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AN ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTIONS OF RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY AT FOOD
TOURISM DESTINATIONS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN U.S.

by

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. Without their unwavering support and positive encouragement I never would have made it through. I would like to especially recognize my wife Jiehan for her supreme intelligence, patience, and amazing resilience. Also, my mom Patricia, dad Cary, brother Andrew, and sister Kimberly for their love and support. I'd also like to thank all my friends and colleagues who helped me stay positive and reminded me of the important things in life.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a comprehensive scale, containing multiple restaurant attributes and authenticity conceptualizations, to measure restaurant authenticity; to test a model examining the mediators and outcomes of restaurant authenticity at independent, full service Southern-style restaurants at food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S.; and to determine if the influences of restaurant authenticity differ between food tourists, general tourists, and locals.

A four-step approach adapted from Netemeyer et al. (2003) was used to develop the restaurant authenticity scale (RAS). Ultimately, the RAS contained six authenticity conceptualizations, 20 items and three dimensions: *restaurant heritage and environment*, *food and beverage*, and *restaurant diners*.

A conceptual model based on social cognitive theory, Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory was then tested. Overall, the model contained 10 hypotheses and each was confirmed. By confirming these hypothesis, it was determined that relationships between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction and restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty were both partially mediated, while a relationship between restaurant authenticity and place attachment was fully mediated.

Lastly, perceptions of food tourists, general tourists, and locals were compared via multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA. Findings suggested that restaurant authenticity has the strongest influence on locals.

This study contributed to both theory and practice. For theory, it determined which items, authenticity conceptualizations, and dimensions were included in the RAS. By testing the conceptual model, the efficacy of several theories and models were confirmed in the foodservice and food tourism context. Restaurant authenticity's influence on relevant mediating and outcome variables was also confirmed. Lastly, results from the multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA tests determined that some differences exist between the food tourists, general tourists, and locals with regard to authenticity.

For restaurant practitioners, the structure of the RAS should call attention to certain restaurant attributes with regards to authenticity. Also, the multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA tests determined that local restaurants should actively reach out to locals. For tourism practitioners, results from the conceptual model suggest that authentic local restaurants may serve as effective venues to engage tourists with certain travel promotions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CB. .... Covariance-Based

CFA..Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFI. .... Comparative Fit Index

CR. .... Construct Reliability

EFA .... Exploratory Factor Analysis

FDA... Food and Drug Administration

GDP.. Gross Domestic Product

GFI ....Goodness of Fit Index

KMO .... Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

MANOVA..Multivariate Analysis of Variance

PAF .... Principal Axis Factoring

RAS...Restaurant Authenticity Scale

RMSEA... Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

SEM. ....Structural Equation Modeling

SL...Standardized Loadings

SPSS..Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TLI .... Tucker Lewis Index

UNWTO.......................................United Nations World Tourism Organization

USDA... United States Department of Agriculture

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND, CONTEXT, AND IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

1.1.1 THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY IN THE U.S.

Dining at restaurants has become a cornerstone of daily life in the United States (U.S.). For the first time in recorded history, the average American is eating out at least once per week and spending approximately half of his or her food budget on food prepared away from home (National Restaurant Association, 2017b; USDA, 2016). Today, the foodservice industry accounts for four percent of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) and is among the 10 largest sectors in the U.S. economy (based on sales) (National Restaurant Association, 2017b; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). While several different types of businesses comprise the American foodservice industry, the restaurant sector is by far the largest entity, accounting for more than $550 billion in annual sales (National Restaurant Association, 2017b). Thus, the financial influence of the restaurant industry is vast, and it is therefore particularly significant to hospitality and tourism researchers.

While dining out is an important facet of daily life in the U.S., the expectations, perceptions, and behaviors of the dining public are not monolithic. Instead, they can be aligned with a multitude of different market segments, including groups segmented demographically, psychographically, or contextually (Harrington, Ottenbacher, & Kendall, 2011; Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Kim, Wen, & Doh, 2010; Yüksel & Yüksel,

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2003). In turn, several of these consumer groups are notably important to the restaurant industry. For example, with regards to demographic groups segmented by age, baby boomers, individuals born between 1946 and 1964, are the largest restaurant consumer group in the U.S., based on expenditure (Creating Results Strategic Marketing, 2009). On the other hand, millennials, individuals born between 1977 and 1995, are the age group which most frequently dines out (Sherman, 2017).

One group of individuals, segmented contextually, that is exceptionally important for many foodservice establishments is tourists, who are individuals who have traveled at least 50 miles away from their homes (Harrington et al., 2011; Kim, Goh, & Yuan, 2010; National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973). They are important because compared to consumer groups dining in their home locales, tourists spend a considerably higher percentage of their budget on dining out (Mandala Research, 2013; Miller & Washington, 2016). They are also a large and growing group of consumers (Hoover's Inc., 2016). Thus, the following section details the relevance of the restaurant industry to tourists and tourism.

