.5.3.1:

KMO and Bartlett's Test Values for Consumer Brand Identification

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.861
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1197,118
	df	10
	Sig.	0,000

According to the above table. **KMO value of Brand Trust is 0,861 which points out very good adequacy and homogeneity.** Additionally, **Bartlett's Test** indicates that this **data is convenient for conducting factor analysis with value 0,000** that is smaller than 0,050. Therefore, we look at the explained variances when eigenvalue is greater than one.

Table 4.5.3.2:

Single Factor Loading of Consumer Brand Identification

Variables	Items	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Consumer Brand Identification	B40-44	3,555	71,109	0,896

The total variance explanation ratio of the single factor is calculated as %71,109. According to this above table, consumer-brand identification items are formed through a single factor as parallel to the literature (Akbar and Wyemer, 2017; Escalas and Bettman, 2003).

4. 5. 4 Exploratory Factor Analysis of Brand Advocacy

This sub-section explores the factors of brand advocacy which is the outcome and final construct in the proposed research model.

Table 4.5.4.1:

KMO and Bartlett's Test Values for Brand Advocacy

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0,889
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1976,619
	df	28
	Sig.	0,000

According to the above table. **KMO value of Brand Trust is 0,8689 which points out very good adequacy and homogeneity.** Additionally, **Bartlett's Test** indicates that this **data is convenient for conducting factor analysis with value 0,000** that is smaller than 0,050.

Table 4.5.4.2:

Total Variance Explained When Eigenvalues > 1, Brand Advocacy

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4,947	61,835	61,835	4,947	61,835	61,835

The total variance explanation ratio of the single factor is calculated as %61,835. We presented the rotated component matrix table as well in order to remember the items and compare with the brand advocacy literature.

Table 4.5.4.3:

Rotated Component Matrix (and factor loadings) When Eigenvalues > 1, Brand Advocacy

Literature Component	N of Q	Item	Component
			1
Brand Advocacy	B32	I like recommending ... to other consumers	0,821
	B33	I love to talk about the good points of ... to people (I know).	0,825
	B34	I have managed to convince other people to buy	0,818
	B35	I will say positive things about ... to other people.	0,832
	B36	I will recommend ... to someone who seeks my advice.	0,808
	B37	If ...did something I didn't like, I would be willing to give it another chance.	0,746
	B38	I would defend this brand to others If I heard someone speaking poorly about him/her.	0,657
	B39	I would like to try new products introduced under this brand name	0,767

According to our research study and the sample group, brand advocacy is found to be a total combination of promoting the brand through word-of-mouth (B32-36), resistance to negative information (B37-38) re-purchase intention for future extensions (B39). That means both proactive, reactive and behavioral intentions include to the total scope of brand advocacy construct. This point will be examined in the discussion section and comparison with literature definitions will be made. Below table summarizes single factor of brand advocacy construct.

Table 4.5.4.4:

Single Factor of Brand Advocacy

Variables	Items	Eigen value	Explained Variance (%)	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Advocacy	B32-39	4,947	61,835	0,91

To conclude briefly, the below table summarizes that Brand Authenticity scale/construct is composed of Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism and Continuity dimensions; Brand Trust scale/ construct is composed of Reliability and Intentions dimensions; and Consumer-Brand

Identification and Brand Advocacy are scales with single factors. The selected items are explored to be clustered under the factors that are consistent with the literature studies that provide the source for our scale and item selection.

Table 4.5.4.5:
Explored Factors and Scales of the Proposed Research Model

Factors and Scales	Item number
Credibility	B12 to B14
Integrity	B15 to B23
Symbolism	B24 to B27
Continuity	B28 to B31
Brand Authenticity	B12 to B31
Reliability	B45 to B48
Intentions	B49 to B52
Brand Trust	B45 to B52
Consumer Brand Identification	B40 to B44
Brand Advocacy	B32 to B39

4.6 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

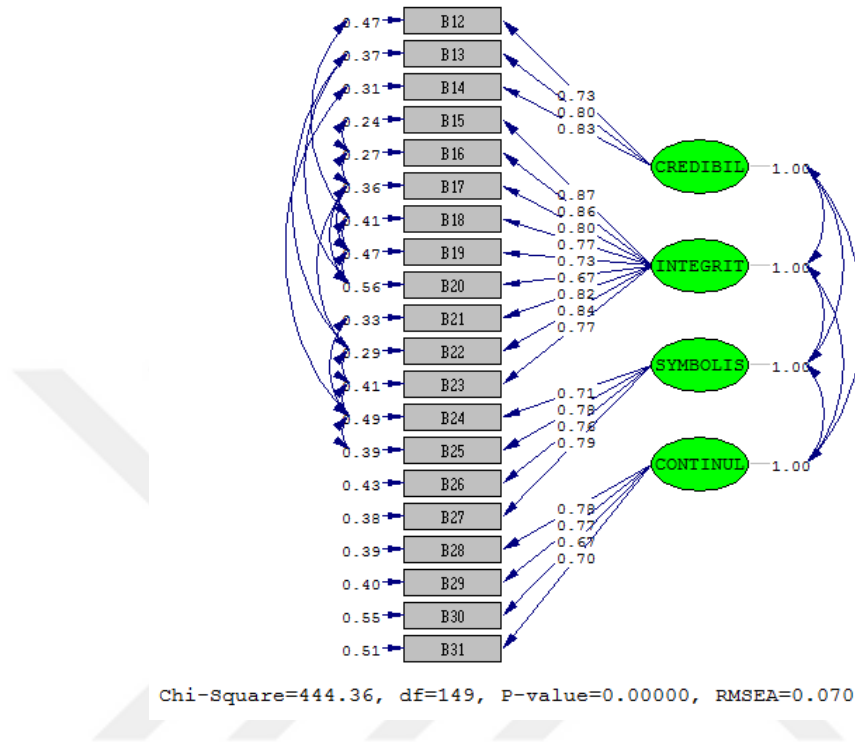
This section aims to understand whether constructs are consistent with our understanding of the nature of those constructs. In other words, to test **whether the data fit a hypothesized measurement model**. Exploratory Factor Analysis are done in the former sections and common ‘latent’ factors are already discovered in the dataset. The confirmatory factor analysis is done through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

4.6.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Authenticity

Below path diagram indicates the analysis done for brand authenticity scale and its factors.

Diagram 4.6.1:

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Authenticity Scale through SEM



In order to report model fit statistics, we select *Doğan and Özdamar (2017)* procedures which suggests to report Chi-squared test, the Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), and Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) to determine how well the a proposed model fits the data.

Table 4.6.1:

Limits and Results of CFA for Brand Authenticity

Fitness Criterion*	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.070
NFI	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.97
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.98
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.044
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.90
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.86

*Source: *Doğan and Özdamar (2017)*

According to above Brand Authenticity CFA diagram and table, factors fit the hypothesized measurement model because;

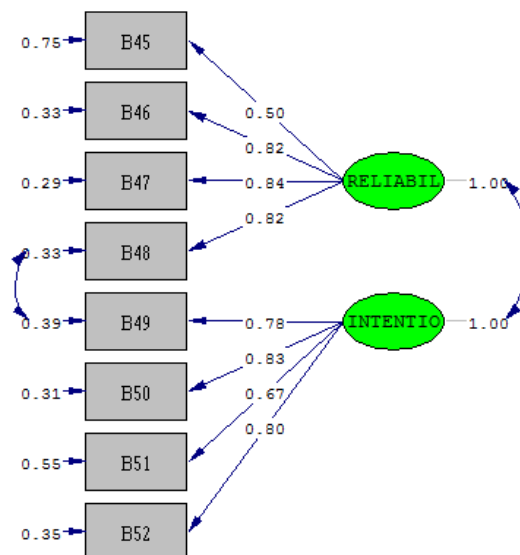
- Chi-square χ^2 /df is obtained as $444,36/149 = 2,98$ that means the **model is statistically significant with a ‘good’ fit. (When the ratio is between 2 and 3, it is interpreted to have a good and acceptable fit.)**
- Fitness criterion FMSE, GFI, AGFI are at **acceptable fitness** according to the above table.
- Fitness criterion CFI, NRI, SRMR are at **perfect fitness** according to the above table.

4.6.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Trust

Below diagram indicates the analysis done for brand trust scale and its factors.

Diagram 4.6.2:

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Trust Scale through SEM



Chi-Square=47.87, df=18, P-value=0.00016, RMSEA=0.064

In order to report model fit statistics, we refer to the below table.

Table 4.6.2

Limits and Results of CFA for Brand Trust

Fitness Criterion	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.074
NFI	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.98
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.98
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.032
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.97
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.94

*Source: Doğan and Özdamar (2017)

According to above Brand Trust CFA diagram and table, factors fit a hypothesized measurement model because;

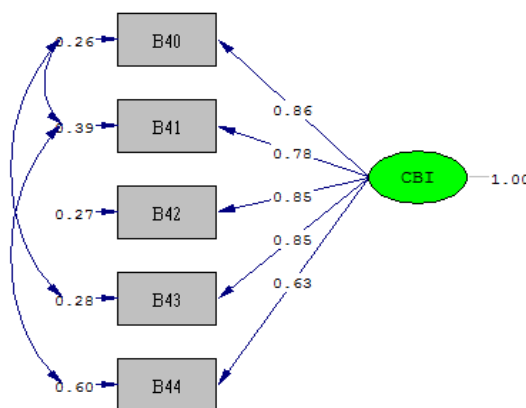
- Chi-square χ^2 /df is obtained as $47,87/18 = 2,65$ that means **the model is statistically significant.**
- Fitness criterion RMSE, NFI, CFI, SRMR, GFI, AGFI are at **perfect fitness.**

4.6.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Consumer Brand Identification

Below diagram indicates the analysis done for consumer-brand identification scale.

Diagram 4.6.3

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Consumer-Brand Identification Scale through SEM



Chi-Square=4.15, df=2, P-value=0.12586, RMSEA=0.052

In order to report model fit statistics, we refer to the below table.

Table 4.6.3

Limits and Results of CFA for CBI Scale

Fitness Criterion	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.052
NFI	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.99
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.99
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.012
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.98
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.97

*Source: Doğan and Özdamar, 2017

According to above Consumer Brand Identification, CFA diagram and table, factors fit a hypothesized measurement model because;

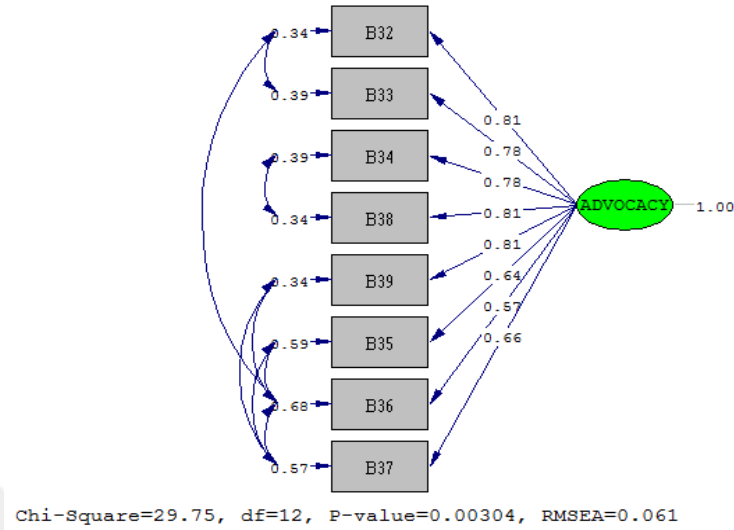
- Chi-square χ^2 / df is obtained as $4,15/2 = 2,07$ that means **the model is statistically significant**.
- Fitness criterion RMSE is at **acceptable fitness**.
- Fitness criterion NFI, CFI, SRMR, GFI, AGFI are at **perfect fitness**.

4.6.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Advocacy

Below figure diagrams the analysis done for brand advocacy scale.

Diagram 4.6.4:

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Brand Advocacy Scale



In order to report model fit statistics, we refer to below table.

Table 4.6.4:

Limits and Results of CFA for Brand Advocacy Scale

Fitness Criterion	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.061
NFI	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.99
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.99
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.021
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.98
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.95

*Source: Doğan and Özdamar (2017)

According to above Brand Advocacy, CFA diagram and table, factors fit a hypothesized measurement model because;

- Chi-square χ^2 /df is obtained as 29,75/12= 2,47 that means the model is **statistically significant**.
- Fitness criterion RMSEA is at **acceptable fitness**.
- Fitness criterion NFI, CFI, SRMR, GFI, AGFI are at **perfect fitness**.

This section indicated that for all scales proposed in our proposed model, there is a good fit between the models and the data. In the next step, correlation analysis can be conducted for the factors. However, prior to correlation analysis, we will examine the descriptive statistics as our factors are explored and confirmed.

4. 7 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Before doing the descriptive analysis, we checked the normality of the distribution. All the statistics indicate that the data is distributed normally.

Table 4.7.1
Normality of the Distribution Analysis

Scales and Factors	Skewness and Kurtosis Statistics*		Normality Test Scores**	
	Skewness	Kurtosis	Kolmogorov-Smirnova	Shapiro-Wilk
Credibility	-1,16	0,97	0,19	0,88
Integrity	-1,23	0,67	0,20	0,86
Symbolism	-0,97	0,41	0,16	0,91
Continuity	-1,34	1,62	0,19	0,87
Brand Authenticity	-1,21	1,15	0,16	0,89
Reliability	-0,70	-0,09	0,14	0,94
Intentions	-0,97	0,54	0,13	0,92
Brand Trust	-0,76	0,10	0,12	0,95
Consumer Brand Identification	-0,84	-0,18	0,16	0,91
Brand Advocacy	-1,19	0,99	0,17	0,89

* For normal distribution skewness to be between -3&3; kurtosis -10&10

** distribution is normal if statistical value greater than and equal to 0.05

This descriptive statistics regarding the dependent and independent variables including the items are in the below table. To remind, the questionnaire in section B used 7 points Likert Scale from 1, Strongly Disagree to 7. Strongly Agree in order to test the proposed research model.

Table 4.7.2

Descriptive Scores of Dependent and Independent Variables (including items)

Scales, Factor, Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Item number
Brand Authenticity	400	5,247	1,142	B12 to B31
Credibility	400	5,309	1,368	B12 to B14
An honest brand.	400	5,365	1,606	B12
A brand that will not betray you.	400	5,243	1,576	B13
A brand that accomplishes its value promise.	400	5,320	1,579	B14
Integrity	400	5,187	1,350	B15 to B23
A brand that gives back to its consumers.	400	5,165	1,673	B15
A brand with moral principles.	400	5,135	1,560	B16
This brand has a positive influence.	400	5,223	1,635	B17
This brand is committed to the public good.	400	4,958	1,732	B18
This brand is reliable.	400	5,175	1,669	B19
This brand is reputable.	400	5,510	1,561	B20
A brand that cares about its consumers.	400	5,295	1,604	B21
This brand is honest.	400	5,125	1,700	B22
A brand true to a set of moral values.	400	5,100	1,653	B23
Symbolism	400	5,128	1,413	B24 to B27
A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.	400	5,148	1,624	B24
A brand that reflects important values people care about.	400	5,265	1,641	B25
A brand that connects people with their real selves.	400	5,083	1,760	B26
A brand connects people with what is really important.	400	5,015	1,753	B27
Continuity	400	5,364	1,308	B28 to B31
A brand that survives times.	400	5,393	1,603	B28
A brand with a history.	400	5,433	1,558	B29
A timeless brand.	400	5,205	1,691	B30
A brand that survives brands.	400	5,428	1,633	B31

Brand Trust	400	4,993	1,271	B45 to B52
Reliability	400	4,988	1,400	B45 to B48
The brand (never) meets my expectations. (reversed)	400	4,513	1,890	B45
I feel confidence in the brand.	400	5,290	1,575	B46
The brand never/always disappoints me.	400	5,063	1,700	B47
The brand name guarantees satisfaction.	400	5,087	1,744	B48
Intentions	400	4,998	1,420	B49 to B52
The brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.	400	5,095	1,653	B49
The brand would make any effort to satisfy me.	400	5,098	1,673	B50
I could (not) rely on the brand to solve the problem. (reversed)	400	4,715	1,781	B51
The brand would compensate me in some way for the problem with the product.	400	5,085	1,701	B52
Consumer-Brand Identification	400	4,857	1,527	B40 to B44
Brand ... reflects who i am.	400	5,020	1,809	B40
I feel a strong sense of belonging to ...	400	4,973	1,765	B41
...embodies what I believe in.	400	4,933	1,757	B42
I can identify myself with ...	400	4,628	1,831	B43
I think ... (could) help(s) me to become the type of person I want to be.	400	4,730	1,915	B44
Brand Advocacy	400	5,215	1,301	B32 to B39
I like recommending ... to other consumers	400	5,463	1,530	B32
I love to talk about the good points of ... to people (i know).	400	5,223	1,619	B33
I have managed to convince other people to buy	400	5,030	1,767	B34
If ...did something I didn't like, i would be willing to give it another chance.	400	5,088	1,704	B35
I would defend this brand to others If I heard someone speaking poorly about him/her.	400	5,040	1,751	B36
I would like to try new products introduced under this brand name	400	5,325	1,611	B37
I will say positive things about ... to other people.	400	5,253	1,634	B38
I will recommend ... to someone who seeks my advice.	400	5,298	1,665	B39

Among all scales, Brand Authenticity has the highest mean with 5,247 and Consumer Brand identification has the lowest mean with 4,857. However, the means of all scales are still close to each other. Among factors of Brand Authenticity scale, Continuity has the highest mean

with 5,364; however, the factors still have similar means. Among factors of Brand Trust scale, both Reliability and Intentions have very close mean values. Because mean values are positioned between 4,9 and 5,3, the respondents on average ‘partially agree’ that items define their assessment of the nominated authentic brand.

4.8 INDEPENDENT T-TEST AND ONE-WAY ANOVA

This section’s objective is to understand whether there are significant differences between the mean values of scales and factors based on the gender and age. Independent sample t-test is applied for gender groups because there are two gender types; while, one-way anova is applied for age groups because there are three sets of age splits.

4.8.1 Independent T-Test for Gender Types

The following null hypothesis are created associated with gender groups;

- H0-1: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Credibility.
- H1-1: There is significant difference among gender groups for Credibility.
- H0-2: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Integrity.
- H1-2: There is significant difference among gender groups for Integrity.
- H0-3: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Symbolism.
- H1-3: There is significant difference among gender groups for Symbolism.
- H0-4: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Continuity.
- H1-4: There is significant difference among gender groups for Continuity.
- H0-5: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Brand Authenticity.
- H1-5: There is significant difference among gender groups for Brand Authenticity.
- H0-6: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Reliability.
- H1-6: There is significant difference among gender groups for Reliability.
- H0-7: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Intentions.
- H1-7: There is significant difference among gender groups for Intentions.
- H0-8: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Brand Trust.
- H1-8: There is significant difference among gender groups for Brand Trust.
- H0-9: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Consumer-Brand Identification.

H1-9: There is significant difference among gender groups for Consumer-Brand Identification.

H0-10: There is no significant difference among gender groups for Brand Advocacy.

H1-10: There is significant difference among gender groups for Brand Advocacy.

In the first step Levene Test is analyzed for testing equality of variances. Following hypothesis are assumed;

H0: The variances of two groups are equal.

H1: The variances of two groups are not equal.

If Levene Test is higher than 0,05, there is a difference assumed in values. Therefore, Ho is rejected and “Equal variances not assumed” is considered in t-test. In the other scenario in which Levene test is lower than 0,05, “Equal variances assumed” row is selected in t-test.

Table 4.8.1.1

Levene for Equality of Variances and Independent T-Test for Equality of Means, Gender Split

SCALES AND FACTORS		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
CREDIBILITY	Equal variances assumed	27,222	0,000	-3,717	398	0,000	-0,502	0,135
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,625	327,868	0,000	-0,502	0,138
INTEGRITY	Equal variances assumed	30,119	0,000	-4,916	398	0,000	-0,648	0,132
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,817	340,923	0,000	-0,648	0,134
SYMBOLISM	Equal variances assumed	19,293	0,000	-3,693	398	0,000	-0,515	0,140
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,616	338,880	0,000	-0,515	0,143
CONTINUITY	Equal variances assumed	21,444	0,000	-3,383	398	0,001	-0,438	0,130
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,303	331,131	0,001	-0,438	0,133
BRAND AUTHENTICITY	Equal variances assumed	34,609	0,000	-5,055	398	0,000	-0,542	0,107
	Equal variances not assumed			-4,925	324,402	0,000	-0,542	0,110
RELIABILITY	Equal variances assumed	12,079	0,001	-2,293	398	0,022	-0,320	0,140
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,256	353,082	0,025	-0,320	0,142
INTENTIONS	Equal variances assumed	13,811	0,000	-1,961	398	0,051	-0,278	0,142
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,923	342,800	0,055	-0,278	0,145
BRAND TRUST	Equal variances assumed	16,448	0,000	-2,360	398	0,019	-0,299	0,127
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,316	345,634	0,021	-0,299	0,129
CONSUMER BRAND IDENTIFICATION	Equal variances assumed	21,098	0,000	-2,702	398	0,007	-0,411	0,152
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,649	342,591	0,008	-0,411	0,155
BRAND ADVOCACY	Equal variances assumed	22,516	0,000	-3,248	398	0,001	-0,419	0,129
	Equal variances not assumed			-3,174	333,026	0,002	-0,419	0,132

According to above table, all Levene Tests are below 0,05 so H_0 is accepted and “equal variances assumed” row is considered in t-test. Except “Intention” factor of “Brand Trust” scale (0,051), all of the p values in sig 2-tailed column are below 0,05. This means that **there is significant difference between males and females except “intention” factor.**

In the second step, Sig 2-tailed value in t-test determines the differences in the mean responses. Following hypothesis are suggested;

H0: There is no difference in the mean responses of factors between groups.

H1: There is difference in the mean responses of factors between groups.

If Sig 2 tailed test value is lower than 0,05, Ho is rejected, so there is a difference between mean values of the different groups.

Table 4.8.1.2

Group Statistics, Gender Split

SCALES AND FACTORS	GENDER	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CREDIBILITY	male	184	5,038	1,561	0,115
	female	216	5,540	1,133	0,077
INTEGRITY	male	184	4,838	1,486	0,110
	female	216	5,485	1,146	0,078
SYMBOLISM	male	184	4,849	1,580	0,116
	female	216	5,365	1,207	0,082
CONTINUITY	male	184	5,128	1,488	0,110
	female	216	5,566	1,097	0,075
BRAND AUTHENTICITY	male	184	6,176	1,247	0,092
	female	216	6,718	0,891	0,061
RELIABILITY	male	184	4,815	1,537	0,113
	female	216	5,135	1,256	0,085
INTENTIONS	male	184	4,848	1,595	0,118
	female	216	5,126	1,241	0,084
BRAND TRUST	male	184	4,832	1,417	0,104
	female	216	5,131	1,117	0,076
CONSUMER BRAND IDENTIFICATION	male	184	4,635	1,709	0,126
	female	216	5,045	1,328	0,090
BRAND ADVOCACY	male	184	4,988	1,476	0,109
	female	216	5,407	1,098	0,075

According to above table, **Females have significantly higher mean scores in Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, Continuity, Brand Authenticity, Reliability, Brand Trust, Consumer Brand Identification, and Brand Advocacy.** H1 in the second step is accepted. **As a result, the hypothesis H01-10 are all rejected except H01-7 (regarding the Intentions factors of Brand Trust).**

4.8.2 One-way Anova for Age Groups

The following null hypothesis are created associated with age groups;

- H0-1: There is no significant difference among age groups for Credibility.
- H1-1: There is significant difference among age groups for Credibility.
- H0-2: There is no significant difference among age groups for Integrity.
- H1-2: There is significant difference among age groups for Integrity.
- H0-3: There is no significant difference among age groups for Symbolism.
- H1-3: There is significant difference among age groups for Symbolism.
- H0-4: There is no significant difference among age groups for Continuity.
- H1-4: There is significant difference among age groups for Continuity.
- H0-5: There is no significant difference among age groups for Brand Authenticity.
- H1-5: There is significant difference among age groups for Brand Authenticity.
- H0-6: There is no significant difference among age groups for Reliability.
- H1-6: There is significant difference among age groups for Reliability.
- H0-7: There is no significant difference among age groups for Intentions.
- H1-7: There is significant difference among age groups for Intentions.
- H0-8: There is no significant difference among age groups for Brand Trust.
- H1-8: There is significant difference among age groups for Brand Trust.
- H0-9: There is no significant difference among age groups for Consumer-Brand Identification.
- H1-9: There is significant difference among age groups for Consumer-Brand Identification.
- H0-10: There is no significant difference among age groups for Brand Advocacy.
- H1-10: There is significant difference among age groups for Brand Advocacy.

In the first step, the following hypothesis are formed;

Ho; Mean value of each age group is equal for the variables.

H1: At least one of the mean values of age groups differs for the variables.

If p value is greater than 0,05, Ho is accepted. If p value is lower than 0,05, Ho is rejected and Post Hoc tests should be applied for these factors and scales.

Table 4.8.2.1

One Way Anova, Age Groups

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
CREDIBILITY	Between Groups	17,322	2	8,661	4,714	0,009
	Within Groups	729,444	397	1,837		
	Total	746,766	399			
INTEGRITY	Between Groups	13,937	2	6,969	3,876	0,022
	Within Groups	713,770	397	1,798		
	Total	727,708	399			
SYMBOLISM	Between Groups	6,195	2	3,098	1,556	0,212
	Within Groups	790,302	397	1,991		
	Total	796,498	399			
CONTINUITY	Between Groups	17,117	2	8,559	5,104	0,006
	Within Groups	665,713	397	1,677		
	Total	682,830	399			
BRAND AUTHENTICITY	Between Groups	11,537	2	5,768	4,841	0,008
	Within Groups	473,053	397	1,192		
	Total	484,589	399			
RELIABILITY	Between Groups	6,120	2	3,060	1,567	0,210
	Within Groups	775,386	397	1,953		
	Total	781,506	399			
INTENTIONS	Between Groups	10,597	2	5,299	2,650	0,072
	Within Groups	793,839	397	2,000		
	Total	804,436	399			
BRAND TRUST	Between Groups	7,917	2	3,958	2,467	0,086
	Within Groups	636,877	397	1,604		
	Total	644,794	399			
CONSUMER BRAND IDENTIFICATION	Between Groups	9,061	2	4,531	1,953	0,143
	Within Groups	921,142	397	2,320		
	Total	930,203	399			
BRAND ADVOCACY	Between Groups	8,804	2	4,402	2,622	0,074
	Within Groups	666,556	397	1,679		
	Total	675,361	399			

According to above table, there is a difference in Credibility, Integrity, Continuity and Brand Authenticity among age groups; therefore, for Credibility, Integrity, Continuity and Brand Authenticity Ho is rejected and post hoc analysis should be done. On the other hand, for Symbolism, Reliability, Intentions, Brand Trust, Consumer Brand Identification and Brand Advocacy Ho is accepted.

In the second step, post hoc analysis are analyzed for Credibility, Integrity, Continuity, and Brand Authenticity. The following hypothesis are formed. If p value is greater than 0,05, Ho is accepted. If p value is lower than 0,05, Ho is rejected.

H0: Variable is the same irrespective of the age groups.

H1: Variable is different irrespective of the age groups.

Table 4.8.2.2

Post Hoc Test, Age Split

FACTOR & SCALES			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
CREDIBILITY	18-20	21-40	0,201	0,185	0,835	-0,244	0,647
		41	.58514*	0,206	0,014	0,091	1,080
	21-40	18-20	-0,201	0,185	0,835	-0,647	0,244
		41	.38393*	0,158	0,046	0,005	0,763
	41	18-20	-.58514*	0,206	0,014	-1,080	-0,091
		21-40	-.38393*	0,158	0,046	-0,763	-0,005
INTEGRITY	18-20	21-40	0,218	0,183	0,703	-0,222	0,659
		41	.54030*	0,203	0,025	0,051	1,029
	21-40	18-20	-0,218	0,183	0,703	-0,659	0,222
		41	0,322	0,156	0,119	-0,053	0,697
	41	18-20	-.54030*	0,203	0,025	-1,029	-0,051
		21-40	-0,322	0,156	0,119	-0,697	0,053
CONTINUITY	18-20	21-40	0,234	0,177	0,558	-0,191	0,660
		41	.59595*	0,196	0,008	0,124	1,068
	21-40	18-20	-0,234	0,177	0,558	-0,660	0,191
		41	0,361	0,151	0,051	-0,001	0,724
	41	18-20	-.59595*	0,196	0,008	-1,068	-0,124
		21-40	-0,361	0,151	0,051	-0,724	0,001
BRAND AUTHENTICITY	18-20	21-40	0,177	0,149	0,709	-0,182	0,536
		41	.48304*	0,166	0,011	0,085	0,881
	21-40	18-20	-0,177	0,149	0,709	-0,536	0,182
		41	.30608*	0,127	0,049	0,001	0,611
	41	18-20	-.48304*	0,166	0,011	-0,881	-0,085
		21-40	-.30608*	0,127	0,049	-0,611	-0,001

According to above table;

- There is a difference in **Credibility** between **18-20 & 41+** and **21-40&41+** age groups.
- There is a difference in **Integrity** between **18-20 & 41+** age groups.
- There is a difference in **Continuity** between **18-20 & 41+** and **21-40&41+** age groups.
- There is a difference in **Brand Authenticity** between **18-20 & 41+** and **21-40&41+** age groups.

Table 4.8.2.3
Mean Scores, Age Split

		AGE SPLIT			
		18-20	21-40	41 and above	Total
CREDIBILITY	N	71	217	112	400,0
	Mean	5,582	5,381	4,997	5,3
	Std. Deviation	1,076	1,298	1,601	1,4
	Minimum	1,667	1,000	1,000	1,0
	Maximum	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,0
	Median	6,0000	6,0000	5,3333	5,7
INTEGRITY	N	71	217	112	400,0
	Mean	5,457	5,239	4,917	5,2
	Std. Deviation	1,186	1,326	1,456	1,4
	Minimum	2,000	1,222	1,111	1,1
	Maximum	7,000	7,000	6,889	7,0
	Median	5,889	5,778	5,444	5,8
CONTINUITY	N	71	217	112	400,0
	Mean	5,658	5,424	5,063	5,4
	Std. Deviation	1,027	1,234	1,539	1,3
	Minimum	1,250	1,000	1,000	1,0
	Maximum	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,0
	Median	6,000	5,750	5,500	5,8
BRAND AUTHENTICITY	N	71	217	112	400,0
	Mean	6,700	6,523	6,217	6,5
	Std. Deviation	0,906	1,052	1,261	1,1
	Minimum	3,750	2,750	2,600	2,6
	Maximum	8,150	8,100	8,100	8,2
	Median	6,900	6,900	6,575	6,9

According to above table;

- In Credibility Factor, those aged 41+ indicate a lower mean value compared to other age groups.
- In Integrity Factor, there is a difference between 41+ age group and 18-20 age group in that, 41+ age group indicate a lower mean value compared to the 18-20 age group.

- In Continuity Factor, those aged 41+ indicate a lower mean value compared to other age groups.
- In Brand Authenticity scale, those aged 41+ indicate a lower mean value compared to other age groups.

As a result, Ho1-2-4-5 hypothesis are rejected and other hypothesis are accepted.

4.9 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

In this section we examined the correlation analysis of brand authenticity factors and brand trust factors in their relevant scales.

Table 4.9.1
Correlation Analysis of Brand Authenticity Factors

		Credibility	Integrity	Symbolism	Continuity
Credibility	<i>r</i>	1,000	0.572	0.642	0.603
	<i>p</i>		0.001**	0.002**	0.001**
Integrity	<i>r</i>		1	0.589	0.565
	<i>p</i>			0.001**	0.001**
Symbolism	<i>r</i>			1	0.664
	<i>p</i>				0.001**
Continuity	<i>r</i>				1
	<i>p</i>				

According Pearson Correlation Co-efficient (*r*) in the above table, there is a “**moderate correlation**” among Brand Authenticity factors.

Table 4.9.2
Correlation Analysis of Brand Trust Factors

		Reliability	Intentions
Reliability	<i>r</i>	1,000	0.626
	<i>p</i>		0.001**
Intentions	<i>r</i>		1
	<i>p</i>		

According Pearson Correlation Co-efficient (r) in the above table, there is a “**moderate correlation**” among Brand Trust factors.

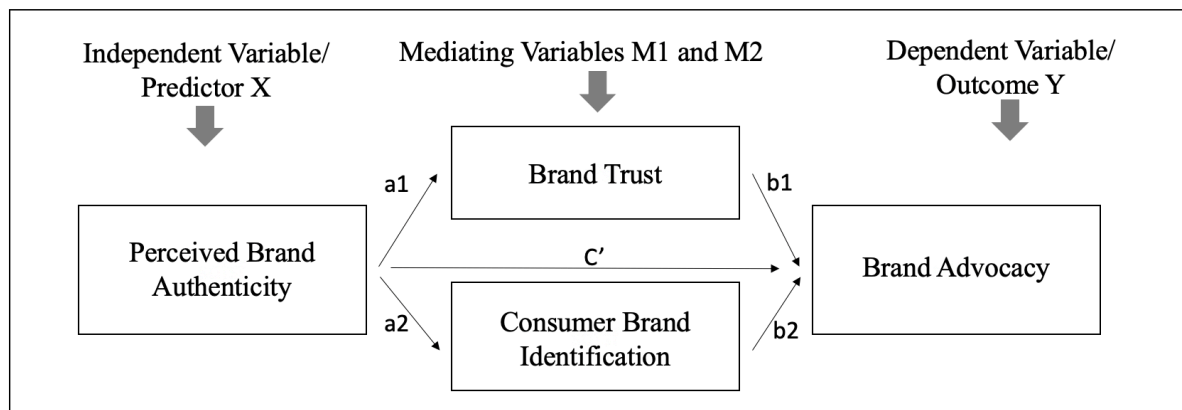
4.10 STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING FOR THE PROPOSED MODEL

Until now, the reliability and validity of the variables and items and normality of the distribution in this study are verified. As a prerequisite, conditions to work through mediator effect are re-confirmed which are continuous measurements, normality, independence, and linearity. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the proposed research model can be tested through SEM analysis. We investigated a total of 18 SEM models for this research study. The first two SEM models measure our proposed research model through its main scales; therefore, these two are core to our analysis and their SEM Diagrams as an output are explicitly given. The remaining 16 SEM models measure the relationships among factors and factors/scales through a more detailed look and because they do not have a proposed hypothesis, we do not explicitly state their SEM diagrams; yet, present the coefficient values and acceptance to fit through a consolidated table in the appendix.

The proposed research model and hypothesis which are introduced in methodology section are re-presented below.

Figure 3.1.2 (sourced from methodology section 3)

The Variable Types of the Proposed Brand Authenticity Model



This model proposes following hypothesis:

- H1: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand advocacy.**
- H2: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand trust.**
- H3: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on consumer brand identification.**
- H4: Brand trust mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.**
- H5: Consumer brand identification mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.**

Based on above hypothesis we will investigate

- * Positive direct effect of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy as indicated by c'
- * Positive direct effect of perceived brand authenticity on brand trust as indicated by $a1$.
- * Positive direct effect of perceived brand authenticity on consumer-brand identification as indicated by $a2$.
- * Positive indirect effect of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy through the mediation of brand trust indicated by $a1b1$.
- * Positive indirect effect of perceived brand authenticity on brand advocacy through the mediation of consumer-brand identification indicated by $a2b2$.

Because we use parallel mediation, two main SEM models are investigated with the relevant scales and their interrelationships proposed in the hypothesised model. First one investigates the mediation model with perceived brand authenticity, brand trust and brand advocacy scales. Second one investigates the mediation model with perceived brand authenticity, consumer-brand identification and brand advocacy.

Diagram 4.10.1

SEM Among Brand Authenticity, Brand Trust, Brand Advocacy

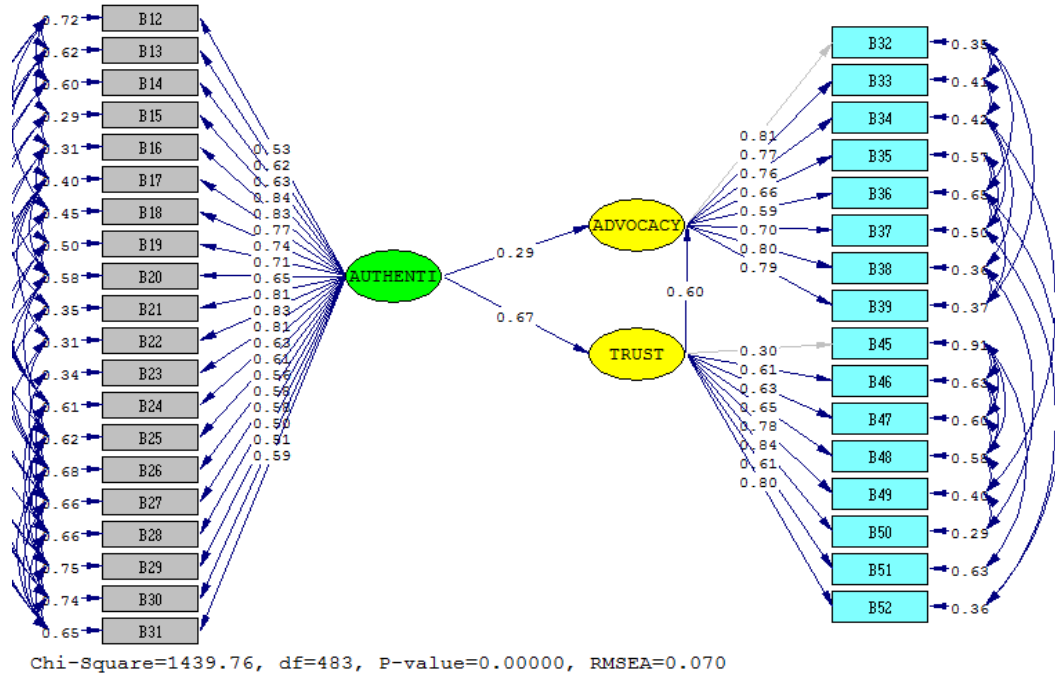


Table 4.10.1

Limits and Results of SEM among Brand Authenticity, Brand Trust, Brand Advocacy

Fitness Criterion	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.070
NFI	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.97
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.97
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.092
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.90
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.85

Above diagram and table indicates that the model is statistically significant and shows a good fitness according to all goodness of fit statistics because;

- Chi-square χ^2 /df is obtained as $1439,76/483 = 2,98$ that means the model is statistically significant.
- Fitness criterion RMSEA, SRMR, GFI, AGFI are at acceptable fitness.