1.1.2 RESTAURANT INDUSTRY RELEVANCE IN TOURISM

Recent data suggests that tourists in the U.S. spend approximately 20% of their travel budget at foodservice establishments. Furthermore, foodservice establishments, and particularly restaurants, serve as a key component of tourists' experiences when traveling. In fact, Buczkowska (2014) argues that restaurants are one of the largest sources for tourists' memories as a large proportion of them take photos of their meals as a means of remembering the unique dining experiences from their trips (Buczkowska, 2014).

One distinct trend related to tourists and dining out is that many wish to dine at restaurants serving authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling. The tendencies of these tourists are apparent because: (1) some tourist destinations have seen growing demand for restaurants serving local cuisine; and (2) many tourist destinations are now marketing their local cuisine and local restaurants to potential visitors (The Nielsen Company, 2014; Raskin, 2015; UNWTO, 2012). At face value, tourist destinations' views that their local restaurants are marketable, appears to be very sensible as authentic, local restaurants differentiate one destination from another (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2006).

Authenticity may also be an exceptionally important factor for certain large sub-groups of tourists, such as food tourists, who participate in food tourism and actively seek out unique food-related experiences while traveling (Robinson & Getz, 2014). However, to date there is a paucity of empirical research assessing the influence of overall restaurant authenticity on tourists; whether this influence actually differs between tourists and non-tourists, or locals; and whether this influence is stronger for certain sub-groups of tourists, such as food tourists. Thus, prior research has not thoroughly assessed the viewpoint that restaurants that are perceived to be authentic can positively influence perceptions and behavior for key consumer groups. This represents a gap in the literature. The following sections introduce the concept of authenticity, prior assessments of restaurant authenticity, and gaps in measuring restaurant authenticity.

1.1.3 AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity is broadly defined as the perception that an item or service is genuine or real, and is derived from an original source (Rudinow, 1994; Taylor, 2001). According to Wang's (1999) seminal study, authenticity comprises two distinct broad forms, which

are exhibited in different contexts. The first form is object-related which is associated with one's perceptions that goods and services are real, genuine, and associated with an origin (Wang, 1999). The second form of authenticity is subject-related which has been described as a feeling that individuals themselves are more authentic or feel more like their true selves because of interactions with a product, service or experience, manifested via a feeling of ease (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999). The concept is closely related to Maslow's (1971) peak experience, which manifests itself as an affective, transient moment of ecstasy for a person, and is a concept with greater exposure in the tourism and food tourism literature (Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010; Cohen, 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Quan & Wang, 2004; Schindehutte, Morris, & Allen, 2006). The following discusses object-related authenticity, subject-related authenticity, and peak experience in greater detail.

Under the umbrella of object-related authenticity, multiple conceptualizations are relevant to the hospitality and tourism industry, including objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, staged authenticity, iconic authenticity, indexical authenticity, and expressive authenticity (Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). First, objective authenticity is based on facts and verifiability, such as when the source of museum artifacts can be confirmed (Wang, 1999). Staged authenticity occurs in situations where a local community exhibits its heritage in an effort to develop authenticity from a tourist perspective (MacCannell, 1973). Third, constructive authenticity is based on one's personal history, such as when a restaurant diner uses his or her prior experiences to assess the heritage of a restaurant (Wang, 1999). On the other hand, indexical authenticity is based on the perceived originality of a good

or service, for instance when a restaurant is the creator of a famous recipe (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Fifth, iconic authenticity represents the ability of a good or service to copy an original, such as a museum gift shop's ability to sell items that accurately copy the museum's artifacts (Belk & Costa, 1998; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Lastly, expressive authenticity concerns the level to which a good or service represents the spirit or feeling of its place of origin (Dutton, 2003).

In contrast, subject-related authenticity, sometimes known as "existential" authenticity, relates to experiences that cause a person to feel more authentic, or more like his or her true self. It comes across as a feeling of ease that a person has (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999). In the context of hospitality and tourism, these situations are thought to include times when individuals have an opportunity to relax, refresh, rehabilitate, be diverted from their daily life, participate in recreational activities, or play (Cohen, 1988; Mergen, 1986). Further research also suggests that subject-related authenticity is positively influenced by object-related authenticity (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

As previously noted, subject-related authenticity is closely related to Maslow's (1971) concept of peak experience, which is prominent in the tourism literature and specifically the food tourism literature (Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Chang et al., 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004). According to Maslow (1971), peak experience is manifested as an affective state, where individuals feel a sense of ecstasy when they carry out certain self-actualizing behaviors, behaviors that take advantage of their talents, and during certain enjoyable moments that differ from their day-to-day routine.

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Overall, extant research suggests that authenticity comprises two distinct forms: object-related, which is related to goods and services; and subject-related, which is related to one's self and is similar to the concept of peak experience (Cohen, 2010; Maslow, 1971; Wang, 1999). This extant research helps guide perceptions of restaurant authenticity, which the following section introduces.

1.1.4 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY

Restaurant authenticity is the perception that a restaurant is truly representative of a given tradition or culture (Vásquez & Chik, 2015). It is an important concept to the restaurant industry as there are indications that it positively influences key outcome variables such as satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Tsai & Lu, 2012; Wang & Mattila, 2013). Prior studies suggest that several restaurant attributes can influence this important concept, including the food and beverage, restaurant environment, others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Jang, Liu, & Namkung, 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013).