- Fitness criterion NFI and CFI are at perfect fitness.

When step by step mediator analyses is examined through above SEM Model;

1. In the condition that mediator variable is not considered, there is a positive and strong relationship between independent variable Perceived Brand Authenticity and dependent variable/outcome Brand Advocacy with the coefficient of 0,29. (IV Brand Authenticity → DV Brand Advocacy)
2. There is a positive and strong relationship between independent variable Brand Authenticity and mediator Brand Trust with the coefficient of 0,67. (IV Brand Authenticity → M Brand Trust)
3. In the condition that mediator variable Brand Trust exists, the relationship between Brand Authenticity and Brand Advocacy gets stronger with a higher coefficient of 0,60 (compared to 0,29 when mediator does not exist). (IV Brand Authenticity/M Brand Trust → DV Brand Advocacy).

As a result, Hypotheses H1,2 and 4 (shown below) are accepted. Perceived Brand Authenticity affects Brand Trust which in turn affects Brand Advocacy. Brand trust is intermediate in the casual sequence.

H1: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand advocacy.

H2: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand trust.

H4: Brand trust mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.

Zhao et al. (2010) states this mediation type to be complementary mediation because both indirect path a1b1 and direct path c1 exist and point the same direction. Thus, brand trust as a cognitive consumer benefit is proved to mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and brand benefit/outcome brand advocacy.

Diagram 4.10.2

SEM Among Brand Authenticity, Consumer-Brand Identification, Brand Advocacy

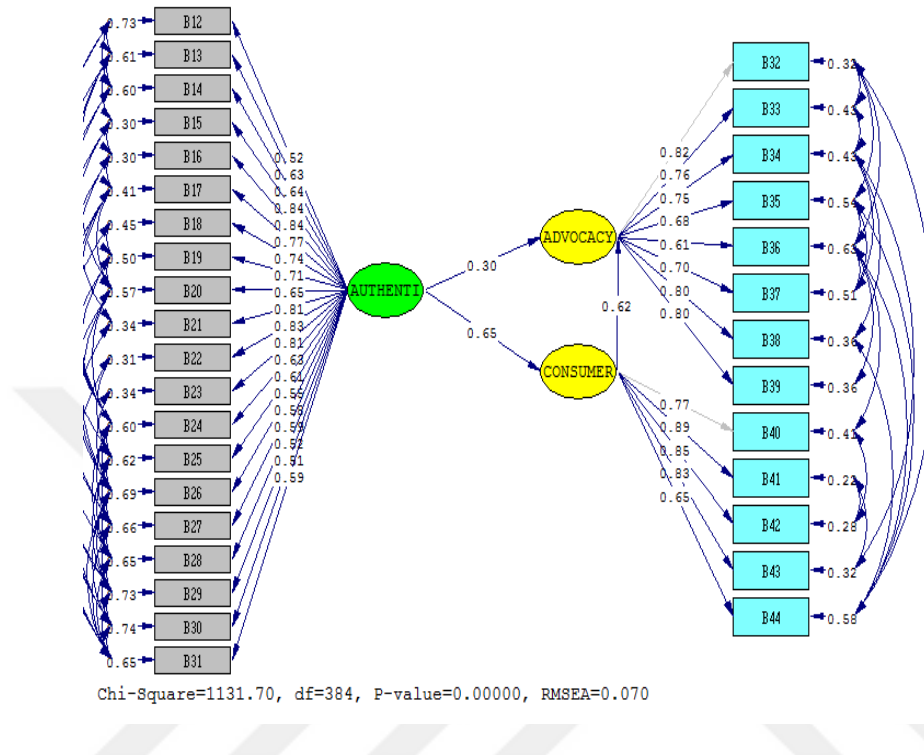


Table 4.10.2

Limits and Results of SEM among Brand Authenticity, Consumer-Brand Identification, Brand Advocacy

Fitness Criterion	Perfect Fitness	Acceptable Fitness	Model
RMSEA	$0 \leq \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} \leq 0.10$	0.070
NFI $\bar{f}$	$0.95 \leq \text{NFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$	0.97
CFI	$0.97 \leq \text{CFI} \leq 1$	$0.95 \leq \text{CFI} < 0.97$	0.98
SRMR	$0 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.05$	$0.05 \leq \text{SRMR} < 0.10$	0.089
GFI	$0.95 \leq \text{GFI} \leq 1$	$0.90 \leq \text{GFI} < 0.95$	0.90
AGFI	$0.90 \leq \text{AGFI} \leq 1$	$0.85 \leq \text{AGFI} < 0.90$	0.85

Above diagram and table indicate that the model is statistically significant and shows a good fitness according to all goodness of fit statistics because;

- Chi-square χ^2 /df is obtained as $1131,70/384 = 2,94$ that means the model is statistically significant.

- Fitness criterion RMSE, SRMR, GFI, AGFI is at acceptable fitness.
- Fitness criterion NFI, CFI, are at perfect fitness.

When step by step mediator analyses is examined through above SEM Model;

1. In the condition that mediator variable is not considered, there is a positive and strong relationship between independent variable Brand Authenticity and dependent variable/outcome Brand Advocacy with the coefficient of 0,30. (IV Brand Authenticity → DV Brand Advocacy)
2. There is a positive and strong relationship between independent variable Brand Authenticity and mediator Consumer-Brand Identification with the coefficient of 0,65. (IV Brand Authenticity → M Consumer Brand Identification)
3. In the condition that mediator variable Consumer Brand Identification exists, the relationship between Brand Authenticity and Brand Advocacy gets stronger with a higher coefficient of 0,62 (compared to 0,30 when mediator does not exist). (IV Brand Authenticity/M Consumer Brand Identification → DV Brand Advocacy).

As a result, Hypotheses H1, 3 and 5 (shown below) are accepted through above analyses. The SEM output confirms the proposed research model. Brand Authenticity affects Consumer Brand Identification which in turn affects Brand Advocacy. Consumer Brand Identification is intermediate in the casual sequence.

H1: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand advocacy.

H3: Perceived brand authenticity has a positive effect on consumer brand identification.

H5: Consumer brand identification mediates the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy.

This is again a complementary mediation type because both indirect path a2b2 and direct path c1 exist and point the same direction. Thus, consumer-brand identification as a cognitive consumer benefit is proved to mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and brand benefit/outcome brand advocacy.

Interpreting the two SEM diagrams and findings, we conclude our proposed research model to be significant. Instead of ‘Perceived Brand Authenticity’ directly affect ‘Brand Advocacy’, independent variable ‘Perceived Brand Authenticity’ affect the mediators ‘Brand Trust’ and ‘Consumer Brand Identification’ separately, and these mediators in turn affect dependent variable/outcome ‘Brand Advocacy’. In other words, the third variables “Brand Trust” and “Consumer Brand Identification” are intermediate in the casual sequence such that “Perceived Brand Authenticity X” affect both “Brand Trust M1” and “Consumer Brand Identification M2” and the two M’s affect “Brand Advocacy Y”.

The multiplier impact of brand trust between the independent and dependent variables is slightly higher compared to that of consumer-brand identification. This finding will be under discussion later. A possible reason might be the selected perceived brand authenticity factors (Morhart et al.,2015) credibility, continuity, integrity, symbolism. At this point we regard it to be worth examining the impact of each independent variable factor to mediator factors/ scale and dependent variable/outcome scale in order to both investigate the above point and provide further insights regarding our proved model. Because we presented no hypothesis regarding the relationships among factors and scales, we will not present a SEM diagram, but provide the coefficient values, and limits and results of SEM.

Sub-models with factor to factor/scale relationships;

Table 4.10.3 in the Appendix section indicates the SEM results of sub-models formed through the casual relationships between factors (Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, Continuity of Brand Authenticity and Intentions and Reliability of Brand Trust) and scale constructs. While reading the relevant table in the appendix, the first column indicates the distinct sub-model number, and second and third column represents the relationship paths. To illustrate, the third SEM model measures the direct effect of independent variable perceived brand authenticity factor credibility on outcome brand advocacy (coded with IV(Factor) to DV), independent variable perceived brand authenticity factor credibility on mediator brand trust (coded with IV(Factor) to Mediator), and the indirect effect of independent variable perceived brand

authenticity factor credibility through the mediation of brand trust on outcome brand advocacy (coded with IV(Factor)/M to DV). Coefficient values, data model fit ratios, and fitness criterion are given in the latter columns. Findings of these sub-analysis are as follows;

- All Sub-SEM analysis are at perfect to acceptable fit in fitness criterion and models are significant with good data model fit value.

-Considering each of the Sub-SEM models measured through individual perceived brand authenticity dimensions credibility, integrity, symbolism and continuity, brand trust as mediator, and brand advocacy as outcome;

-The multiplier effect of brand trust as a mediator between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy is signaled through the sub-SEM models 3 to 7 as well, as parallel to the main SEM Model in diagram 4.10.1. In the condition that mediator variable **Brand Trust** does not exist, there is a positive and strong relationship between **each factor Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, Continuity (of brand Authenticity scale)** and dependent variable/outcome Brand Advocacy with coefficients of 0,06 to 0,52 range. It is notable that from Credibility to Brand Advocacy, coefficient is lowest of all other variables with 0,06. We interpret this as an important finding because complementing this finding with sub-models 3 and 7, the impact of credibility on brand trust is 0,80 and brand trust dimension intention is 0,75 which proves the multiplier effect of credibility on brand trust and its dimension intentions is more significant when the mediation effect enters (still brand trust dimension reliability has significant impact with 0,71). As already found, when mediator brand trust intervenes in the relationship between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy, the indirect path has a higher coefficient value (SEM diagram 4.10.1 from 0,29 to 0,60).

-Examining the pathways between independent variable factors and mediator brand trust (Sub-SEM models 3-14), all perceived brand authenticity dimensions have significant causal relationship to mediator brand trust between 0,57 to 0,80 coefficient values. Among all, integrity has the lowest impact with 0,57 which is an unexpected finding because integrity dimension of brand authenticity defines being moral and responsible to consumers and is expected to increase brand trust reliability and intentions dimensions.

-Examining the pathways from independent variables' direct impact on brand advocacy, continuity is found to have the highest significance among other perceived brand authenticity dimensions. Continuity dimension also demonstrates the brand heritage and has a vital importance in the brand authenticity literature. This finding will be further discussed later.

-Considering each of the Sub-SEM models measured through individual perceived brand authenticity dimensions credibility, integrity, symbolism and continuity, consumer-brand identification as mediator, and brand advocacy as outcome;

-The multiplier effect of consumer-brand identification as a mediator between perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy is signaled through the sub-SEM models 15 to 18 as well, as parallel to the main SEM Model. In the condition that **mediator variable Consumer-Brand Identification** does not exist, there is a positive and strong relationship between **each factor Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, Continuity (of brand Authenticity scale)** and dependent variable/outcome Brand Advocacy with coefficients of 0,19 to 0,42 range. It is notable that, consistent with SEM diagram 4.10.2, from Credibility to Brand Advocacy, coefficient is lowest of all other variables with 0,19 and that of Continuity to Brand Advocacy is highest with 0,42.

-In the condition that **mediator variable Consumer Brand Identification** exists, the relationship between **each independent latent variable Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, Continuity** and Brand Advocacy gets stronger with higher coefficients of 0,53 to 0,71 range (compared to the condition when mediator does not exist). Symbolism and Continuity dimensions of perceived brand authenticity have the highest coefficient values among the pathways to consumer-brand identification.

-Finally, consumer-brand identification as a mediator significantly increases the indirect impacts of credibility, symbolism and integrity on outcome brand advocacy based on sub-SEM models 15 to 17. These finding will be discussed in the conclusion section.

5.DISCUSSION

The data analysis indicate that our hypotheses are not only underpinned by brand authenticity literature, but also proven through our data analysis. This section further interprets the data analysis and compare them with prior literature findings. We divided this discussion section into six sub-sections each of which are examined below.

5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

As stated in section IV.1, our realized sample is a good representative of our target sample and total population group 18-55 years old people with a split of %54 female, and %46 male (versus equal split of female and male gender group in actual population) who live in İstanbul with a percentage of %60, and Ankara and İzmir with a combined percentage of %40. Our data analysis indicated that our non-probabilistic quota sampling method through online survey platform, which is conducted in three sets, enabled us to reach our sample characteristics. We surveyed a total of 400 subjects (versus minimum requirement of 384) with the planned demographic characteristics; therefore, it is justifiable to claim that our realized sample is representative of the target population in Turkey in terms of both sample size and characteristics. This fact contributed to the reliability of our study.

5.2 AUTHENTIC BRAND RATING AND TRANSLATION

As stated in the significance of the study section, this study presents the first perceived authentic brand rating in Turkey.

This discussion starts with the authentic brand rating. We directed first an unaided and then an aided question regarding the respondents' authentic brand nomination.

First of all, because unaided responses present stronger associations due to the depth and strength of those associations (Keller, 2003), we regard crucial success to the top-rated brands in this class which are Ülker, Samsung, Apple, Arçelik, Vestel, Eti, Algida and Beko.

i. More than half of the total respondents preferred to make an unaided brand selection which is a favorable finding for us. That means our authentic brand description is easy to interpret and calls for brand associations. It is still under discussion whether the brands with higher familiarity might have been mentioned.

ii. Another interesting highlight is that, the top mentioned brands are big sized global and local companies unlike small manufacturers that are suggested to connect origin of place and heritage which are some antecedents of brand authenticity. We interpret this finding as a natural result of the initial description of total brand authenticity construct given in the questionnaire which stresses the importance of knowing inner-self and complying to this self to be genuine. Another reasoning might be the continuity of these companies for decades; thus, the relative importance of continuity dimension among brand authenticity scales is visible in the scope of unaided questions. If some more specific multidimensions and antecedents were presented at the very beginning, some other brand results would have been possible. To exemplify, Beverland's (2016) relationship to place and Newman and Dhar's (2014) country of origin antecedents would have revealed some different brand ratings.

Secondly, the aided brand responses indicate Starbucks, Apple, BMW, Loreal, Audi, İkea brands as the top-rated brands. The aided brand response is critical for us to assess the possible bias that might result by the logo placements. However, as we explained in the section IV.3 one questionnaire type's top-rated results match the advantageous placement; yet, other's do not. Therefore, the findings are not adequate to reach a final decision. Additionally, our aided response findings reveal that Apple, and BMW are among the top ten global authentic rating list as similar to the Cohne and Wolfe (2017) study. These results might be due to the consistent global brand positioning and execution of these two brands.

Finally, we combined unaided and aided brand responses in table 4.3.3. Apple, Starbucks, BMW, Arçelik, Loreal, Audi, İkea, İş Bankası, Nike and Ülker are found to be the top-rated authentic brands in Turkey with a contribution of %35 of the total responses. Interestingly the global brands are rated high in global authenticity index as well which implies us that human behave as tribes in the globe regardless of the geographic

differences as explained in the introduction section. Furthermore, size and continuity of the brand is an important link to brand authenticity. Additionally, the brands are not parts of a brand portfolio, but they are all corporate brands which suggests that authenticity is sought in total organization not in merely the specific brand as stated by Eggers et al. (2013).

An important discussion is shall we rate the first 10 brands only or present the top 50 or any number of brands that entered into the list. Each of these brands are selected upon the authentic brand description which means each has an authentic perception to an extent; therefore, presenting the index through Top 20/50 would be a logical approach too.

Another important discussion is whether unaided and aided brand selections should be rated with equal coefficients. As mentioned earlier, unaided responses reveal a deeper and stronger association compared to aided responses. This is a discussion based on statistical analysis; however, seems to be critical for correct interpretation of the data.

Moreover, the top-rated index indicates us that the product context and involvement of each brand differs from each other. This finding is parallel to the literature authentic brand findings. A mutual characteristic in the top-rated brands is that, they are well-known brands with their strong brand positionings, symbolic benefits, and continuous brand communications.

We presented the different methods applied in the literature studies used to nominate an authentic brand in section 3.3.1. **The method we used was a combination of those used by Napoli et al. (2013) and Beverland (2016), and Morhart et al. (2015) and Akbar and Wyemer (2017) with some extensions and originalities.** Compared to the methods of nominating an authentic brand in benchmark studies, we used an original rationale to form the initial brand pool by working with a small group of marketing experts that narrowed down the list we formed from Cohne and Wolfe (2017) and Brand Finance, Turkey (2019) studies. Both of these studies were the latest issues; therefore, the most relevant ratings. **Another originality in our brand nomination is that, we formed a visual brand pool that is divided into different sets, and different placements of logos in order to eliminate a bias resulting from the golden triangle placement.** We believe working with smaller and representative pre-

samples to eliminate the brands as much as possible instead of providing 24 brands in a quantitative method would be the best choice; however, considering the limitations on hand we applied the best possible approaches to keep reliability.

We continue our discussion from the Turkish translation of authentic brand and claim to make an important contribution to Turkish brand authenticity literature in terms of the definition of the construct. **As priorly stated, ‘Gerçek/Genuine’ is the top frequency result regardless of the gender split and with a higher preference for 41 years old and older age group compared to other age groups.** The finding is reliable and parallel to definitions of brand authenticity in the global literature. **Beverland et al. (2010) highlights that even though the construct has multiple interpretations resulting from its multidimensional nature, what is consistent in all interpretations is that an authentic brand is genuine, real and true.** Demirel and Yıldız (2015) translated the construct as ‘Özgünlük/Originality’; yet, it is one of the single dimensions of the construct. and Yaşın et al., (2017) translated it as ‘Otantiklik’ which is a much closer definition to genuineness and imply the object has a factual link to its original genre; however, this term gives a definition from a more objectivist perspective instead of evaluating the subject as a relational agent that provides control, connection and virtue (Beverland, 2005). We conclude that both our finding ‘Gerçek’ and Yaşın et al.’s ‘Otantik’ could be used to define the construct in Turkish branding literature; however, further research through a much wider sample group would be beneficial.