Although the two forms of authenticity discussed above, object-related and subject-related, are distinct variables, object-related authenticity is often found to be an antecedent of its subject-related counterpart (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Consequently, only one is typically used to assess restaurant authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005); and of the two forms, there is strong support for the use of conceptualizations of object-related authenticity. This is because object-related authenticity concerns perceptions of goods, services, and experiences, and the restaurant attributes that have previously been found to positively influence perceptions of overall

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restaurant authenticity have been manifested as goods, services, and experiences (Albrecht, 2011; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Jang et al., 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013; Wang, 1999). Yet, to date, many relevant conceptualizations of object-related authenticity, including staged authenticity, iconic authenticity, indexical authenticity, and expressive authenticity have not been fully assessed in the restaurant authenticity context. This represents a gap in the literature on this subject (Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999).

In summary, authenticity is a complex concept based on two primary forms: object-related and subject-related, sometimes referred to as peak experience. Furthermore, there are multiple conceptualizations of object-related authenticity. It is an important concept for the restaurant industry as the perceived authenticity of certain restaurant attributes have been found to positively influence satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Tsai & Lu, 2012; Wang & Mattila, 2013). Restaurant authenticity may also be important for certain consumer groups such as tourists, and particularly for certain types of tourists, such as food tourists. This is because many of these individuals wish to dine at restaurants serving authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling (Raskin, 2015; UNWTO, 2012; The Nielsen Company, 2014). Yet, there are potential gaps in the current restaurant authenticity literature which preclude researchers and practitioners from clearly measuring restaurant authenticity and assessing its effect on perceptions and behavioral intentions among key consumer groups. The following section expands upon the literature's shortcomings.

1.1.4.1 SHORTCOMINGS IN THE RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY LITERATURE

To date, prior research on restaurant authenticity has: (1) not developed a comprehensive scale containing multiple conceptualizations of restaurant authenticity or multiple restaurant attributes; (2) generally ignored large or important constituencies of the growing tourist market; (3) not tested restaurant authenticity in conjunction with several important food tourism and restaurant-related factors; and (4) generally assessed ethnic rather than domestic and/or regional restaurants (Chi & Jackson, 2011; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Mkono, 2012; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). Each of these shortcomings is discussed in more detail next.

Firstly, to date, no study has developed a comprehensive measurement of restaurant authenticity containing each of the above-mentioned object-related conceptualizations as well as relevant restaurant attributes. With regard to conceptualizations, most prior studies have only assessed restaurant authenticity with constructive and objective authenticity conceptualizations, but not with staged, iconic, indexical, or expressive authenticity conceptualizations (Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang, Ha, & Park, 2012). With regard to restaurant attributes, no prior study has developed a measurement of restaurant authenticity which assesses a comprehensive set of restaurant attributes such as the food and beverage, restaurant environment, others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Jang et al., 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013).

Secondly, there is some reason to believe that having high levels of restaurant authenticity may be an effective way to attract important tourist groups such as food tourists, because many of them actively seek out authentic local cuisine, and the

consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling is congruent with their lifestyle (Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009). On the other hand, some research suggests that the effects of restaurant authenticity may be more muted for the tourist group known as general tourists, who tend not to seek out food-related activities or authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling (Andriotis, Agiomirgianakis, & Mihiotis, 2007; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016; Torres, 2002). Furthermore, both of these tourist groups may have expectations and perceptions which differ from the locals at a destination (Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016). Yet, to date, little empirical research has specifically assessed or compared the influence of restaurant authenticity on food tourists, general tourists, or locals (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Sims, 2009).

A third shortcoming relates to the fact that restaurant authenticity has not been tested in conjunction with several important restaurant and food tourism-related factors such as lifestyle-congruence, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment, discussed next. With regard to the food tourism literature, extant qualitative research suggests that restaurant authenticity is congruent with food tourists' lifestyle, particularly restaurants serving a destination's authentic local cuisine. Yet, to date, no empirical study has examined the influence that restaurant authenticity actually has on food tourists' lifestyle-congruence, which is an established affective measurement assessing the level to which a destination or brand supports an individual's lifestyle (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Gladwell, 1990; Nam, Ekinci, & Whyatt, 2011; Sims, 2009).

There is also dearth of work assessing important restaurant-related outcome variables such as restaurant loyalty, which helps to indicate whether an individual has an

emotional connection to a restaurant, provides positive word-of-mouth about it, and will be a return customer; or place attachment, which relates to one's emotional connection to a destination (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). Assessing place attachment may be especially relevant for tourists as several destinations have started to promote their authentic, traditional cuisine as a means of attracting more visitors (UNWTO, 2012).

A fourth and final shortcoming of the restaurant authenticity literature relates to the type of restaurants being assessed. The majority of studies have investigated consumer perceptions and behavior in the context of international ethnic cuisine, as opposed to domestic or regional cuisine (Chi & Jackson, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Mkono, 2012; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Liu, 2012). However, domestic, American cuisine is the most represented cuisine at restaurants throughout the U.S. (Alvarez, 2015, 2016b). Furthermore, some research suggests that in general, restaurant customer expectations of domestic restaurants differ from their expectations of international ethnic restaurants (Camarena, Sanjuán, & Philippidis, 2011).

Overall, this section has discussed several shortcomings in the restaurant authenticity literature. Notably, prior research has not developed a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale containing multiple conceptualizations of restaurant authenticity or multiple restaurant attributes. The literature has also generally ignored important constituencies, such as food tourists, of the growing tourist market. It has not tested restaurant authenticity in conjunction with several important restaurant and food tourism-related factors such as lifestyle-congruence, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment, and authenticity literature has generally assessed ethnic rather than domestic

and/or regional restaurants (Chi & Jackson, 2011; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Mkono, 2012; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). The following section discusses the present study's aims, objectives, and research questions to attempt to address these gaps in the literature.

1.2 AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The overall aim of the present study was to determine the influence of perceived restaurant authenticity on the perceptions and behavioral intentions of guests dining in restaurants serving local cuisine at food tourism destinations in the U.S. More specifically, the current study has two key objectives: (1) to develop a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale (RAS) that considers multiple conceptualizations of authenticity and a variety of restaurant attributes; and (2) to determine the influence of perceived restaurant authenticity on relevant affective variables including lifestyle-congruence and resultant restaurant and tourism-related behaviors.

This study assessed perceptions and resultant behavioral intentions related to restaurant authenticity at full-service restaurants located specifically in U.S. food tourism destinations, where food plays an important part of the overall experience. These restaurants serve regional American Southern cuisine (Hrelia, 2015). The information derived from this study allows researchers to better understand which conceptualizations and specific restaurant attributes influence perceptions of restaurant authenticity. The findings will further assist foodservice and tourism practitioners in developing marketing strategies that more effectively increase customer restaurant loyalty and place attachment. Moreover, the study provides insights to restaurateurs to allow them to develop new

restaurants or modify existing ones in a manner that most effectively attracts food tourists, general tourists, and locals.

To guide the research, the following research questions were formulated related to restaurant authenticity and its potential influences on perceptions and behavioral intentions in the context of food tourism:

1. Which conceptualizations of authenticity and which restaurant attributes comprise a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale (RAS)?

2. To what extent does perceived restaurant authenticity influence perceptions and satisfaction with restaurants serving regional American Southern cuisine?

3. To what extent does perceived restaurant authenticity influence restaurant loyalty and place attachment in restaurants serving authentic, regional American Southern cuisine?

4. To what extent do perceptions and resultant behaviors relating to restaurant authenticity differ between general tourists, food tourists, and locals?

The social cognitive theory, a seminal consumer behavior theory, is used in this study to provide an overarching theoretical framework for assessing the influence of restaurant authenticity on perceptions, satisfaction, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment. However, hospitality and tourism studies based on social cognitive theory have examined a wide and disparate variety of variables, suggesting that a review of further theory is required to guide the specific factors and relationships included in the current study's proposed model (Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006; Bandura, 1986; Kakoudakis, McCabe, & Story, 2017; Lu, Gursoy, & Lu, 2015; Song & Chon, 2012). Thus, as a means of providing additional theoretical support to the social cognitive theory, this study also

reviews the Mehrabian-Russell stimulus-organism-response model (henceforth referred to as the Mehrabian-Russell model), congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory to provide a more comprehensive framework for the development of the proposed model.

In summary, the aim of this study is to develop a restaurant authenticity scale (RAS) and test its influence on general tourists', food tourists', and locals' perceptions and behavioral intentions in the context of regional, American Southern cuisine. The following section discusses the assumptions of this study.

1.3 ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS STUDY

A key assumption that needs to be addressed in this study is the complexity of the concept of authenticity. There are two key forms of authenticity: object-related and subject-related. In the present study, it is assumed that the RAS comprises multiple conceptualizations of object-related authenticity (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Wang, 1999). This is because object-related authenticity assesses goods, services, or experiences, and the attributes assessed in restaurant authenticity are either goods (food and beverage), services, or experiences (Albrecht, 2011; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz, Wood, & Solomon, 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng, Go, & De Vries, 2012).

Another key assumption specifically relates to food tourists. Food tourists seek out food-related activities for a variety of reasons, including a desire for authenticity, a desire for novelty, a chance to learn about cuisine, and a chance to brag to friends and family about their food and dining experiences (Fields, 2002; Ignatov & Smith, 2006). In

this study, it is assumed that food tourist perceptions and behaviors are influenced by multiple factors, some of which cannot necessarily be controlled for.

A further assumption relates to the data collection process. More specifically, to develop the RAS, interviews were conducted to refine the item pool. It is assumed that participants in these interviews understood the questions and discussions taking place, were familiar with American Southern cuisine, and provided truthful and unbiased answers.