5.3 FACTOR ANALYSIS

The exploratory factor analysis revealed that Brand Authenticity has four factors which are continuity, credibility, integrity and symbolism with %70 cumulative explained variance, Brand Trust has two factors which are reliability and intentions with %68,9 cumulative explained variance, Consumer-Brand Identification with %71,1 total explained variance with single factor and Brand Advocacy has a single factor construct as well with %61,8 total explained variance. The SEM models of all constructs confirmed the significance of our factor models. These findings have equal results to original literature constructs and their scales and items. None of the items’ factor loading indicates a major difference compared to the others’ in each factor; therefore, we conclude that the global

dimensions indicate a good fit to Turkish culture. This finding could be an important contribution to the brand authenticity literature because as explained in the introduction section globalization results in a holistic world with human tribes scattered into different geographical areas; yet, pursuing similar aspirations, motivations and concerns. Regardless of the time, place and culture the items define the intended and globally tested factors in a local area. To exemplify, **Morhart et al. (2015) developed Brand Authenticity factors and items in North America and used in a model testing in North America, Europe, and Russia. Portal et al. (2018) used the same dimensions in South Korea. All of the mentioned countries are scattered to different locations and possess a different culture; however, the mentioned studies have positive results.**

There are different perspectives to select already developed dimensions or develop a measurement scale specific to a culture. It is likely that, if we started the survey through a qualitative method to understand the nature of brand authenticity construct in Turkey, we might have found different dimensions that would be close to or different than Morhart et al.'s (2015) factors. The reason we selected Morhart et al.'s (2015) dimensions is their proved links to our latter constructs Brand Trust and Consumer-Brand Identification. Another perspective would suggest that even if we select, for instance, Beverland et al.'s (2010) dimensions, the factor analysis would reveal consistent results because conceptualization of brand authenticity in this study states that authentication provides feeling of control, connected and virtue. Integrity dimension in our study implies the same factor with Virtue and Symbolism dimension implies Connection. **There are many overlaps throughout the literature conceptualizations in this sense which are previously indicated in Table 2.1.2.2, Groups of Dimensions According to Content Similarities.**

As priorly stated our study is the first in brand authenticity literature that measured total Brand Advocacy construct. The data analysis found that brand advocacy is perceived to be a single factor construct with repurchase intention to extensions, word-of-mouth and resistance to negative information. **This finding further reveals that when a consumer advocates a brand, he/she exhibits both behavioral responses such as supporting the brand through buying extensions, proactive responses such as being the vocal voice of the brand, and reactive responses such as evangelizing the brand for negative information**

and experiences. The construct we used is similar to how Keller (2003) defined total brand resonance, in other words types and depth of consumer- brand relationship. Even though brand authenticity studies used only word-of-mouth, willingness to recommend, behavioral loyalty we used total brand advocacy as an outcome as it is the strongest form of consumer-brand relationship in today's digitalization era (Urban, 2015). Literature indicates varying definitions of brand advocacy some of which approaches the construct through a physical support (physical brand advocacy by Noble and Noble, 2010), while some others approach it to be promoting through distributing information among others (Social brand advocacy). Our factor analysis indicate that brand advocacy is seen as a holistic consumer behavior in favor of brand and indicates both physical and social relationship. Busser and Shulga (2010) presented the closest construct to our brand advocacy construct under the brand loyalty construct; however, he did not include resistance to negative information.

5.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The descriptive analysis supports the normality of the distribution and mean values as priorly stated range between points 4,9 and 5,3 above Likert Scale Type 7 exhibiting similarities; therefore, none of the dimension and item presents an original position compared to others. which is the most important finding we wish to discuss in this section. Of course, there are many respondents that rated below and above the mean; yet, this reveals their overall assessment of the nominated authentic brand. **Even though they selected a brand which has clear set of identity, and exhibits promises and actions in parallel to the inner self, according to Likert scale point 7, they 'partially agree' with the statements.**

The possible underlying reason for us is provided by the literature. Cohne and Wolfe (2017) authentic brand survey which is executed in 15 countries and 15.000 consumers indicates that less than %20 of the consumers assess brands as authentic. Another survey, Stackla (2017) suggests that more than %57 of the consumers believe less than all available brands are authentic even though %86 of them seek authenticity in their consumption role. It is justifiable to conclude that, brands have a long way to be perceived as really authentic and consumers' expectations are high. Their skepticism is rather a big barrier for marketers.

Therefore, our finding actually is in line with our initial diagnosis regarding the skeptic consumer, and quantitative brand studies that rated authentic perception levels.

5.5 DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES

The literature presents no information regarding the demographic differences for the independent t-test and one-way anova tests; therefore, we interpret solely our own findings. The findings which revealed that female gender group has a higher mean scores in all dimensions and factors except Intention factor of Brand Trust might be resulted from the higher skepticism level of female group and higher willingness to involve in reciprocal relationships with the brands of female group as defined by Kotler (2017). Kotler (2017) explains in his famous Marketing 4.0 book that females consumer decision making process is more complex compared to male group, they search for both utilitarian and symbolic benefits, devote more time for brand interpretations and selections and when they are satisfied with a brand advocate them in different platforms; whereas, male groups decision making process is shorter and more logical. However, male group scored a much higher mean score for Brand Trust's Intention factor. That might be because male group cares more about the sincere and good intentioned personalities of brands compared to female group. Furthermore, 41+ age group indicates lower mean values to all total Brand Authenticity, and Credibility, Integrity, Continuity dimensions. 41+ age group represents generation X with a general characteristic to be more realistic, hardworking, and work to earn life and satisfy necessary needs not hedonic ones (Kuran, 2018). This result might be a possible reason that this age group considers credibility, integrity, continuity factors as salient attributes to a brand they form relationship with.

5.6 THE STRUCTUREL EQUATION MODEL OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH MODEL

Our data analysis findings have contribution to both brand authenticity and consumer-brand relationship literatures and closely link the two constructs to each other.

The direct positive and significant relationship between the perceived brand authenticity and brand advocacy are proven through both SEM models. We interpret this as a contribution to consumer-brand relationship marketing and state brand authenticity as an important and up to date construct that results in strong and deep consumer brand relationship. When brands give consumer the feeling of control, virtue and connection, that means the company advocates the consumer. As a contribution to Urban's (2005) statement, there is a reciprocal relationship between the consumer and the brand; therefore, when brand advocates the consumer through being genuine and truthful, the consumer than advocates the brand by promoting the brand to others proactively, giving resistance to negative words regarding the brand, and intending to buy new brand extensions. This combination of this physical and social support is the most sought benefit for a company in today's digital world. Our finding is also in line with Morhart et al.'s (2015) finding; however, they proved the direct positive effect of Brand Authenticity on word-of-mouth only.

Our SEM results proved the positive and strong relationship between independent variable Brand Authenticity and the mediator Brand Trust. When we start introducing the core of this study and explain the significance of our study, we detailly explained the level of consumer skepticism and consumers' feeling of control to the outer world. Mastery of environment is a relevant need of today's consumer and they seek for brands that enable this mastery. The relational marketing era requires long term relationship investments instead of short-term commercial gains. Moreover, we explained the trust to be the most important and key ingredient to consumer-brand relationship. The authentic brands establish very consistent narratives from their roots and stay true to these roots which indicate their capacity to deliver on promises. Therefore, this finding contributes the brand authenticity studies that link the construct with brand trust (Eggers et al., 2013; Lee and Chung, 2019; Busser and Shulga, 2010; Fernandez and Lewis; 2019).

Our SEM results proved the positive and strong relationship between independent variable Brand Authenticity and the mediator Consumer-Brand Identification. This finding is in line with other findings in the literature that relate brand authenticity and consumer-brand identification (Akbar and Wyemer, 2017; Napoli et al., 2016; Spiggle et al., 2012; Oh et al., 2019). Self-brand connection is a frequently measured and raised sub-construct in

consumer-brand relationship marketing and we contributed to the existing literature. In the introduction and significance of the study sections, we explained the increasing expectation of today's consumer to convey self-identity. An authentic brand transparently conveys its identity and inner self to its consumers; therefore, serves consumers' expectations regarding the symbolic benefits as found in Oh et al.'s (2019) study. An authentic brand genuinely represents its identity and essence; therefore, increase consumer-brand identification according to Akbar and Wyemer (2017) as well.

This finding is a contribution to brand authenticity studies based on **Social Identity Theory** as well (Escalas, 2004; Bacerra and Bagozzi, 2000). Brand acts as a vehicle for the consumer to categorize himself/herself with a social group categorization; and feels part of this group. Therefore, social integration occurs as a result of consumer-brand identification.

The remaining hypothesis measured brand trust and consumer brand identification as mediators between brand authenticity and brand advocacy. We found that the relationship between Brand Authenticity and Brand Advocacy gets stronger with a higher coefficient (indirect effect) when Brand Trust mediates the relationship. This revealed that there is a casual sequence in the relationship formation in the consumer mind. When consumer perceives the brand to be authentic, he/she forms positive judgmental perception in the form of brand trust which in turn increases his/her advocacy behavior. This finding is in line with Lee and Chung's (2012) finding that brand trust mediates brand authenticity. **We also found that the relationship between Brand Authenticity and Brand Advocacy gets stronger with a higher coefficient (indirect effect) when Consumer-Brand Identification mediates the relationship.** This revealed that there is another casual sequence in the relationship formation in the consumer mind. When consumer perceives the brand to be authentic, he/she forms affective perception in the form of consumer brand identification which in turn increases his/her advocacy behavior. This finding serves as a contribution to brand authenticity studies that are linked to Social Identity Theory because when consumer perceives a self-congruence with the brand that makes him/her associate with a social group, he/she takes action to favor the group's interests and talk positively about the brand.

The mediator effects' findings together present contribution to Choi et al.'s (2015) study as well which places consumer brand relationship constructs as the mediators between brand authenticity and brand loyalty. However, they selected more affective constructs which are brand attachment and commitment. More importantly, the combined findings of our proposed research model support our theoretical framework which is a combination of **Identity Based Brand Management Model** and **Consumer Brand Building Steps** we introduced in the introduction section. **A brand defines its inner-self and reveals this self through positioning statement and marketing communications. If the inner-self complies with the positioning and communication, it is perceived as authentic depending on the objectivist, constructivist and existential cues. Later the consumer forms both cognitive and affective judgements in the form of early stage of consumer-brand relationship and decide on the depth and strength of the relationship in the final stage of the relationship forming.** Being authentic has a positive impact on stronger and deeper relationship formation; however, this relationship gets stronger and deeper when consumer perceived his/her cognitive and affective benefits.

The final part of the data analysis interpreted sub-SEM models formed with dimension relationships. We firstly noticed that **from Credibility to Brand Advocacy**, coefficient is lowest of all other variables; however, **when Brand Trust intervenes** especially through **Intentions** the indirect path has a higher coefficient value. This multiplier effect of is justifiable because the positive intentions and capabilities of the brand increases the credibility and reliability further as explained in the literature studies. **On the other hand, Continuity which defines the timeless tradition and survival is found to have the highest significance among other perceived brand authenticity dimensions over brand advocacy in direct effect.** It is likely that when a brand survives times and have a consistent and well-rooted pedigree, it evokes feelings of stability and consistency and deserve advocacy in the mind of consumers. We would like to remind that the brand rating study revealed global and big brands which offer continuity. **We further noticed that integrity has the lowest impact on mediator brand trust.** Integrity dimension demonstrates having an agenda beyond commercial motives; thus, is expected to increase the significance of intentions dimension of brand trust; thus, this is an interesting finding for us. **Moreover, CBI as a mediator significantly increases the indirect impacts of integrity, symbolism, and credibility on brand advocacy.** This is an

expected result because each dimension has possible links with consumers self upon existentialist perspective. **Finally, Continuity and Symbolism dimensions indicate the highest coefficients on CBI.** Symbolism is defined to the extent having a symbolic benefit that consumers can use to define self and consumer-brand identification considers brand as an extension of self; thus, this is a consistent detailed finding with the literature. Continuity defines being timeless and having the ability to transcend times which also defines brand heritage. Brand heritage associate's origin of times and places with the brand and its likely link to consumer-brand identification.

Examining the micro relationships in the literature, we encounter detailed finding of Morhart; They measured brand trustworthiness as a similar construct to credibility and presents the same findings from credibility to advocacy like ours' when brand trust mediates the relationship. The same authors found that continuity as the least self-referential dimension thus has lowest impact on self-brand connection. Another finding from the same authors is that there is a positive relationship between credibility, continuity, integrity but not for symbolism.

6. CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

As a conclusion, this research study presented answers to the initial research questions. We believe to have contributed to the Brand Authenticity literature with link to Identity-Based Brand Management System and Social Identity Theory. Holding to the position that communal relationship is realized only through genuine partnership, brand authenticity has a crucial role in strong and deep consumer-brand relationships throughout the constructs' continuum. We used the continuum term because consumer-brand relationship starts from the perceived consumer benefits and reaches to brand benefit at the end of the journey.

This study contributed to the brand authenticity initially by using cognitive and affective consumer-brand relationship constructs as two mediators between brand authenticity and brand advocacy. Second, we used brand advocacy, the synonym of brand resonance, for the first time in a brand authenticity study and proved the positive relationship. Third, we designed the first official authentic brand rating in Turkey. Forth,

we explored the perceived Turkish translation of ‘authentic’ brand in our study. The literature survey indicates some similar models tested with CBR constructs as a second order construct but none of them used our mediators at the same time.

As explained in the introduction section, the situation analysis to the global consumers indicate skepticism, lack of trust and the need for expressing self-identity. The initial studied regarding brand authenticity indicates brand authenticity to be replaced with quality and states consumer and brand benefits. It is also stated to be the cornerstone of strategic partnership in which stakeholders trust each other through a reciprocal relationship and a vehicle for reflecting the consistency of self-identity for consumers. Brand authenticity delivers the required conditions to pursue an actual relationship between two agents. First one is having an interdependence and reciprocal exchange. Second one is aiming to add meaning to each other’s life. Third one is providing the expected benefits to each other. Forth one is evolving the relationship based on contextual environment. An authentic brand as a relational partner delivers on all of these conditions for its consumer; therefore, we believe this construct deserves further exploration both in academic studies and business cases.

This section additionally presents our recommendations to the marketing professionals based on our literature review and research findings.

We initially advise marketing and brand professionals to internalize and deeply understand global consumers’ anxieties and concerns and start re-shaping their organizational culture and marketing executions upon that ground. Company/brand should understand the prerequisite to be legitimate to its community. Additionally, being authentic shall not be the target of a specific brand under a corporate name, but it should be the holistic personality and way of relating with the community through a bigger entity behind. The reasoning is that a brand is composed of employees, processes, systems, different organizational departments all of which have specific roles in communicating with the stakeholders. Therefore, each department and process should possess necessary characteristics that will enable the whole organization to behave authentic. The first stakeholders in this perspective are the employees. Enabling them to understand the prerequisites to be authentic as

a company, to integrate systems and processes accordingly, and to be authentic to them initially is crucial as they will walk the talk and enable consistency on behalf of the company.

An approach to achieve such a holistic and 360-degree purpose starts with re-examining the corporate identity and values. In other words, doing a situation analysis regarding the brand authenticity perception of the brand. What the company/brand is dedicated to achieving for its community in terms of utilitarian and social values and mission is the first question to ask. After re-examining the mission statement, each function in the organization should set their own targets to contribute authentic perception in the stakeholders. To illustrate, the definition of high-quality products might differ depending on the industry. When the industry playground is selected, it is vital to understand which ingredients, method of productions and production processes lead quality commitment. The answers will direct the strategies and tactics of the supply chain department. Additionally, what will be the quality standards to follow each function and process in order to give value promises to the consumers for the quality department would be another question to ask. All these functional commitments enable to achieve what is promised; therefore, indicate that the brand is reliable which in turn enhances brand trust. Moreover, these functional purposes should be accompanied by clearly set corporate values that will guide all employees' behaviors and approaches to the stakeholders and community. **If these targets and processes are defined as a part of total quality management system on the base, the total organization will indicate greater persistence to follow them.**

These values should not be centered around making profit but relate to be a genuine partner of the target consumer and whole community by focusing on integrity. This integrity does not only define the mutual interests of the consumer and the brand, but also the interest of environment and different social groups in the name of sustainability. We appreciate deep rooted and unchanged corporate values because it is the only way to create behavioral consistency among diverse employees and functions so that external stakeholders encounter a consistent relational partner. This behavior also implies Moral Authenticity, adapted from Psychology and Sociology discipline, that suggests actions and choices are parallel to what is declared at every transaction.

Consequently, this holistic behavioral system will foster brand trust because community explicitly see that the brand has good intentions to perform what is promised.

Secondly, companies/brands should target which brand authenticity pillars they are willing to possess right from the beginning. Brand Authenticity conceptualization and antecedents' studies give important hints to marketing professionals. The dimension analysis indicated us that factors such as credibility and continuity are must and almost exist in every dimension sets; however, factors such as symbolism, integrity, naturalness depends upon industry context and companies' own willing. To exemplify, for a luxury brand symbolism is an important dimension that results in self-brand congruency; whereas, for a technology brand integrity is an expected dimension that results in brand trust. We recommend professionals to explore their consumers via qualitative surveys and understand their expectations upon their industry and product group. After necessary dimensions are determined, we recommend these professionals to conduct a situational analysis regarding the current perception on selected dimensions of brand authenticity and find the gaps. It is critical to determine functional strategies and tactics to close this gap over time for the authentic perception they desire and periodically conduct progress research. **We strongly recommend that during the situation analysis, the company and brand should act with high self-awareness and genuinely assess what are the assets and competencies. The brand essence should be built upon these assets and competencies and positioning should directly reflect the essence.** It is a must to continuously work for these values and targets and deliver what is promised. It is critical to remember that when the company fails to deliver on a promise, it should transparently convey the situation and reasonings to its consumers and take regulative actions to fix the situation. That is because being honest and genuine is a must to develop trust.

Aimed at giving a clearer direction to adapt which strategies to possess some brand authenticity dimensions, we give below recommendations to the managers. If the brand manager desires his/her brand to be perceived as **continuous**, he/she should focus on communication strategies that emphasize the brand's pedigree and heritage, stylistic consistency, unchanged quality commitment and employee passion. If the brand manager desires **reliability** perception, he/she should focus on organizational transparency, use of best ingredients and recipe, integration with craftsmanship and premium product quality. If the brand

manager desires **originality** perception, the total brand functions should focus on innovation, points of differentiation compared to the rest of the market and first-mover spirit. If the brand managers' purpose is to create **naturalness** perception, organic ingredients and a purest recipe are important. If the purpose is to create **integrity** perception, a clear and consistent corporate social responsibility programme, a set sustainability targets in the form of both environmental and social pillars, and dedication for communal relationship and partnership is critical. Last, if the brand manager desires to possess **symbolism** dimension, the very first important prerequisite is accompanying in consumers' life narratives through strategic brand management. Storytelling techniques are key in this perspective for marketing communications. **Furthermore, the ultimate purpose should be creating a maker brand which realizes the ideals and goals of its consumers.** Creating and executing a brand personality which has a congruency with the target groups' actual and ideal self are also major strategies. Additionally, we believe brand anthropomorphism as a technique that should accompany all these strategies to reinforce symbolism which is an important dimension that positively impacts consumer-brand identification. The strategies proposed prove that being authentic requires a 360-degree execution from organizational values to marketing mix elements, and value proposition to employee behavior. These strategies will pay back to the company as a sustainable competitive advantage because that require a clear and persistent roadmap that are not easy to imitate.

Third, companies' focus should change from economic goals to relational goals upon our findings. They should develop strategies for establishing communal relationship with consumers; thus, start advocating them as a first step. Our study revealed the wide and desired benefits of brand advocacy construct and how consumer proactively and reactively support the brand as a relational partner when he/she is advocated by the brand. Brand advocacy; therefore, should be among the marketing department's main targets and strategies and activities to achieve this target should be wisely planned. Delivering the best utilitarian and symbolic benefits is essential to establish this communal relationship because brand authenticity is highly evaluated through indexical and iconic cues through objectivist, constructivist and existentialist perspectives. The diversity of perspectives and multidimensional nature of brand authenticity require brands to work for both judgmental and affective consumer benefits. The literature survey conducted for introduction section revealed the necessity of creating brand trust and self-brand connection as consumer-brand relationship

sub-constructs; therefore, these two measures should be set as initial key performance indicators to evaluate relational marketing performances. As a contribution, the relationship should not only be formed with consumers but also with others in the community such as local craftsman or small-sized ingredient producers.