In this study, the data collection points (two restaurants for the pilot study and six for the main data collection process) were selected based on the extant literature, in an attempt to ensure that food tourists, general tourists, and locals dined there, and that the restaurants focus on regional cuisine. However, the researchers could not control who dined at a given restaurant during designated time frames. Thus, it must be assumed to a certain extent that the desired groups all dined at the restaurants selected for data collection.

Lastly, a screening question was used to determine whether respondents met this study's definition of food tourist, general tourist, or local resident. It is assumed that the individuals answered the screening question in a truthful manner.

Overall, it is assumed that restaurant authenticity comprises multiple conceptualizations of object-related authenticity (Steiner & Reisinger, 2006; Wang, 1999). It is further assumed that some respondents' perceptions and behaviors might have been influenced by certain factors that could not be controlled for. The following section discusses the limitations and delimitations of the present study.

1.4 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current study has several limitations and delimitations which need to be addressed. The limitations are discussed first, followed by the delimitations.

One key limitation is the inability to generalize across different regional cuisines and restaurant types. This study only examined perceptions of authenticity at restaurants serving local, regional American Southern cuisine at food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S. Prior research suggests that customer perceptions differ between a region's local cuisine, domestic cuisines originating from other regions, and international ethnic cuisine, indicating that the findings from the present study might be different if they had been obtained from the same destination's international ethnic restaurants or restaurants serving domestic cuisines from other regions (Camarena et al., 2011).

Furthermore, this study collected data at multiple functioning restaurants, so certain factors within the data-collection sites were difficult to control for. For example, there could have been fluctuations in the availability of certain menu items or certain key ingredients, which could potentially have influenced respondents' perceptions of the restaurants' authentic food and beverage. Some variables relating to the restaurant environment, such as the music being played and restaurant lighting (which vary throughout the day), were also difficult to control for. Moreover, respondent attributes such as mood might also have factored into their perceptions of restaurant authenticity.

The present study also has a set of key delimitations, or boundaries introduced to limit the research's scope (Leedy & Ormond, 2005). These delimitations are discussed next.

The study's first delimitation is that it assessed only one important form of American regional cuisine: American Southern cuisine. However, there is a wide variety of different American regional cuisines including, but not limited to, New England cuisine, New York cuisine, Puerto Rican cuisine, Hawaiian cuisine, Louisiana cuisine, and Southern cuisine (Sackett & Haynes, 2012). Nevertheless, Southern cuisine, which originated in states in the American Southeast, serves as an ideal iteration of American regional cuisine to assess for the current study. It has an extensive history and represents a large geographic territory (Edge, 2014). Furthermore, several highly regarded food tourism destinations, such as Charleston, SC, Louisville, KY, Nashville, TN, Savannah, GA, and Atlanta, GA, are located within the American Southeast and have a plethora of authentic, local, traditional Southern cuisine restaurants (Hunt, 2016; Sietsema, 2015; Zagat, 2016).

Another delimitation of the study concerns the topics of the reviewed literature. The literature used to inform and guide the research herein is generally limited to the restaurant industry, authenticity, authenticity in restaurants, tourism, food tourism and food tourists, hospitality, sociology, history, geography, and key consumer behavior literature. These topics represent the relevant areas of context for the current study.

Another delimitation relates to the form of authenticity used to develop the RAS. As previously noted, there are two primary forms of authenticity: object-related and subject-related (Wang, 1999; Knudsen & Waade, 2010). However, based on extant literature, the RAS is proposed to contain items related to object-related authenticity (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

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The final key delimitation concerns the testing of this study's model. While mixed methods were used to develop the RAS, a quantitative research methodology was used to test the current study's conceptual model. To some degree, it would be possible to assess the proposed relationships with qualitative research methods, such as observations, focus groups, panels, or interviews (Creswell, 2014). However, as the aim was to examine resultant perceptions and behavioral intentions from multiple authenticity conceptualizations and restaurant attributes, and thus, potentially, via multiple latent variables, a quantitative approach was used. This is because quantitative methods are ideal in situations where effects and outcomes are investigated and hypotheses are tested to determine relationships between variables (Yates, 2015).

Overall, several limitations and delimitations were determined for the current study. Next, the following section defines the key terms of this study.

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms have been defined for use in the current study:

1) *The U.S. foodservice industry*: The U.S. foodservice industry comprises restaurants, food trucks, food carts, bars, managed services, dining in lodging facilities, and food vending services. It is one of the largest private business sectors of the U.S. economy (Alvarez, 2016b, 2016d; National Restaurant Association, 2017b).

2) *American Southern cuisine*: American Southern cuisine is a regional cuisine associated with the Southeastern U.S. that can be classified based on its geography, history (dates to the 1700s), and a set of key recipes and dishes (Edge, 2014; Williamson, 1999). The 13 states associated with Southern cuisine are

Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, South
Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Florida.

3)   *Authenticity*: Authenticity is broadly defined as the perception that an item is
genuine or real, and derived from an original source (Rudinow, 1994; Taylor,
2001).