Fourth, inspired from Kelley's (1973) attribution theory which suggests perceived brand authenticity to depend on its antecedents and attributes and cues related to objectivist, constructivist and existential brand authenticity perspectives, we have a set of recommendations to the marketing professionals from another perspective. Constructivist and Existentialist perspectives possess an important role for the scope of our study because brand authenticity is perceived upon beholder's expectations and experiences which implies constructivist perspective and symbolism in consumption and self-brand connection are desired consumer benefits which imply existential constructs. However, the brand trust is formed both through delivering on promises and providing genuine product and services that have a factual link to the original genre; thus, objectivist perspective become relevant as well. These perspectives come to life through brand communication cues; thus, integrated brand communication has a major importance to create authentic brand perception.

Related to cues that are relevant to **objectivist perspective**, the depiction of craftsmanship, heritage and pedigree, country of origin, method of production, ingredients are important cues to be used in integrated marketing communication. To illustrate using a special logo on a wine bottle that indicates the origin of place and type of grapes is a strong communication vehicle to convey authenticity of the product. For a beer brand, using brand elements that indicate the brewing technique, for a luxury brand a special style of sewing sign, for a dining brand an ethnic menu and chef specific to the restaurant type are all effective communication strategies.

Related to cues that are relevant to **constructivist perspective**, emphasizing brand's roots, virtue, originality, social commitment, employee passion are important cues to be used. To exemplify, CSR strategies should be integrated into the corporate purpose. Other social commitment programs such as educating women, or better working conditions for factory workers are important actions. Retro marketing and Vintage products will evoke consumers'

personal associations as well. Storytelling techniques and brand narratives are important vehicles for this perspective.

Related to cues that are relevant to **existentialist perspective**, brand humanization methods and anthropomorphism, brand legitimacy, actual and ideal self-congruence are important cues to be used. It is critical to understand personal aspirations, ideals, concerns of the consumer and provide solutions to them on top of giving them utilitarian values. Emotional branding is an important tool for this purpose. Additionally, brand anthropomorphism evokes consumer-brand identification because the consumer compares self with the identity of the brand. Thus, brand humanization strategies should be evaluated. Consumers closely look for personality traits of the brands for self-brand connection; thus, identity should explicitly be executed through secondary brand elements such as a spokesperson or animism.

We explained that big global companies have an advantage in authentic perception mostly due to continuity dimensions. However, there are great opportunities for smaller and local companies as well for authentic brand perception. Consistent and continuous brand communication on the objectivist, constructivist and existential cues would give rebirth to local brands in any culture. Especially using pedigree and origin of place as antecedents will help these local brands to revitalize through relevant associations to the target group's expectations.

Fifth, our literature and research findings reveal that brand authenticity strategy should be a global strategy; however, there might be some tactical differences based on geographic differences. Our factor analysis and literature survey reveal that brand authenticity has a perception independent from cultural differences. As stated earlier, Morhart's dimensions are tested in North America, South Korea, Europe, Russia and finally by us in Turkey. Factors models are confirmed in all cultures. Because there are geographically scattered target consumer groups with similar aspirations, motivations and expectations, for global brand, a globally consistent positioning strategy is likely to have high return on investment. On execution level, however, tactics might change. To exemplify an Italian cuisine-based restaurant differs from a Korean cuisine-based restaurant. Similarly, if the company does wine business, it might pay close attention to grape production and wine making techniques specific to that country.

Finally, we value great importance to convey consumers' real consumption experience. The digital media as a vehicle presents relevant platforms to this. The brands should be brave to encourage consumers generate user-generated-contents to get connected with their communities and share their consumption experiences and narratives. Consumers are co-creators of the brand meaning at the end especially in the social media platforms. This is the most authentic brand communication ever with a communal relationship concern. If the brand delivers on what it promises it should stay confident for negative evaluations as well, and instantly take actions for consumer complaints. Experiential marketing is also important in this sense.

To sum up, brand authenticity literature provides ample strategies and tactics to brand managers for executing an authentic culture. The brand managers should priorly select which of the dimension sets they believe best suit to the assets and competencies of the company and at the same time suit to the vision of the brand. Whichever strategy is selected, it is critical that brand authenticity should not be regarded as an ordinary association in the brand image, but it is a total system that is imposed to the DNA of the brand and its company structures. It is a prerequisite to survive in today's competitive markets that serve as an important antecedent of strong and deep consumer-brand relationship that requires mutual cooperation of both parties.

7. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Based on our literature survey and research findings, we present some future research directions in this section.

First of all, even though the Morhart et al.'s (2015) factors are confirmed in the local culture, it is beneficial for the future of brand authenticity literature in Turkey and for a contribution to the global literature that, **an exploratory research should be conducted in order to understand Turkish people's conceptualization of brand authenticity.** The literature presents different set of dimensions and such a research would reveal which dimensions are perceived to be closest to the local culture.

Second, **testing the model among generation X, Y, Z would benefit especially marketing professionals for a more focused branding strategy for their specific target group.** Understanding the differences based on generations would help professionals to set more realistic key performance indicators for their branding activities in terms of depth and strength of consumer-brand relationship targets. To illustrate, for a generation which demonstrate higher indirect effect of brand authenticity on brand advocacy through the mediator effect of consumer-brand identification compared to brand trust would set higher targets and key performance indicators for CBI as a result of brand authentication strategies and activities. Similarly, testing the model between female and male gender group would be beneficial as well as the branding literature suggests female group has a more complex decision-making process and regards cognitive and affective benefits almost equally when deciding the level of their relationships with a brand.

Third, measuring the model for small local brands would reveal important findings; therefore, applying more specific sample characteristics such as specific socio-economic groups, or geographic locations that are not big cities is suggested as a strategy in methodology. A qualitative survey examining only small local brands and assessing these brands upon different brand authenticity dimensions would reveal important strategic implications for these brands as well.

Forth, Zhao et al (2010) suggests different mediation types to be used such as parallel mediation and serial mediation. **A new testing on our model can explore the relationship between our mediator constructs brand trust and consumer-brand identification.** We raise this question because Puzakova et al. (2009) states that consumers earn more trust to brands which reflect their self-values.

Fifth, **our model can be tested through high and low brand involvement as a moderator effect.** Even though our brand rating findings indicates that authentic brand nomination is made regardless of the product context, additional research by extending our model is likely to contribute our findings or lead it to a new direction.

Sixth, **we advise further research on Turkish translation of ‘Brand Authenticity’ with a much wider sample group.** It is highly crucial to reach a consensus on the Turkish

definition of Brand Authenticity both in academics and industry. This study is advised to use a combination of different methodologies because it is initially important to explain the construct to the respondents, and later take their open ended and close ended responses.

Seventh, authentic brand rating study revealed some interesting findings for us, and these findings can be enhanced with more studies. For instance, **the top-rated brands in unaided responses can be investigated further and the reasonings behind the selection and the important dimensions that enabled these brands to be nominated can be explored through qualitative study.** Similarly, the reasoning behind aided brand selection can be explored and the reasonings of unaided and aided brand selections can be compared.

Eight, **brand partner quality can be substituted with brand trust construct as a mediator and the model can be re-tested.** Brand partner quality is a sub-construct of consumer-brand relationship and indicates the reliability and capability of the brand and its willingness to solve consumers' problems, be supportive and feel accountable from the consumer. Its nature; therefore, is similar to brand trust, so mutual roles of two different consumer-brand relationship constructs could be compared.

Last, relational authenticity is an important sub-area to explore further as brands are relational partners according to consumer-brand relationship construct. This model can be extended by using brand anthropomorphism as an antecedent of relational brand authenticity. A new model can be built by using the relational authenticity as a mediator construct between brand anthropomorphism and any affective consumer-brand relationship construct.

8. APPENDICES

Appendices of Methodology

8.1 Main Study Questionnaire, Turkish

Bu Anket formu. T.C. Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İşletme Anabilim Dalı, Üretim Yönetimi ve Pazarlama Bölümü için yapılan bir tez çalışması için hazırlanmıştır.

Vereceğiniz tüm bilgiler ve kimliğiniz tamamen gizli tutulacak olup, yalnızca anket formunun ait olduğu akademik çalışma için kullanılacaktır. Bilimsel verilerin doğru analizler sunabilmesi adına her soruyu dikkatle okuyup cevaplandırmanız rica edilmektedir.

BÖLÜM A:

Lütfen öncelikle aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”

A1 – Bu aşamada, yukarıdaki ifadeye sizin için uyan tek bir marka belirtmeniz beklenmektedir. Lütfen ifadeye uygun olarak aklınıza gelen markanın adını aşağıdaki boş bırakılan alana yazınız. Eğer aklınıza yukarıdaki ifadeye uyan bir marka gelmiyor ise, bir sonraki sayfada belirtilen markalar havuzundan da seçiminizi yapabilirsiniz.

Lütfen şimdi marka adını yazınız.

(.....)

A2 – Markalar havuzundan seçim yapmayı tercih ettiniz. Şimdi lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”



***Logolu marka havuzunu inceleyerek sizin için yukarıdaki ifadeye en uygun olan markayı, aşağıdaki seçenekler arasından işaretleyiniz. Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin.**

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| - Nike | - Youtube | - Arçelik |
| - Adidas | - Nescafe | - Google |
| - Mercedes Benz | - Migros | - Audi |
| - Apple | - Harley Davidson | - Türkiye İş Bankası |

A3 – İlk markalar havuzundan bir marka seçtiniz Şimdi farklı bir markalar havuzundan seçim yapmanız beklenmektedir. Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”



***Logolu marka havuzunu inceleyerek sizin için yukarıdaki ifadeye en uygun olan markayı, aşağıdaki seçenekler arasından işaretleyiniz. Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin.**

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|----------|
| - 3M | - Loreal | - Amazon |
| - Starbucks | - Colgate | -Lego |
| - BMW | -Anadolu Efes | -Samsung |
| - İkea | -Hilton | -Disney |

A4 – İki farklı markalar havuzundan seçim yaptınız. Aşağıdaki seçeneklerde marka havuzları birleştirilmiştir. Önceki sayfalarda yaptığınız iki seçim arasından sadece bir tanesini, son kararınız olarak işaretleyiniz.



- | | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------|
| - Nike | - Youtube | - Arçelik |
|--------|-----------|-----------|

B15	Tüketicilerine hak ettikleri karşılığı veren bir markadır.							
B16	Ahlaki prensipleri olan bir markadır.							
B17	Olumlu etkisi olan bir markadır.							
B18	Halk yararına çalışmaya önem veren bir markadır.							
B19	Güvenilir bir markadır.							
B20	Tanınmış bir markadır.							
B21	Tüketicilerine özen gösteren bir markadır.							
B22	Dürüst bir markadır.							
B23	Bir takım ahlaki değerlere sadık kalan bir markadır.							
B24	İnsanların hayatlarına anlam katan bir markadır.							
B25	İnsanların özen gösterdiği önemli değerleri yansıtan bir markadır.							
B26	İnsanları gerçek benliklerine bağlayan bir markadır.							
B27	İnsanları aslında önemli olan şeylere bağlayan bir markadır.							

B28	Zamana karşı hayatta kalan bir markadır.							
B29	Geçmişi olan bir markadır.							
B30	Belirli bir çağa ait olmayan bir markadır.							
B31	Diğer markalara karşı hayatta kalan bir markadır.							
B32	... markasını başkalarına tavsiye etmekten hoşlanırım.							
B33	...markasına ait iyi şeyleri (tanıdığım) insanlara konuşmaya bayılırım.							
B34	Diğer insanları ... markasını satın almaları için ikna edebilmişimdir .							
B35	Eğer ... markası hoşuma gitmeyen bir şey yapsaydı, ona başka bir şans vermek isterdim.							
B36	Eğer başkalarının bu marka hakkında kötü konuştuğunu duysaydım onu bu kişilere karşı savunurdum.							

B37	Bu marka altında tanıtımı yapılan yeni ürünleri denemek isterim.							
B38	Diğer insanlara ... markası hakkında olumlu şeyler söyleyeceğim.							
B39	Önerimi isteyen kişiye ... markasını tavsiye edeceğim.							
B40	... markası kim olduğumu yansıtır.							
B41	... markasına güçlü bir aitlik duygusu hissediyorum.							
B42	... markası inandığım şeyleri somutlaştırır.							
B43	Kendimi ... markası ile özdeşleştirebilirim.							
B44	Bence ... markası olmak istediğim tipte bir insan olmam için bana yardım edebilir.							
B45	Marka hiçbir zaman beklentilerimi karşılamaz.							
B46	Markaya güven hissediyorum.							
B47	Marka hiçbir zaman beni hayal kırıklığına uğratmaz.							

B48	Markanın ismi memnuniyeti garanti eder.							
B49	Marka kaygılarıma hitap etmekte dürüst ve samimidir.							
B50	Marka beni tatmin etmek için her çabayı gösterir.							
B51	Problemimi çözmesi konusunda bu markaya güven duyamam.							
B52	Üründe bir problem olması durumunda marka bir şekilde bana telafi eder.							

BÖLÜM C:

Lütfen son olarak aşağıdaki soruları yanıtlayınız.

C1 - “Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.” İfadesinde tanımlanan markayı tek bir kelime ile anlatmak isteseydiniz, aşağıdakilerden hangi kelimeyi seçerdiniz?

Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

- Gerçek
- Sahici
- Hakiki
- Samimi
- Diğer....

C2 – Cinsiyetiniz Kadın..... Erkek

C3 – Medeni Durumunuz Evli..... Bekar

C4 – Lütfen doğum yılınızı belirtiniz.....

C5 – Eğitim durumunuz (Mezuniyet)

İlkokul ve Ortaokul

Lise

Universite Lisans

Üniversite Yüksek Lisans/Doktora

C6 – Aktif olarak çalışıyor musunuz? Evet ... Hayır

8.2 Main Study Questionnaire, English

This questionnaire is prepared for a thesis study in Turkish Republic, University of Marmara, Social Sciences Institute, Business Administration in English, Department of Production Management and Marketing. The information you provide will be enclosed and used only for this academic study. We request your careful examination to each question in order to present reliable scientific results.

SECTION A:

Please carefully read the below description first;

“This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”.

A1 – At this stage, you are expected to nominate a single brand that represents the above description best. Please write the brand you chose to the space given below. If there is no brand that comes to your mind, you can make a selection from the brand pool presented in the next page.

Please write the brand name.

(.....)

A2 – You preferred making a selection from the brand pool. Please read the below description again.

“This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”.

*Please examine the brand pool with logo elements shown below and decide your choice that best represents the above definition.



You can now select your brand choice through clicking on the below brand names.

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| - Nike | - Youtube | - Arçelik |
| - Adidas | - Nescafe | - Google |
| - Mercedes Benz | - Migros | - Audi |
| - Apple | - Harley Davidson | - Türkiye İş Bankası |

A3 – You selected a brand from the first brand pool. Now you are expected to select another brand from a new brand pool. Please re-read the below description carefully.

“This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”.

*Please examine the brand pool with logo elements shown below and decide your choice that best represents the above definition.



You can now select your brand choice through clicking on the below brand names.

- | | | |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|
| - 3M | - Loreal | - Amazon |
| - Starbucks | - Colgate | - Lego |
| - BMW | - Anadolu Efes | - Samsung |
| - İkea | - Hilton | - Disney |

A4 – You make brand selection from two different brand pools. Below the both brand pools are combined and shown at once. We request you to focus on the two brands you chose in the previous questions and indicate which of the two questions you chose as your final decision to nominate the brand that best represents the above definition.



- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| - Nike | - Youtube | - Arçelik |
| - Adidas | - Nescafe | - Google |
| - Mercedes Benz | - Migros | - Audi |
| - Apple | - Harley Davidson | - Türkiye İş Bankası |
| - 3M | - Loreal | - Amazon |
| - Starbucks | - Colgate | -Lego |
| - BMW | -Anadolu Efes | -Samsung |
| - İkea | -Hilton | -Disney |

A5 - Have you ever bought this brand?

Yes..... No.....

A6 - If your answer to the previous question is yes, please indicate the the timing of your last purchase.

Last 1 month.... Last three months.... Last 6 months.... Last 1 year....
More than a year...

SECTION B:

In this step, you are expected to indicate your acceptance level to the below sentences through the brand you nominated to suit “This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”. 1. means Definetely Disagree, 7. means Definetely Agree. You can select the values in the middle as well.

		1 – Definitely Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 -More or Less Agree	4 – Neither Agree, nor disagree	5 – More or less agree	6 - Agree	7 – Definitely Agree
B12	An honest brand.							
B13	A brand that will not betray you.							
B14	A brand that accomplish its value promise.							
B15	A brand that gives back to its customers.							
B16	A brand with moral principles.							
B17	This brand has a positive influence.							
B18	This brand is committed to the public good.							
B19	This brand is reliable.							
B20	This brand is reputable.							
B21	A brand that cares about its customers.							
B22	This brand is honest.							
B23	A brand true to a set of moral values.							
B24	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.							
B25	A brand that reflects important values people care about.							
B26	A brand that connects people with							

	their real selves.							
B27	A brand connects people with what is really important.							
B28	A brand with a history.							
B29	A brand that survives times							
B30	A timeless brand.							
B31	A brand that survives brands.							
B32	I like recommending ... to other consumers.							
B33	I love to talk about the good points of ... to people (i know).							
B34	I have managed to convince other people to buy							
B35	If ...did something I didn't like, i would be willing to give it another chance.							
B36	I would defend this brand to others If I heard someone speaking poorly about him/her.							
B37	I would like to try new products introduced							

	under this brand name.							
B38	I will say positive things about ... to other people.							
B39	I will recommend ... to someone who seeks my advice.							
B40	Brand ... reflects who i am.							
B41	I feel a strong sense of belonging to ...							
B42	...embodies what I believe in.							
B43	I can identify myself with ...							
B44	I think ... (could) help(s) me to become the type of person I want to be.							
B45	The brand (never) meets my expectations. (reversed)							
B46	I feel confidence in the brand.							
B47	The brand never/always disappoints me.							
B48	The brand name guarantees satisfaction.							

B49	The brand would be honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.							
B50	The brand would make any effort to satisfy me.							
B51	I could (not) rely on the brand to solve the problem. (reversed)							
B52	The brand would compensate me in some way for the problem with the product.							

SECTION C:

Please respond to the below questions.

C1 – If you define “This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self” through only one word, what would it be?

Please select among below answers

- Genuine
- Real
- True
- Sincere
- Other....

C2 – Your Gender Female..... Male

C3 – Your Marital Status Married..... Single

C4 – Birth year.....

C5 – Graduation Level

Primary and Secondary School

High School

Undergraduate

Graduate and Doctoral

C6 – Are you actively working? Yes No

8.3 Main Study, Online Survey Screen Shots



Marka Araştırması

Bu Anket formu, T.C. Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü bünyesinde İngilizce İşletme, Üretim Yönetimi ve Pazarlama Bölümü için yapılan bir tez çalışması için hazırlanmıştır. Vereceğiniz tüm bilgiler ve kimliğiniz tamamen gizli tutulacak olup, yalnızca anket formunun ait olduğu akademik çalışma için kullanılacaktır. Bilimsel verilerin doğru analizler sunabilmesi adına her soruyu dikkatle okuyup cevaplandırmanız rica edilmektedir.