4)   *Food tourism:* Food tourism has been broadly defined as the consumption of the
culinary "other" while traveling (Long, 2004). It is composed of many different
activities, such as visiting food production facilities, festivals, unique restaurants,
and food tasting rooms while traveling (Hall & Mitchell, 2001).

5)   *Food tourists*: Food tourists represent a large market segment of tourists. These
individuals seek out and participate in food-related activities while traveling
(Mitchell & Hall, 2003; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009).

6)   *General tourists:* General tourists are individuals who live more than 50 miles
from a given destination (National Tourism Resources Review Commission,
1973). Unlike food tourists, these individuals do not necessarily actively seek out
food tourism experiences while traveling (Hjalager, 2003; Mandala Research,
2013).

7)   *Lifestyle-congruence:* Lifestyle-congruence can be defined as the extent to which
a destination or brand supports an individual's lifestyle or living patterns
(Gladwell, 1990; Nam et al., 2011).

8)   *Locals*: Locals are individuals who live less than 50 miles from a given location
(National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973).

9) *Loyalty*: Loyalty is broadly defined as frequent repurchase behavior from a goods or service provider accompanied by positive attitudes and positive word of mouth behavior towards that company (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). In the context of the current study, loyalty refers to loyalty to the specific restaurant being assessed.

10) *Object-related authenticity*: The perceived authenticity of goods and services (Wang, 1999).

11) *Peak experience*: Peak experience represents a transient moment of ecstasy. It occurs during times of self-actualization and has been closely linked to subject-related authenticity (Cohen, 2010; Maslow, 1971; Schindehutte et al., 2006).

12) *Place attachment:* Place attachment represents individuals' emotional connection to a destination where they live or that they are visiting (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). Place attachment in the current study represents an emotional connection to the selected food tourism destinations: Charleston, SC and Savannah, GA.

13) *Restaurants:* Restaurants are facilities that prepare and sell food directly to consumers for immediate consumption. They can be independent or part of chains, serve a variety of different cuisines, and offer varying levels of service (Alvarez, 2015; Alvarez, 2016a; FDA, 2016).

14) *Restaurant authenticity*: Restaurant authenticity is the perception that a restaurant is truly representative of a given tradition or culture (Vásquez & Chik, 2015). According to extant empirical studies, perceptions of restaurant authenticity are based on conceptualizations of object-related authenticity and are influenced by key restaurant attributes including food and beverages, restaurant environment,

others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011;

Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Jang

et al., 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013).

15) *Satisfaction*: Satisfaction represents an emotional state related to one's attainment

of a goal or desire (Burr, 1970). In the hospitality and tourism context, it is

frequently conceptualized as the positive difference between the perceptions and

expectations that an individual has towards a good or service (Oliver, 1980).

16) *Subject-related authenticity*: Subject-related authenticity relates to the perceived

authenticity of one's self (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999). It is

manifested via a feeling of ease (Cohen, 2010; Maslow, 1971).

This section has defined the key terms used in the current study. In the following

section, this chapter is summarized.

1.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The foodservice industry is one of the largest sectors of the U.S. economy,

suggesting that it is an area of importance for researchers (National Restaurant

Association, 2017b; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Within this industry, tourists, a

consumer group segmented contextually, represent a large, distinct, and growing

consumer group (Hoover's Inc., 2016).

One apparent trend related to this consumer group is that many tourists wish to

dine at restaurants serving authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling (The

Nielsen Company, 2014; Raskin, 2015; UNWTO, 2012). Further, authenticity may also

be an exceptionally important factor for certain large sub-groups of tourists, such as food

tourists, who participate in food tourism and actively seek out unique food-related

experiences while traveling (Robinson & Getz, 2014). Yet, there are some clear gaps in the current restaurant authenticity literature which preclude researchers from understanding the influence that restaurant authenticity has on these consumer groups. In particular, the current literature on restaurant authenticity has: (1) not developed a comprehensive scale containing multiple conceptualizations of authenticity or multiple restaurant attributes to measure authenticity; (2) generally ignored large or important constituencies of the growing tourist market; (3) not tested restaurant authenticity in conjunction with several important restaurant and food tourism-related factors; and (4) generally assessed ethnic rather than domestic and/or regional American cuisine restaurants (Chi & Jackson, 2011; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Mkono, 2012; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). Thus, the present study proposed that a restaurant authenticity scale (RAS) be developed as a comprehensive scale, which considers many restaurant attributes and multiple conceptualizations of authenticity. This scale can then be used to assess perceptions and concurrent behavioral intentions at restaurants serving regional American Southern cuisine at food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S.

The following chapter discusses the literature related to the current topic including the U.S. foodservice industry, tourism in the U.S., restaurants and tourism, food tourism, authenticity, authenticity measurements in the literature, authenticity in restaurants, food tourists, general tourists and dining, locals and dining, and American Southern cuisine, and food tourism destinations. It will then review in detail the theoretical frameworks guiding this study. Then, in a third section of the following chapter the proposed independent variable, mediating variables, and dependent variables

of the proposed conceptual model will be reviewed. In a fourth section the hypothesized

relationships between those variables will be discussed. Lastly, a fifth section will present

the current study's proposed model.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter reviews literature which is relevant to the current study, discusses proposed variables, and the underlying theory guiding the current study.. Following that, hypotheses development and the introduction of the proposed model to be tested will be done prior to the summary of Chapter 2.