Sonraki

Lütfen öncelikle aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şey söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”

A1 – Bu aşamada, yukarıdaki ifadeye sizin için uyan tek bir marka belirtmeniz beklenmektedir.

Lütfen ifadeye uygun olarak aklınıza gelen markanın adını aşağıdaki boş bırakılan alana yazınız.

Eğer aklınıza yukarıdaki ifadeye uyan bir marka gelmiyor ise, bir sonraki sayfada belirtilen markalar havuzundan da seçiminizi yapabilirsiniz.

Lütfen şimdi marka adını yazınız.

Sonraki

Markalar havuzundan seçim yapmayı tercih ettiniz.

Şimdi lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”



*

Logolu marka havuzunu inceleyerek sizin için yukarıdaki ifadeye en uygun olan markayı, aşağıdaki seçenekler arasından işaretleyiniz.

❗ Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

- ☐ Nike
- ☐ Adidas
- ☐ Mercedes - Benz
- ☐ Apple
- ☐ Harley Davidson

İlk markalar havuzundan bir marka seçiniz.

Şimdi farklı bir markalar havuzundan seçim yapmanız beklenmektedir. Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeyi tekrar dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”



*Logolu marka havuzunu inceleyerek sizin için yukarıdaki ifadeye en uygun olan markayı, aşağıdaki seçenekler arasından işaretleyiniz.

❗ Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

- ☐ 3M
- ☐ Loreal
- ☐ Amazon
- ☐ Starbucks



*İki farklı markalar havuzundan seçim yaptınız. Aşağıdaki seçeneklerde marka havuzları birleştirilmiştir. Önceki sayfalarda yaptığınız iki seçim arasından sadece bir tanesini, son kararınız olarak işaretleyiniz

! Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

- ☐ 3M
- ☐ Loreal
- ☐ Amazon

Bu aşamada, **"Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır."** ifadesini ve bu ifadeye uygun olarak seçtiğiniz markayı dikkate alarak, aşağıdaki ifadelere katılma derecenizi belirtmeniz beklenmektedir. Lütfen size en uygun olan cevabi işaretleyin. 1. Kesinlikle katılmıyorum demek, 7.Kesinlikle katılıyorum demektir. Aradaki değerleri de seçebilirsiniz.

*Size en uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kısmen katılmıyorum	Ne katılmıyorum ne katılmıyorum	Kısmen katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Bu markanın geçmişten günümüze tutarlı kaldığını düşünüyorum.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bu marka özüne sadık bir markadır.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bu marka süreklilik sağlar.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bu markanın takip ettiği net bir görüşü vardır.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Bu marka sahici bir izlenim uyandırır.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

*“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.” İfadesinde tanımlanan markayı tek bir kelime ile anlatmak isteseydiniz, aşağıdakilerden hangi kelimeyi seçerdiniz?

❗ Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

☐ Gerçek

☐ Sahici

☐ Hakiki

☐ Samimi

☐ Diğer:

Sonraki

8.4 Brand Pool Formation Study, Turkish

Bu Anket formu T.C. Marmara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İngilizce İşletme Anabilim Dalı, Üretim Yönetimi ve Pazarlama Bölümü için yapılan bir tez çalışması için sadece pazarlama profesyonellerinin uzman görüşüne başvurmak hedefi ile hazırlanmıştır.

BÖLÜM A:

Lütfen öncelikli olarak aşağıdaki ifadeyi dikkatlice okuyunuz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.”

Bu ifadenin sizin için büyük ölçüde tanımladığını düşündüğünüz bir markayı aşağıda bulunan boş alana yazınız.

.....

İkinci olarak, aşağıda verilen her bir markanın, önceki sayfada **verilen ifadeye uygunluğuna** ne derece katıldığınızı belirtmeniz gerekmektedir.

Lütfen size en uygun olan cevabı işaretleyin. 1. Kesinlikle katılmıyorum demek, 5. Kesinlikle katılıyorum demektir. Aradaki değerleri de seçebilirsiniz.

“Bu marka tam olarak neyi temsil ettiğini bilir. Özüne ve karakterine aykırı hiçbir şeye söz vermez ve bu öze uygun davranır.” ifadesine ... markası için katılma derecem.

	1. Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	2. Katılmıyorum	3. Ne katılıyorum, ne katılmıyorum	4. Katılıyorum	5. Kesinlikle katılıyorum
Mc Donalds					
Halkbank					
Nissan					
Nikon					
Migros					
Nescafe					
Hilton					
Vakıfbank					
Michelin					
BİM					
Audi					
Sony					
Toshiba					
Türk Hava Yolları					
Harley Davidson					
İs Bankası					
Nestle					
Amazon					
Honda					
Anadolu Efes					
Samsung					
Toyota					
Apple					
Microsoft					
Akbank					
Pirelli					
Google					
Adidas					
Ülker Bisküvi					
Intel					
Lego					
BMW					
LG					
Unilever					
HP					
Garanti					
Bosch					
Visa					
Mercedes					
Ziraat Bankası					
Canon					

Tofaş					
Disney					
Ikea					
Vestel					
Ford					
Levi's					
Türk Telekom					
IBM					
Johnson & Johnson					
Philips					
Turkcell					
Coca-Cola					
Nike					
Arcelik					
Dell					
Starbucks					
Lenovo					
Facebook					
Hasbro					
Pepsi					
Danone					
Ford Otosan					
Gillette					
OPET					
Marriot					
3M					
Loreal					
Colgate					
Siemens					
Boeing					
Volkswagen					
Colgate Palmolive					
Pampers					
Reebok					
Youtube					
Mastercard					
Yapı kredi					
Pizza hut					
Panasonic					
Lindt					
Ferrero					
Braun					
Procter and Gamble					

Bridgestone					
Bayer					

BÖLÜM B:

Lütfen son olarak aşağıdaki soruları yanıtlayınız.

C1 – Cinsiyetiniz Kadın..... Erkek

C2 – Lütfen doğum yılınızı belirtiniz.....

8.5 Brand Pool Formation Study, English

This questionnaire is prepared to take marketing experts' opinion in the scope of a thesis study conducted on behalf of Turkish Republic, University of Marmara, Social Sciences Institute, Business Administration in English, Department of Production Management and Marketing.

SECTION A:

Please carefully read the below description first;

“This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self”.

Please indicate a brand of your chose which you perceive to best fits in to the above description.

.....

Secondly, you are expected rate each of the below brands to the extent it fits in the above definition.

Please indicate the best answer that represents your opinion among 1 to 5 in which 1. Definitely Disagree and 5. Definitely Agree. You can select a choice among these values as well.

According to my opinion, the brand ...’s rating for fitting in “This brand has a self-awareness regarding what values she represents, and she makes no promises against her inner-self and identity. She acts according to this inner-self” description is,

	1. Definitely disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neither agree, nor disagree	4. Agree	5. Definitely agree
Mc Donalds					
Halkbank					
Nissan					
Nikon					

Migros					
Nescafe					
Hilton					
Vakıfbank					
Michelin					
BİM					
Audi					
Sony					
Toshiba					
Türk Hava Yolları					
Harley Davidson					
İş Bankası					
Nestle					
Amazon					
Honda					
Anadolu Efes					
Samsung					
Toyota					
Apple					
Microsoft					
Akbank					
Pirelli					
Google					
Adidas					
Ülker Bisküvi					
Intel					
Lego					
BMW					
LG					
Unilever					
HP					
Garanti					
Bosch					
Visa					
Mercedes					
Ziraat Bankası					
Canon					
Tofaş					
Disney					
Ikea					
Vestel					
Ford					
Levi's					
Türk Telekom					

IBM					
Johnson & Johnson					
Philips					
Turkcell					
Coca-Cola					
Nike					
Arcelik					
Dell					
Starbucks					
Lenovo					
Facebook					
Hasbro					
Pepsi					
Danone					
Ford Otosan					
Gillette					
OPET					
Marriot					
3M					
Loreal					
Colgate					
Siemens					
Boeing					
Volkswagen					
Colgate Palmolive					
Pampers					
Reebok					
Youtube					
Mastercard					
Yapikredi					
Pizza hut					
Panosonic					
Lindth					
Ferrero					
Braun					
Procter and Gamble					
Bridgestone					
Bayer					

SECTION B:

Please response to the below questions finally.

C1 – Your gender Female..... Male

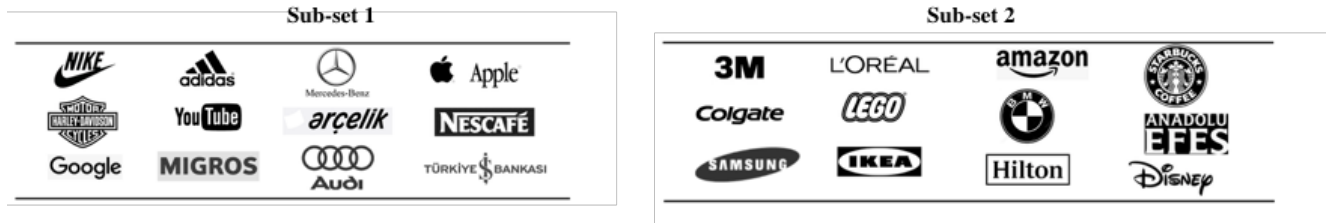
C2 – Please indicate your year of age.....

8.6 Data Analysis of Brand Pool Formation Survey

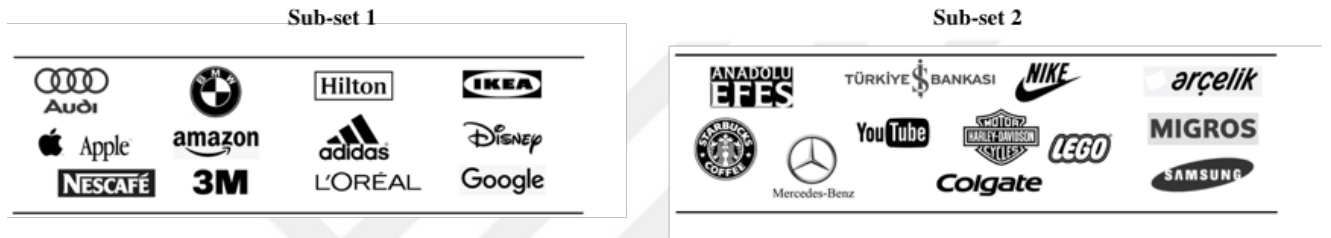
BRAND	SOURCE	MIN RATING	MAX RATING	MEDIAN	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Audi	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	4	5	4,5	4,5	0,5
Apple	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	4	5	4,5	4,5	0,5
Lego	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	5,0	4,5	0,8
Ikea	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	4	5	4,5	4,5	0,5
Nike	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	5,0	4,5	0,8
Harley Davidson	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	5,0	4,4	1,1
Amazon	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,5	4,4	0,7
BMW	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,5	4,4	0,7
Disney	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,5	4,4	0,7
Google	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,5	4,3	0,9
Adidas	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,3	0,7
Nescafe	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
İş Bankası	Brand Finance, 2019	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
Anadolu Efes	Brand Finance, 2019	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
Mercedes	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	4	5	4,0	4,1	0,4
Arçelik	Brand Finance, 2019	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,8
Starbucks	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
3M	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,8
Colgate	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
Youtube	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,1	0,6
Migros	Brand Finance, 2019	3	5	4,0	4,0	0,5
Hilton	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,0	0,8
Samsung	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,0	0,8
Loreal	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	4,0	0,8
BİM	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	4,0	3,9	0,8
Toyota	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,9	0,6
Mastercard	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,9	0,8
Microsoft	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,8	0,7
Canon	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	4,0	3,8	0,9
Coca-Cola	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	4,0	3,8	1,2
Pepsi	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,8	0,7
Siemens	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,8	0,7
Boeing	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,8	0,7
Colgate Palmolive	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	4,0	3,8	0,7
Ferrero	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,8	0,9
Nikon	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	4,0	3,6	0,5
Honda	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	4,0	3,6	0,5
Garanti	Brand Finance, 2019	3	4	4,0	3,6	0,5
Bosch	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	4,0	3,6	0,9
IBM	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Johnson & Johnson	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Danone	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,5	3,6	1,1
Marriot	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Volkswagen	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	4,0	3,6	1,2
Pampers	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Lindt	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Braun	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	4,0	3,6	0,5
Procter and Gamble	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	4,0	3,6	0,7
Bayer	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,5	3,6	0,7
Michelin	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,5	3,5	0,5
Sony	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	4,0	3,5	0,8
Toshiba	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,0	3,5	0,8
Nestle	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	4,0	3,5	0,8
Intel	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,0	3,5	0,8
Visa	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,5	3,5	0,5
Ford	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,5	3,5	0,5
Dell	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	5	3,0	3,5	0,8
Lenovo	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,5	3,5	0,9
Hasbro	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,5	3,5	0,5
Gillette	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,5	3,5	0,9
Türk Hava Yolları	Brand Finance, 2019	1	5	3,5	3,4	1,4
Unilever	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,5	3,4	1,1
Levis	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,5	3,4	0,7
OPET	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,0	3,4	0,9
Nissan	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,0	3,3	0,5
Akbank	Brand Finance, 2019	2	4	3,0	3,3	0,7
LG	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,0	3,3	0,5
Ziraat Bankası	Brand Finance, 2019	2	4	3,0	3,3	0,7
Tofaş	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	3,3	0,7
Philips	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,0	3,3	0,9
Reebok	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	3,3	0,7
Yapikredi	Brand Finance, 2019	2	4	3,5	3,3	0,9
Bridgestone	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	3,3	0,7
Pirelli	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	3	4	3,0	3,1	0,4
Ülker Bisküvi	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	5	3,0	3,1	1,2
HP	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	3,1	0,6
Vestel	Brand Finance, 2019	2	4	3,0	3,1	0,6
Ford Otosan	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	3,1	0,6
Vakıfbank	Brand Finance, 2019	1	4	3,0	3,0	0,9
Mc Donalds	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	1	4	3,0	2,9	1,1
Pizzahut	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	3,0	2,9	0,6
Halkbank	Brand Finance, 2019	1	4	3,0	2,8	0,9
Turkcell	Brand Finance, 2019	1	4	3,0	2,8	1,2
Facebook	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	4	2,5	2,8	0,9
Panasonic	Cohne & Wolfe, 2017	2	3	2,5	2,5	0,5
Türk Telekom	Brand Finance, 2019	2	3	2,0	2,4	0,5

8.7 Visual Master Brand Pool Sub-Sets

Questionnaire Type 1 (distributed to 200 respondents during the main study)



Questionnaire Type 2 (distributed to 200 respondents during the main study)



8.8 Dependent and Independent Variables' Items

VARIABLE	DIMENSIONS	DESCRIPTION	ITEMS	QUESTION NUMBER	SOURCE
Brand Authenticity	Credibility	Being transparent and credible and keeping promises	An honest brand.	B12	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand that will not betray you.	B13	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand that accomplishes its value promise.	B14	Morhart et al., 2015
	Integrity		A brand that gives back to its consumers.	B15	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand with moral principles.	B16	Morhart et al., 2015
			This brand has a positive influence.	B17	Morhart et al., 2015
			This brand is committed to the public good.	B18	Morhart et al., 2015
			This brand is reliable.	B19	Morhart et al., 2015
			This brand is reputable.	B20	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand that cares about its consumers.	B21	Morhart et al., 2015
			This brand is honest.	B22	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand true to a set of moral values.	B23	Morhart et al., 2015
	Symbolism	Having a symbolic benefit consumers can use to define self	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.	B24	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand that reflects important values people care about.	B25	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand that connects people with their real selves.	B26	Morhart et al., 2015
			A brand connects people with what is really important.	B27	Morhart et al., 2015
	Continuity	Being timeless, historic, and gaving the ability to transcend times	A brand that survives times.	B28	Morhart et al., 2015
		A brand with a history.	B29	Morhart et al., 2015	
		A timeless brand.	B30	Morhart et al., 2015	
		A brand that survives brands.	B31	Morhart et al., 2015	
Brand Advocacy	Positive word of mouth		I like recommending ... to other consumers	B32	Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012 / Morhart et al., 2015/ Price and Arnould, 1999
		Promoting the brand to others	I love to talk about the good points of ... to people (i know).	B33	Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012 / Morhart et al., 2016
			I have managed to convince other people to buy ...	B34	Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012
			I will say positive things about ... to other people.	B38	Fullerton, 2005 / Morhart et al., 2015 / Tutan & Ashley 2016/ Price and Arnould, 1999
			I will recommend ... to someone who seeks my advice.	B39	Fullerton, 2005 / Morhart et al., 2015 / Tutan & Ashley 2016/ Price and Arnould, 2000
	Resistance to negative information	Defending the brand against negative referrals	If ...did something I didn't like, i would be willing to give it another chance.	B35	Bilro et al., 2018
			I would defend this brand to others If I heard someone speaking poorly about him/her.	B36	Turri et. al., 2013
	Purchase Intentions for extensions	Future buying intention	I would like to try new products introduced under this brand name	B37	Wallace et al., 2012 /Chiosa & Anastasiei, 2018 / Bilro et al., 2019
Consumer Brand Identification			Brand ... reflects who i am.	B40	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017/ Escalas and Bettman, 2003
		Brand is perceived to be an extension of self	I feel a strong sense of belonging to ...	B41	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017 / Stokburger-Sauer et al, 2012
			...embodies what I believe in.	B42	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017 Stokburger-Sauer et al, 2012
			I can identify myself with ...	B43	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017/ Escalas and Bettman, 2003
			I think ... (could) help(s) me to become the type of person I want to be.	B44	Akbar and Wyemer, 2017/ Escalas and Bettman, 2003
Brand Trust	Reliability		The brand (never) meets my expectations.	B45	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
		Having the ability to fulfill its promises	I feel confidence in the brand.	B46	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
			The brand never/always disappoints me.	B47	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
			The brand name guarantees satisfaction.	B48	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
	Intention		The brand would be honest an sincere in addressing my concerns.	B49	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
		Being honest, sincere, warm, kind and committed to solve the problems	The brand would make any effort to satisfy me.	B50	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
			I could (not) rely on the brand to solve the problem.	B51	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018
			The brand would compansate me in some way for the problem with the product.	B52	Napoli et al., 2013/Beverland 2016/Portal et al., 2018

8.9 Original Items' Translation Process

BRAND AUTHENTICITY DIMENSIONS	ORIGINAL SCALE ITEM	AUTHOR'S TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL ITEMS INTO TURKISH	OFFICIAL TRANSLATION OFFICE'S TRANSLATION OF THE AUTHOR'S TURKISH TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH AGAIN	DISCREPANCY
Continuity	A brand with a history.	Gecmişi olan bir markadır.	It is a brand with a history.	none
	A timeless brand.	Modası geçmeyen bir markadır.	It is a golden brand.	Office translation is not ideal. Oxford dictionary defines "timeless" as "Çağları aşan, modası geçmeyen".
	A brand that survives times.	Zamana karşı hayatta kalan bir markadır.	It is brand that survives against time.	none
	A brand that survives brands.	Diğer markalara karşı hayatta kalan bir markadır.	It is brand that survives against other brands.	none
Credibility	A brand that will not betray you.	Sana ihanet etmez.	It doesn't betray you.	none
	A brand that accomplishes its value promise.	Değerlerine ilişkin vaatlerini başarıyla yerine getirir.	It successfully fulfills its promises on its values.	none
	An honest brand.	Dürüst bir markadır.	It is an honest brand.	none
	A brand that gives back to its consumers.	Tüketicilerine karşılığını veren bir markadır.	It is a brand that gives value for the customers.	The office used 'give value' phrase synonym with 'give back'.
Integrity	A brand with moral principles.	Ahlaki prensipleri olan bir markadır.	It is a brand with moral principles.	none
	A brand true to a set of moral values.	Bir takım ahlaki değerlere sadık kalan bir markadır.	It is a brand that is loyal to some moral values.	none
	A brand that cares about its consumers.	Tüketicilerine özen gösteren bir markadır.	It is a brand that cares for its customers.	none
	This brand is honest.	Dürüst bir markadır.	It is an honest brand.	none
	This brand has a positive influence.	Olumlu etkisi olan bir markadır.	It is a brand with positive impact.	none
	This brand is committed to the public good.	Kamu yararını üstlenen bir markadır.	It is a brand that undertakes public interest.	none
	This brand is reputable.	Tanınmış bir markadır.	It is a well-known brand.	none
	This brand is reliable.	Güvenilir bir markadır.	It is a reliable brand.	none
	A brand that adds meaning to people's lives.	İnsanların hayatlarına anlam katan bir markadır.	It is a brand that adds meaning to people's lives.	none
	A brand that reflects important values people care about.	İnsanların özen gösterdiği önemli değerleri yansıtır.	It reflects the important values cared by people.	none
Symbolism	A brand that connects people with their real selves.	İnsanları gerçek benliklerine bağlar.	It connects people to their real identities.	none
	A brand connects people with what is really important.	İnsanları aslında önemli olanlara bağlar.	It connects people to what actually matters.	İnsanları aslında önemli olan şeylere bağlayan bir markadır.' is the final decision.