Overall, the literature review consists of five parts. The first section reviews the primary topics underlying the current study: the U.S. foodservice industry, tourism in the U.S., restaurants and tourism, food tourism, authenticity, authenticity measurements in the literature, authenticity in restaurants, food tourists, general tourists and dining, locals and dining, and American Southern cuisine and food tourism destinations. More specifically, the section discusses the scope of the U.S. foodservice industry, the role that restaurants play in tourism, and food tourism. Then, the section examines different conceptualizations of authenticity, along with a review of the literature related to the influence of different restaurant attributes on overall perceived restaurant authenticity. Prior measurements of authenticity in the hospitality and tourism literature are also discussed, followed by a review of food tourists', general tourists', and locals' characteristics and behavior. Lastly, the chapter defines American Southern cuisine and its relationship to both authenticity and food tourism. The second part of the literature review assesses the theoretical frameworks underpinning and guiding the present study,

while the third section reviews the independent variable, mediating variables, and dependent variables comprising the proposed conceptual model. Next, the fourth section discusses the hypothesized relationships between those variables, and the fifth section finally presents the current study's proposed model. First, the following section discusses the U.S. foodservice industry and its importance in the U.S. economy.

2.1 THE U.S. FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

The foodservice industry in the U.S., which consists of restaurants, food trucks, food carts, bars, managed services, dining in lodging facilities, and food vending services, represents one of the largest sectors of the U.S. economy (Alvarez, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2016d; National Restaurant Association, 2017b). In 2017, the industry achieved more than $798 billion in sales, which represented approximately 4% of the U.S. GDP and almost half of the American budgeted food dollar (National Restaurant Association, 2017b). Furthermore, the U.S. foodservice industry employs almost 15 million individuals, which is approximately 10% of the American workforce (National Restaurant Association, 2017b).

Of the different businesses comprising the U.S. foodservice industry, the restaurant sector is by far the largest entity, accounting for more than $550 billion in annual sales (National Restaurant Association, 2017b). However, it should be noted that restaurants are not monolithic and can be broken down based on a number of criteria including ownership, cuisine, and service-levels. Firstly, in terms of ownership, restaurants can be separated into chain restaurants, which are groups of restaurants under the same brand, often managed via a corporate structure. Chain restaurants tend to have standardized operations and products, while independent restaurants, which are not

affiliated with a national or regional brand, have owners who are often involved with menu development and daily operations (Bradach, 2002; Harris, DiPietro, Murphy, & Rivera, 2014; Schuldt et al., 2014). Of the two, there are a greater number of independent restaurants, and because of that, they have higher annual gross revenues in total than chains in the U.S. (Alvarez, 2015, 2016b).

Next, the cuisine of restaurants in the U.S. tends to be delineated between domestic and ethnic cuisine, which represents a variety of cuisines originating from abroad. An amalgamation of forms of domestic, American cuisine represent the most common cuisine served by restaurants in the U.S., but there is also a significant presence of restaurants serving Mexican, Chinese, and Italian cuisine, which are the three most popular ethnic cuisines served in restaurants in the U.S. (Alvarez, 2015, 2016b; National Restaurant Association, 2015).

Furthermore, restaurants are also categorized based on the level of service they provide. The two largest service segments are quick-service restaurants, which offer a relatively limited menu, very limited service, and relatively low prices; and full-service restaurants, which offer table service, a larger menu, often serve alcohol, and tend to have much higher check averages than quick-service restaurants (Miller & Washington, 2016; National Restaurant Association, 2017a; Ninemeier & Perdue, 2005). Of these two restaurant segments, full-service restaurants have slightly higher annual sales (approximately $250 billion) than quick-service restaurants (approximately $220 billion) (National Restaurant Association, 2017a). Since the full-service sector is larger, a study focusing on this type of restaurant may have a larger impact on the overall restaurant industry. Furthermore, according to Jani and Han (2011), compared to diners at quick-

service restaurants, full-service restaurant diners are able to evaluate the authenticity of a greater number of restaurant attributes. This is because they tend to have more service encounters and longer dining experiences than quick-service diners do. This further suggests that it is advantageous to assess full-service restaurants in the current study.

One of the reasons why there are a wide variety of restaurants in the U.S. is that restaurant customers' expectations, perceptions, and behaviors are not all uniform (George, 2011). As such, some prior studies have shown that restaurant customers' expectations and perceptions can differ based on their demographic backgrounds, including their age, gender, and cultural heritage (Harrington et al., 2011; Harrington, Ottenbacher, Staggs, & Powell, 2012). For example, regarding gender, Harrington et al.'s (2011) study of fine dining restaurant selection determined that female respondents were more concerned with a restaurant's price, reputation, and healthfulness than their male counterparts were. They further determined that related to age, older respondents placed a greater emphasis on a restaurant's promotions, reputation, environment, and healthfulness than younger respondents did.