OTHER CONSTRUCT'S DIMENSIONS	ORIGINAL SCALE ITEM	AUTHOR'S TRANSLATION OF THE ORIGINAL ITEMS INTO TURKISH	OFFICIAL TRANSLATION OFFICE'S TRANSLATION OF THE AUTHOR'S TURKISH TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH AGAIN	DISCREPANCY
BRAND ADVOCACY				
	I like recommending ... to other consumers. I love to talk about the good points of ... to people (I know).	... markasını başkalarına tavsiye etmekten hoşlanırım. ...markasına ait iyi şeyleri (bildiğim) insanlara konuşmaya bayılırım.	I like recommending the brand X to others. I love telling the goods things (which I know) about x brand to other people.	none Office translation is decided to not to give the intended meaning.
	Positive Word of Mouth	I have managed to convince other people to buy ... I will say positive things about ... to other people.	I think I had been able to convince other people to buy the X brand. I will tell good things to other about the X brand.	none none
	I will recommend ... to someone who seeks my advice.	... markasını önerimi isteyen kişiye tavsiye edeceğim. ... markası hakkında diğer insanlara olumlu şeyler söyleyeceğim.	I recommend the X brand to the person who requests my advice.	none
Resistance to Negative Information	If ... did something I didn't like, I would be willing to give it another chance.	Eğer ... markası hoşuma gitmeyen bir şey yapsaydı, ona başka bir şans vermek isterdim.	If the X brand did something I didn't like, I'd like to give it another chance.	none
	I would defend this brand to others if I heard someone speaking poorly about him/her.	Eğer başkasının hakkında kötü konuştuğunu duysaydım, bu markayı diğerlerine savunurdum.	If I heard that someone was making bad comments about this brand, I would defend this brand to others.	none
Purchase Intention (Extensions)	I would like to try new products introduced under this brand name	Bu marka altında tanıtımı yapılan yeni ürünleri denemek isterim.	I would like to try new products introduced under this brand.	none
CUSTOMER-BRAND IDENTIFICATION	Brand ... reflects who I am.	... markası kim olduğumu yansıtır.	The X brand reflects who I am.	none
	I can identify myself with ...	Kendimi ... markası ile özdeşleştirebilirim.	I can identify myself with the X brand.	none
	I feel a strong sense of belonging to ...	... markasına güçlü bir ailiyet duygusu hissediyorum.	I feel a strong sense of belonging to the X brand.	none
	I think ... (could) help(s) me to become the type of person I want to be.	Bence ... markası olmak istediğim tipte bir insan olmam için bana yardım edebilir.	I think X brand can help me to be the kind of person I want to be.	none
BRAND TRUST	...embodies what I believe in.	... markası inandığım şeyleri somutlaştırır.	The X brand embodies what I believe in.	none
	The brand (never) meets my expectations.(reversed)	Marka hiçbir zaman beklentilerimi karşılamaz.	The brand never meets my expectations.	none
Reliability	I feel confidence in the brand.	Markaya güven hissediyorum.	I feel confidence in the brand.	none
	The brand never/always disappoints me.	Marka her zaman beni hayal kırıklığına uğratar/ hiçbir zaman beni hayal kırıklığına uğratmaz.	The brand always disappoints me / never disappoints me.	none
Intentions	The brand name guarantees satisfaction.	Markanın ismi memnuniyetli garanti eder.	The brand's name guarantees satisfaction.	none
	The brand would be honest an sincere in addressing my concerns.	Marka kaygılarıma hılab etmekte dürüst ve samimidir.	The brand is honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.	none
	I could (not) rely on the brand to solve the problem.	Problemi çözmesi konusunda markaya bel bağlayabilirim/bağlayaymam.	I can/cannot rely on the brand to solve the problem.	none
	The brand would make any effort to satisfy me.	Marka beni memnun etmek için her çabayı yapar.	The brand makes every effort to please me.	memnun etmek' will be changed to 'tatmin etmek'.
	The brand would compensate me in some way for the problem with the product.	Üründe bir problem olması durumunda marka bir şekilde bana telafi eder.	If there is a defect on the product, the brand somehow compensates me.	none

8.10 Sub-Models with Factor to Factor/Scale Relationships

SEM SUB-MODEL NO	RELATIONSHIP PATHS	NOTE	COEFFICIENT VALUE	DATA MODEL FIT RATIO	FITNESS CRITERION
				CHI-SQUARE/DF	
3	Credibility to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,06	2,67	Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility to Brand Trust	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,80		Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility/Brand Trust to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,76		Acceptable to Perfect
4	Integrity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,20	2,90	Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity to Brand Trust	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,57		Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity/Brand Trust to Brand Advocacy	IV(Latent)/M to DV	0,70		Acceptable to Perfect
5	Symbolism to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,42	2,99	Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism to Brand Trust	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,72		Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism/Brand Trust to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,48		Acceptable to Perfect
6	Continuity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,52	2,87	Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity to Brand Trust	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,73		Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity/Brand Trust to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,44		Acceptable to Perfect
7	Credibility to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,16	2,89	Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility to Intentions	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,75		Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility/Intentions to Brand Advocacy	IV(Latent)/M to DV	0,67		Acceptable to Perfect
8	Integrity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,23	2,97	Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity to Intentions	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,56		Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity/Intentions to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,67		Acceptable to Perfect
9	Symbolism to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,33	2,90	Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism to Intentions	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,74		Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism/Intentions to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,57		Acceptable to Perfect
10	Continuity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,55	2,90	Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity to Intentions	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,72		Acceptable to Perfect

	Continuity/Intentions to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,39		Acceptable to Perfect
11	Credibility to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,35	2,85	Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility to Reliability	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,71		Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility/Reliability to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,43		Acceptable to Perfect
12	Integrity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,37	2,86	Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity to Reliability	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,44		Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity/Reliability to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,51		Acceptable to Perfect
13	Symbolism to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,55	2,90	Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism to Reliability	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,63		Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism/Reliability to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,39		Acceptable to Perfect
14	Continuity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,64	2,90	Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity to Reliability	IV (Factor) to Mediator (Factor)	0,49		Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity/Reliability to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,37		Acceptable to Perfect
15	Credibility to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,19	2,80	Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility to CBI	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,65		Acceptable to Perfect
	Credibility/CBI to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,71		Acceptable to Perfect
16	Integrity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,24	2,98	Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity to CBI	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,5		Acceptable to Perfect
	Integrity/CBI to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,71		Acceptable to Perfect
17	Symbolism to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,24	2,84	Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism to CBI	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,73		Acceptable to Perfect
	Symbolism/CBI to Brand Advocacy	IV(Factor)/M to DV	0,67		Acceptable to Perfect
18	Continuity to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor) to DV	0,42	2,81	Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity to CBI	IV (Factor) to Mediator	0,73		Acceptable to Perfect
	Continuity/CBI to Brand Advocacy	IV (Factor)/M to DV	0,53		Acceptable to Perfect

8.11 Brand Authenticity Studies Snapshot

AUTHOR(S)	NAME OF THE STUDY	CONSTRUCTS AND DIMENSIONS	PRODUCT CONTEXT	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS METHOD	SAMPLE FEATURES
Wang, 1999	Rethinking authenticity in Tourism experience	Not applicable	Tourism.	Viewpoint essay	Not presented
Beverland, 2005	Brand management and the challenge of authenticity	Not applicable	None.	Viewpoint essay	Not presented
Leigh et al., 2006	The Consumer Quest for Authenticity: The Multiplicity of Meanings within the MG Subculture of Consumption	Not applicable	Car.	An ethnographic approach guided data collection; participant observation, photo and document reviews, informal conversations and formal in-depth interviews; Interpretative analysis is made.	58 MG owners in US.
Beverland, 2006	The 'real thing': Branding authenticity in the luxury wine trade	Not applicable	Wine.	Qualitative method with case Study: In-Depth Interview; Data analysis is done through cross-case Analysis	20 wine producers and 30 high involvement wine consumers (Worldwide).
Anderberg and Morris, 2006	Authenticity and Transparency in Advertising Industry	Brand Authenticity conceptualisation is made through advertising messages.	Not applicable.	Discussion and interview.	An advertisement professional, USA
Wink et al., 2008	Projecting Authenticity Through Advertising	Indexial and Iconic Cues of Authenticity in Advertising.	Beer.	Interpretive interviews; in-depth	Beer consumers, marketers, and business buyers from the selected brands in Belgium and Netherlands (23 interviewers in total), 12 consumers (2 females and 10 males, aged between 20 and 54
Beverland et al., 2008	Projecting Authenticity through Advertising, Consumer Judgments of Advertisers' Claims	Personal beer consumption, brand choice, place of consumption, and authentic ad cues are explored.	Beer.	Qualitative Method through 23 semi structured in-depth interviews; Interpretative Approach for data analysis.	23 participants (12 Trappist beer drinker. 11 marketer and B2B business owner), Netherlands and Belgium.
Alexandar, 2009	Brand Authentication; creating and maintaining brand auras	Antecedents are Heritage and Pedigree, Stylistic Consistency, Quality Commitment, Relationship to Place, Method of Production, Downplaying Commercial Motives (Beverland 2006 findings are used); Consequence is Brand Aura.	Beer.	Qualitative method with case study (personal in-depth semi-structured interviews) and participant observation; Other methods added such as documentary analysis; Data analysis is done through interpretative method such as triangulation of data.	18 interviewers from marketing and communications team.
Carrol and Wheaton, 2009	The Organizational Construction of Authenticity: An examination of contemporary food and dining in the U.S.	The words "authentic-, authentic, authenticity, authentically, etc." and any of the three words: dining, restaurant, or food are searched.	Food and Dining	Phenomenal and Unstructured Qualitative Approach is used to build an Interpretative Framework Development: Searching the articles of the historical texts of the main U.S. newspapers	US Market
Beverland et al., 2010	Authentic Subcultural Membership: Antecedents and Consequences of Authenticating Acts and Authoritative Performances	Level of attachment to the sports and reasons for engaging in it are explored.	Sports (surf, skate, snowboard communities).	Qualitative Approach with Interviews; Interpretative approach for data analysis.	21 participants with varying age, gender, income, and educational background.
Beverland and Farrelly, 2010	The Quest for Authenticity in Consumption: Consumers' Purposive Choice of Authentic Cues to Shape Experienced Outcomes	Conceptualization is made through control, connection and virtue.	NA	Qualitative method through semistructured in-depth home interviews (image-elicited); Interpretative Analysis is done for data analysis.	21 participants with varying age, gender, income, and educational background.
Gundlach & Leville, 2012	Authenticity: Further theoretical and practical development	Variables that contribute the brand authenticity formation are explored.	Beer.	Open- ended In-depth Qualitative Interview	22 beer drinkers (18 male, 4 female with mean age 22), Australia
Spiggle et al., 2012	More Than Fit: Brand Extension Authenticity	Brand Extension Authenticity construct with four dimensions; maintaining brand standards and style, honouring brand heritage, preserving brand essence, avoiding brand exploitation. Final constructs are purchase extension, willingness to recommend, brand extension attitudes.	Various industries.	4 different studies are done. Study 1&2 are scale development; Study 3 is predictive power of BEA versus fit; Study 4 measures the moderating role of self-brand connection.	Study 1 employed 77 undergraduates, 9 doctoral students, 10 staff members at the first stage and
Gundlach and Neville, 2012	Authenticity: Further theoretical and practical development	Brand authenticity conceptualisation dimensions are; relationship to place, method of production, heritage and pedigree, commitments to consistency and quality, ingredients and materials, craftsperson, aesthetics, uniqueness and originality, genuineness/prioritizing craft motives.	Beer.	Qualitative method with open-ended interviews; Interpretative method is used for data analysis.	22 beer consumers. 18 male, 4 female; Mode age 23, Median and Average age 22.

AUTHOR(S)	NAME OF THE STUDY	CONSTRUCTS AND DIMENSIONS	PRODUCT CONTEXT	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS METHOD	SAMPLE FEATURES
Bruhn et al., 2012	Brand Authenticity: Towards a Deeper Understanding of Its Conceptualization and Measurement	Conceptualization is done.	Sports Apparel, Soft Drink, Automobile, and Body Care.	Online survey with 7 points Likert scale; Structural Equation Model is used for Hypothesis testing.	77 participants for pre-tests; 857 participants into online survey with an age range of 34 to 69 (age mean 49.6).
Coulter et al., 2012	Brand signals of authenticity: from conscious to non-conscious effects	Antecedents of BA are original and imitation product ; Latter constructs are consumers' evaluations, preferences, purchase intentions, and post-consumption behaviors.	Not applicable.	Experimental studies,	Not applicable.
Eggers et al., 2013	The impact of Brand Authenticity on Brand Trust and SME Growth: A CEO perspective	Brand Authenticity dimensions are brand consistency, Brand customer orientation and Brand congruency; second order dimension is SME Brand Trust (mediator) and last order dimension is SME Growth.	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.	Quantitative method with online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	10.000 randomly selected German CEO's of SME.
Coary, 2013	Scale construction and effects of brand authenticity	Brand authenticity dimensions are being the category pioneer, adhering to principles, maintaining the original products; Second-order constructs are brand attitudes and behavioural intentions.	Not applicable.	Qualitative method with experimental approach is used; Interpretative approach is used for data analysis.	Not applicable.
Schallehn et al., 2014	Brand authenticity: model development and empirical testing	Antecedents of brand authenticity are individuality, consistency, continuity; Brand Trust is the latter construct after brand authenticity.	Fast food and beer market.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM and Partial-least-squares approach is used for data analysis.	600 attendees in Germany.
False et al., 2014	What Is True-to-Self Brand Authenticity? Understanding the Antecedents and Consequences of a Brand's Passion	Antecedents of true-to-self brand authenticity; uniqueness, longevity, scarcity, longitudinal consistency. Consequences of true-to-self brand authenticity; expected quality and trust.	Student journal.	Experiment testing with attendees evaluate online edition of a journal, SEM used for data analysis	300 students
Napoli et al., 2014	Measuring Consumer Based Brand Authenticity	Conceptualization is done.	Various Industries.	Qualitative method with self administrative quantitative scale questionnaire; SEM is used for data analysis.	247 students, the average age was 23 years, with a relatively even split between male (43%) and female (57%) respondents.
Ilicic and Webster, 2014	Investigating Consumer Brand Relational Authenticity	Relational Authenticity is the first order construct; Brand attitudes and Purchase Intentions are the last order constructs; Brand Attachment and Relationship Quality (Trust & Commitment) are the moderator between relational authenticity and last order constructs.	Finance, Electronics, Luxury, Food.	Quantitative method through online Survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	Almost 1200 people in Australia.
Newman & Dhar, 2014	Authenticity Is Contagious: Brand Essence and the Original Source of Production	Transferred essence is mediator between manufacturing location and perceived authenticity; Perceived evidence is mediator between authorized retailer and perceived authenticity; Valuation is the last order construct after perceived authenticity.	Apparel, Confectionary (Gourmet), Luxury Luggage.	Quantitative method with online survey; Mediator and Path Analysis is done for data analysis.	Various experiments have different sample groups; 253 participants with mean age 36 and %56 femal, 328 participants (Mean age 36.1 years, 62% female), 120 adults (Mean age = 35.4 and 69% female), 200 adult participants (Mage = 35.5 years, 66% female), 240 adults (Mage = 36.9 years, 58% female).
Kadirov, 2015	Private labels ain't bona fide! Perceived authenticity and willingness to pay a price premium for national brands over private labels	First order construct marketing and manufacturing factors are Product Innovation, Distinct Packaging, Advertising, Price Promotion, Private Label production by National Brand Manufacturer, Difficulty of producing the product; Perceived Authenticity Gap (Real, Genuine, Authentic) is the second order factor; Brand Loyalty is moderator; Willingness to pay for abs over PLs is the last order construct.	Food, Beverage, and Household care.	Quantitative method through face to face interview with both open ended and close ended questions;Confirmatory factor analysis and Mediator-Moderator analysis is applied.	661 participants New Zeland.
Miller, 2015	Ad Authenticity: An Alternative Explanation of Advertising's Effect on Established Brand Attitudes	Advertising Authenticity is the first order construct; Attitude toward the ad, Brand Attitude, Ad Credibility are the latter constructs.	Electronics, Confectionary, Fast Food.	Quantitative method with online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	310 undergraduate and graduate students USA.
Mazutis and Slawinski, 2015	Reconnecting Business and Society: Perceptions of Authenticity in Corporate Social Responsibility	Distinctiveness and social connectedness are explored as brand authenticity variables.	None.	Framework Development	None

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Morhart et al., 2015	Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale	Dimensions of BA as a second-order construct: Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism, and Continuity; Antecedents of BA: Indexial Cues (Brand scandals, Employee Behaviour), Iconic Cues (Roots communication style, virtue communication style), Experiential Cues (Brand Anthropomorphism); Moderator dimension: Marketing Scepticism; Consequences of BA: Emotional Brand Attachment and Positive Word of Mouth.	Various Industries.	Quantitative and qualitative methods and minor experimental research through lab design; Exploratory Factor Analysis & Confirmatory Factor Analysis are done for data analysis.	710 participants from North America for development; 932 participants from North America, Europe, Russia for the main study; 204 participants from Europe for moderating effects testing. Samples are almost equal in Gender.
Guevremont and Grohmann, 2016	The Brand Authenticity Effect; Situational and Individual Level Moderators	First order construct is Brand Authenticity with Credibility, Integrity, Symbolism and Continuity; Latter construct Brand Attachment: with dimensions Affection, Connection, Passion.	Sports Apparel.	Online Survey in a Consumer Panel; Moderated regression analysis, Anova and Manova is used for data analysis.	Study 1: 114 participants with mean age 52 (62% female), Study 2: 105 participants with mean age 51 (%62 female)
Mattila et al., 2015	The role of Fashion Brand Authenticity in Product Management: A Holistic Marketing Approach	Brand Authenticity dimensions are presented as iconic and indexical cues with factors; Authority, Fashionability, Consistency, Innovativeness, Sustainability, Origin, Heritage; Mediators are brand attachment and brand commitment; Consequence is brand loyalty.	Sports Brand.	Qualitative analysis of cases of two global brands	Korean consumers living in metropolitan cities and purchase the brands in case. 207 respondents with 18-44 age range and %49 female, %51 male.
Stehlor and Tienison, 2015	Opportunistic Luxury Branding: Understanding perceptions of brand authenticity in an emerging market context	Not applicable.	Luxury Brands.	Qualitative method with 16 in-depth semi-structured interviews; interpretative method for data analysis.	South Korean Luxury brand consumers both male and female with 26-57 age range.
Choi et al., 2015	The Role of Fashion Brand Authenticity in Product Management: A Holistic Marketing Approach.	Antecedents of Brand Authenticity are authority, fashionability, consistency, innovativeness, sustainability, origin, heritage; Brand attachment and brand commitment are mediators; Brand Loyalty is the last order construct.	Fashion Sports.	Quantitative method with self-administrated online survey; Regression analysis is used for data analysis.	207 Korean people aged between 18-44 with almost equal size of male and female.
Assiouras et al., 2015	The impact of brand authenticity on brand attachment in the food industry	Brand Authenticity dimensions are quality commitment, heritage and sincerity; Second order construct is Brand Attachment; Last order constructs are Brand Self Connection, Prominence, Purchase Intention, Pay More, Promote.	Food Industry.	Quantitative method is used through online panel survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	217 consumers with 62% female and 38% male aged 18-60+
Demirel and Yıldız, 2015	The effects of Brand Authenticity on brand preferences, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty; a study in computer brands.	First order construct Brand Authenticity with four dimensions from Continuity, Originality, Reliability, Naturalness. Other constructs are Brand Choice, Consumer Satisfaction, and Brand Loyalty.	Computer.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM is used for data analyses.	384 consumer in Turkey
Kasper, 2015	Searching for the Authentic: A Strategic Look at Authenticities Role in Branding and CSR/Social Initiatives	Not applicable.	Various industries.	Qualitative method through interviews; Interpretative method is used for data analysis.	7 attended among communication professionals, corporations and millennial consumers.
Wachter et al., 2016	Product ethnicity and perceived consumer authenticity: the moderating role of product type	First order construct is Product image; Latter constructs are purchase intentions, authenticity; Moderator as involvement.	Various.	Online survey. Multiple regression and process is used(for mediation testing).	200 South Korean %50 male, and %50 female with 25-56 age group, and 288 US panel data
Cheah et al., 2016	Conceptualizing country-of-ingredient authenticity of luxury brands	Consumer's need for ingredient authenticity, Consumer judgment towards branded products, Consumer willingness to buy; Consumer willingness to recommend and brand attachment are used as constructs.	Luxury Clothing.	Self Administrative Questionnaire; Experimental Research Design with 7 points Likert scale; Structural Equation Analysis	Western Australia
Lehman et al., 2016	The Perils of Proclaiming an Authentic Organizational Identity	Main variables; Authenticity and Emotion or affect; Control variables are total words in the review and reviewer activism based on the number of reviews, reviewer variety seeking, date of the review, reviewer ID.	Restaurants.	Online survey and experimental setting. SEM used for data analysis	13.393 restaurants' consumers in Los Angeles through online survey

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Gannon and Prothero, 2016	Beauty blogger selfies as authenticating practices	Authenticating cues via selfies in social media blogs are measured.	Beauty Blogs.	Qualitative method with 20 in-depth interviews with a review of the participants' blogs and selfies□	18-50+ age group.
Kowalczyk and Pounders, 2016	Transforming celebrities through social media: the role of authenticity and emotional attachment	Brand Authenticity is the first construct with genuineness, real and authentic items; emotional attachment is the second construct; WOM and purchase likelihood are the last constructs.	Human Celebrity brands.	Qualitative (focus group) and quantitative (survey) methods are used. SEM used for data analysis.	For qualitative method; 20 female college students in USA with an age range 19-22 years old. For quantitative survey; online survey method in USA with 52 students with %55 male and %45 female with a median age 33.
Illic and Webster, 2016	Being True to Oneself: Investigating Celebrity Brand Authenticity	Dimensions of Kernis & Goldman 2006 Authenticity Inventory; Behaviour and Relational Orientation.	Celebrity Brand.	Qualitative method through focus group study and quantitative method with online survey; SEM used for data analysis.	19 people for focus group; Study 2: 160 participants 68.1% female mainly between 35-64 years of age (27.5% and 40.0%); Study 3: 169 participants 65.7% female, pre- dominantly between the ages of 35-64; Study 4: 96 participants 67.7% female, predom- inantly between the ages of 24-49; All respondents in Australia.
Cheah, 2016	Conceptualizing country-of-ingredient authenticity of luxury brands	Brand authenticity dimensions are Authenticity of raw materials; Authenticity of artisan skills; Sustainability and Ethical Consideration; Product Judgment is second order construct; Willingness to buy and Willingness to recommend third order constructs; Brand attachment is moderator between second and third order constructs.	Luxury Clothing.	Quantitative method with self-administrative questionnaire; SEM is used for data analysis.	810 participants; Australia.
Napoli et al., 2016	The brand authenticity continuum: strategic approaches for building value	First order construct is Brand Authenticity with dimensions Quality commitment, Sincerity, Heritage; Other constructs and dimensions are Consumer Value (Utilitarian, Hedonic), Self Authentication, Brand Love, Brand Trust (Brand Reliability, Brand Intentions) and Brand Equity (Loyalty, Quality, Awareness).	Various.	Quantitative method through online survey; Multiple Regression is done for data analysis.	312 participants, 31 years age, with a relatively even split between males and females.
Park et al., 2016	Product ethnicity and perceived consumer authenticity: the moderating role of product type	Product ethnicity as an antecedent of perceived authenticity; Product evaluations (image) as the consequence of BA; Perceived authenticity as a mediator between product ethnicity and product evaluations.	Not applicable.	Quantitative method is used through online survey; Multiple regression analysis and Mediation analysis is done for data analysis.	200 South Korean in study 1 and 288 US citizen in study 2.
Yaşın et al., 2017	The effect of Brand Authenticity on Consumer Based Brand Equity	Brand Authenticity dimensions are reliability, continuity, originality and naturelness; Consumer Based Brand Authenticity is the second-order construct; Overall brand value is used as the third-order construct.	Fast food service business.	Qualitative method with face to face interview; SEM is used for data analysis.	530 consumers in Turkey
Akbar and Wyemer, 2017	Refining the Conceptualization of Brand Authenticity	Brand Authenticity dimensions are Genuineness and Originality; Consequence is Consumer Brand Identification.	Non-profit organization.	Quantitative Method with online survey; PLS-Structural Equation Model for data analysis.	506 respondents for the main study with 281 male and 225 female with a mean age 33.
Fritz et al., 2017	Authenticity in Branding - exploring antecedents and consequences of Brand Authenticity	Antecedents of BA: Brand Heritage, Brand Nostalgia, Brand Commercialization, Brand Clarity, Brand Commitment, Brand Legitimacy, Actual-self Congruence, Ideal-self Congruence, Employee's passion.; Moderator in the construct: Brand Involvement; Consequences of BA: Brand Relationship Quality, Purchase Intention, Price Premium, Forgiveness.	Fast-moving and Durable consumer goods (e.g. Kinder and Victorinox). Services (e.g. Google, Shell) and Retail brands (e.g. Aldi.	Semi-structured interview questions; Data collected via social networking sites and forums; Structural Equation Model is used for data analysis.	509 participants (58% female, 42% male; 50% of the participants are aged between 26 and 30 years, which can be explained by the comparable higher online-affinity of younger age groups). Germany.
Garcia-Rapp, 2017	'Come join and let's bond': authenticity and legitimacy building on YouTube's beauty community	No dimension is presented. Purpose is to answer the question of what are the markers of authenticity in a commercialized platform where expectations for honest self-presentation and meaningful personal interactions remain high.	Beauty Blogs.	The netnography through You tube.	Global, Beauty influencers, 20 video tutorials, 20 vlogs and 2000 user comments are examined
Frizzo et al., 2018	The effect of brand heritage on consumer-brand relationship	Brand Heritage is the first order construct; Enticing the self, Enabling the self, Enriching the self are the second order construct; Self-brand connection is the last order construct.	None.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM is used for data analyses.	309 Brazilian and American Consumers.

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Portal et al., 2018	The Role of Brand Authenticity in Developing Brand Trust	Dimensions of Brand Authenticity: Originality, Continuity, Credibility, and Integrity as the first order construct; Perceived Warmth and Perceived Competence as the mediator constructs; Brand Trust as the last order construct with reliability and brand intention dimensions.	Airline Brand.	Quantitative method with self completion questionnaire, 10 points numeric rating scale(strongly disagree to strongly agree); PLS Test Modelling Used for data analysis.	355 participants;31% female; over the age of 46 (42%). Frequent Flyers of the Brand - South Africa.
Dwivedi and Mc Donald, 2018	Building brand authenticity in fast-moving consumer goods via consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications	Perceived brand marketing communications with advertising, social media, sponsorship, CSR antecedents is the first order construct; Clarity of Positioning is the second order construct; Brand authenticity is the last order construct.	Energy Drink FMCG.	Quantitative method with online self administered survey; Structural Equation Model is done for data analysis.	315 Frequent Energy Drink Consumers, Undergraduate Students, balanced gender number and 20-24 age, US Consumers.
Guevremont and Grohmann, 2018	Does brand authenticity alleviate the effect of brand scandals?	Dimensions of Brand Authenticity; Integrity, Continuity, Symbolism, Credibility; Other construct are affection , willingness to pay for the branded product, perceived hypocrisy, perceptions of the brand's responsibility for the scandal.	Sports Apparel.	Quantitative method online survey with 7 Points Likert Scale; Anova used for data analysis.	400 participants for the pretest and 228 participants with 60% female and mean age 50 for the actual study : Canada.
Guevremont, 2018	Creating and Interpreting Brand Authenticity; the case of a young brand	Conceptualization is done.	Food/Restaurant.	The netnography approach as a qualitative method that adapts ethnography to a web-based environment using publicly available information from online consumer communities, 933 comments and 7 individual interviews	Global
Yoganathan et al., 2018	The Core Value Compass: visually evaluating the goodness of brands that do good	Goodness criteria is studied; Stand-out, primary cause, intrinsic meaning, external interface, everyday work realities, market-leading impetus, heritage, withstand challenge	Public sector.	In-depth single case study and focus groups	Operational and managerial staff, CEO, internal communications manager, HR director in the case company in England
Lude and Prögl, 2018	Why the family business brand matters: Brand authenticity and the family firm trust inference	First order construct is Communication of the family nature of a firm (family business brand); second order construct is Brand authenticity (mediator); third order construct is Brand trust; Last order construct is Purchase Intention.	Wine.	Between subject design is used.	40 people with a mean age of 26.9 and %50 female in study 1; 139 people with a mean age of 38 and %47 female in study 2.
Norris et al., 2018	Unpacking the authenticity gap in corporate social responsibility: lessons learned from Levi's 'Go Forth Braddock' campaign	Brand Heritage, Unpolished Realism, Collaboration, Timing, Tangibility, Subdued Approach, Situatedness and Media message are dimensions.	Clothing Brand.	Qualitative method through 7 focus groups (a case stud is examined)	154 marketing/business practitioners
Taheri et al., 2018	Sustainability and the authentic experience. Harnessing brand heritage – a study from Japan	First order construct is brand heritage; Latter constructs are cultural motivation, authenticity, relational value, and commitment.	Historical Places of Japan.	Quantitative Method with questionnaires. Partial Least Square analysis is used for data analysis.	768 visitors in Japan with 53% female and 47% male in 18-55+ age group
Athwal and Harris, 2018	Examining how brand authenticity is established and maintained: the case of the Reverso	Brand Authenticity dimensions are sincerity, quality commitment, stylistic consistency, continuity, craftsmanship, integrity, symbolism.	Luxury Watch.	Qualitative method through cross-sectional archival and netnographic researches and Quantitative method through interviews; Data Analysis is done through interpretative methods.	400 posts and articles and 10 self interviews
Carsana and Jolibert, 2018	Influence of iconic, indexical cues, and brand schematicity on perceived authenticity dimensions of private-label brands	Antecedents of brand authenticity are standard PLB name as iconic cue, no label/with label as indexical cue, and brand schematicity; Brand Authenticity as mediator construct with Integrity, Credibility, Symbolism, Continuity dimensions, Brand Attitude and Willingness to Buy are last order constructs.	Retailer brand in FMCG.	Qualitative survey through experimental method; SEM used for Data Analysis.	169 respondents; %60 male and %40 female with 18-55+ age range.
Manthiou, 2018	The impact of brand authenticity on building brand love: An investigation of impression in memory and lifestyle-congruence	Constructs are as follows; Brand Authenticity as a first order construct, Need for Uniqueness is a moderator, Impression in Memory and Lifestyle Congruence are mediator between BA and Brand Love.	Luxury Hotel.	Quantitative method through online self-administrative questionnaire; SEM is used for data analysis.	412 guests in USA.
Yao and Wang, 2018	Research on the relationship of the weaker enterprises post-merger brand strategy and consumers' purchase intention Based on the brand authenticity	Brand Authenticity dimensions are; Maintain the style and standard of the brand; Respect the brand heritage; Maintain the essence of the brand. Last order construct is Purchase Intention and self-brand connection is a moderator.	Electronics.	Quantitative method through online survey.	190 Chinese consumers.

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Fernandez and Lewis, 2019	Brand Authenticity leads to perceived value and brand trust	First order Brand authenticity dimensions are Brand individuality, Brand consistency, Brand continuity; Last order constructs are Perceived value and Brand trust.	Fast Food and Beer market.	Quantitative Method through online survey. Data analysis is done through correlation and regression analysis.	749 respondents in USA with %47 female and %53 male group with mean age 33.8.
Lee and Chung, 2019	Effects of perceived brand authenticity in health functional food consumers	First order construct Brand Authenticity dimensions are; Product Authenticity, Communication Authenticity, Originality, Price Authenticity, Health self-efficacy. Second order construct Brand Relationship Quality Dimensions are; Brand Satisfaction, Brand Trust, Brand Commitment. Last order construct is Brand Loyalty.	Functional Health Food.	Qualitative Method with focus groups and Quantitative method with online survey; Partial Least Squares-based SEM is used for data analysis.	16 consumers in South Korea aged 30-50 in focus groups, and 374 participants in final analysis.
Park et al., 2019	The role and dimensions of authenticity in heritage tourism	Object-based authenticity, construct-based and existential authenticity are first order constructs; Tourist satisfaction is the second order construct; Tourist loyalty is the third order construct.	Tourism destination.	Quantitative method through online survey. SEM is used for data analysis.	South Korean village selected as the research site, 535 tourist attended to the survey
Kim et al., 2019	The chain of effects from authenticity cues to purchase intention: The role of emotions and restaurant image	First order construct is Brand Authenticity; Second order constructs are Restaurant Image and Positive emotion, last order construct is Purchase Intention.	Traditional Restaurants.	Quantitative method with online panel survey; SEM used for data analysis.	480 attendees in China.
Davis et al., 2019	Conceptualising and measuring consumer authenticity online	Conceptualization is done.	Online consumption.	Quantitative method through face-to-face interview. Data analysis is done through CFA and SEM using mediation and moderation analysis.	491 attendees in total.
Keiningham, 2019	Creating innovation that drives authenticity	Framework is proposed between innovation-authenticity-loyalty relationship with two constructs; centrality and distinctiveness..	Not applicable.	Not applicable	Not applicable
Oh et al., 2019	The effect of brand authenticity on consumer-brand relationships	First order construct is Brand Authenticity with heritage, quality commitment, originality and sincerity; mediating mechanisms are self-reinforcing assets with enticing the self, enriching the self, enabling the self dimensions and the other mediating construct is brand-self connectedness; and last order construct is behavioural	Fashion.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	347 consumers in USA and Brazil.
Busser and Shulga, 2019	Involvement in consumer-generated advertising: Effects of organizational transparency and brand authenticity on loyalty and trust.	Brand Authenticity antecedent is Transparency; Brand Authenticity is second order construct with Continuity, Originality, Naturalness dimensions; Involvement with consumer-generated advertising is third order construct; Loyalty is fourth order construct, and Trust is last order construct.	Coffee-shop.	Quantitative method with self-administrated online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	492 responses from coffee shop owners in USA.
Jian et al., 2019	Brand cultural symbolism, brand authenticity, and consumer well-being: the moderating role of cultural involvement	First order construct is brand cultural symbolism; Latter constructs are consumers' enduring cultural involvement, brand authenticity, and consumer well-being.	Multi-industries.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	533 consumers in China aged between 18-48+.
Le et al., 2019	What we know and do not know about authenticity in dining experiences: A systematic literature review	NA		Systematic quantitative approach is used through review approach;	NA
Matthews et al., 2020	When and how frontline service employee authenticity influences purchase intentions	Constructs are as follows; Purchase intentions, Trust in provider, Expected level of service quality, Overlap between perceptions of the person and brand, Liking of provider.	Personal trainer and hair saloon.	Quantitative method through online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	845 attendees in total through four separate studies.
Rodriguez-Lopez et al., 2020	Formation of customer-based brand equity via authenticity	Authenticity is the first order construct; Customer satisfaction is the second order construct and Consumer Based Brand Equity is the last order construct.	Restaurant.	Quantitative method through survey. Moderated mediation regression model is used for data analysis.	402 customers for each restaurant type.
Rosado-Pinto, 2020	How Brand Authenticity and Consumer Brand Engagement Can Be Expressed in Reviews: A Text Mining Approach	Constructs are as follows; Affection, Activation, Cognitive Processing, Brand Love, Brand Authenticity, Need for uniqueness	Restaurant.	Data mining technique is used; Data analysis is done through sentiment analysis.	3877 customer reviews in USA.
Riefler, 2020	Local versus global food consumption: the role of brand authenticity	First order construct is Perceived Brand Authenticity, Moderator is Perceived Brand Globalness; Consequence construct is Perceived Brand Value.	Global Beverage brands in general.	Qualitative method through experimental studies; Anova is used for data analysis.	220 students and 350 consumers.
Chen et al., 2020	The impact of destination brand authenticity and destination brand self-congruence on tourist loyalty: The mediating role of destination brand engagement	Brand Authenticity is the first order construct with 4 dimensions, Credibility, Continuity, Integrity, Symbolism. Other constructs are; Destination self-brand congruence, destination brand engagement, revisit intention, recommendation intention.	Touristic Place.	Quantitative Method through online survey; SEM is used for data analysis.	521 chinese attendees with 43.4% male, and 56.6% female aged between 21 and 30.
Pelet et al., 2020	Label design of wines sold online: Effects of perceived authenticity on purchase intentions	First order construct is Authenticity, second order construct is pleasure, and third order construct is buying intention.	Wine.	Qualitative study; SEM is used for data analysis.	21 consumers.

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