As previously noted, baby boomers are the largest restaurant consumer group in the U.S., based on expenditure (Creating Results Strategic Marketing, 2009). Further, millennials are the age group which most frequently dines out (Sherman, 2017). With regard to individuals' cultural heritage, Defranco, Wortman, Lam, and Countryman (2005) determined that restaurant expectations varied widely between diners from America and diners from Hong Kong. American diners had stronger expectations regarding food tastiness, temperature, and freshness, while Hong Kong diners had stronger expectations regarding restaurant greetings.

Other studies have shown that certain psychographic attributes, such as one's satisfaction level, level of stress, or openness to advice from others, can influence expectations, perceptions, and behaviors (Jones, McCleary, & Lepisto, 2002; Namkung & Jang, 2008). For example, Jones et al.'s (2002) study of restaurant complaining behavior determined that individuals who provide negative word-of-mouth about a restaurant tend to have relatively high levels of stress and are often not open to the advice of others.

Lastly, in certain contexts, when reasons for dining differ, restaurant customers' expectations, perceptions, and behaviors can vary too. For example, they can differ depending on whether one is dining for business or leisure, or based on whether one is traveling or is in one's hometown (Batra, 2008; Dube, Renaghan, & Miller, 1994; Hall, Lockshin, & O'Mahony, 2001; Sammells, 2010). Individuals who are traveling more than 50 miles away from their homes are typically known as tourists (National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973). These consumers tend to spend a large proportion of their travel budget dining out, suggesting that they may represent an important consumer group for restaurants to target. Furthermore, tourists are a large and growing consumer group (Hoover's Inc., 2016). Therefore, the following section briefly introduces the tourism sector in the U.S. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the relationship between restaurants and tourism and the concept of food tourism.

2.2 TOURISM IN THE U.S.

Tourism is broadly defined to represent expenditures by individuals who have traveled more than 50 miles to reach a destination (National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973). The main travel purposes for tourists can include business,

conventions or conferences, leisure, and visiting friends and relatives (Alvarez, 2016c).

Tourism expenditures are a major contributor to the U.S. economy and represent

approximately 2.3% of the GDP of the U.S. in direct spending (SelectUSA, 2017). In the

U.S., both domestic and international tourism generates approximately $2.3 trillion in

direct and indirect economic output every year (U.S. Travel Association, 2017).

Spread across 25 sectors, tourism directly supports approximately 7.6 million

jobs, which represents more than 5.5% of the entire U.S. workforce (SelectUSA, 2017).

In 2016, 1.7 billion person-trips, or overnight trips, which are more than 50 miles from

home, were carried out in the U.S. (U.S. Travel Association, 2017). The tourism industry

is also seeing robust growth, growing by approximately 6% year-over-year (U.S. Census

Bureau, 2017).

According to SelectUSA (2017), a program of the International Trade

Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce, the tourism industry's three largest

subsectors, accommodations, air travel, and food services, represent approximately 50%

of total tourism-related economic output. Of those subsectors, the accommodation

subsector is the largest. Annually, tourists spend $278 billion on places to stay. Next is

the air travel subsector, with approximately $265 billion spent on flights by tourists.

Finally, the foodservice subsector is the third largest subsector, accounting for more than

$250 billion in tourism-related expenditures (SelectUSA, 2017). Overall, tourism is a

major contributor to the U.S economy, and the foodservice subsector is the third largest

in terms of revenue generation (SelectUSA, 2017). Restaurants and tourism are discussed

in the following section to demonstrate the relevance of these industries (National

Restaurant Association, 2017b).

2.2.1 RESTAURANTS AND TOURISM

The $250 billion that tourists spend annually on food and beverages represents approximately 20% of their overall travel budgets (SelectUSA, 2017). Those sales also have a significant impact on the entire U.S. restaurant industry, as portions of that $250 billion account for 30% of full-service and 19% of quick-service restaurant sales (SelectUSA, 2017; UNWTO, 2012; U.S. Travel Association, 2017). Relatedly, there appears to be a correlation between growth in the tourism and restaurant industries. Namely, when tourism grows at a given destination, the foodservice industry also grows by extension (Calzada, 2016). Calzada (2016), whose study focused on Costa Rican tourism, notes that as the tourism sector has grown, restaurants have needed to import increasing amounts of high-end products such as prime beef cuts, wines, and beer.

Restaurants can also have a strong influence on tourists' perceptions of a destination (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Sparks, Bowen, & Klag, 2003). Sparks et al.'s (2003) study of restaurants in Australia determined that one's perceptions of a destination's restaurants positively influence satisfaction with that destination. Similarly, Kivela and Crotts's (2006) study of restaurants in Hong Kong determined that restaurants there were "an integral part of the visitor's experience" (p. 373), and that restaurants could impact tourists' desires to return to Hong Kong. Lastly, in their study of Chinese tourist dining behavior, Cohen and Avieli (2004) note that some tourists learn about a region or destination by eating at that destination's unique restaurants.

Correspondingly, the United Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) (2012) Global Report on Food Tourism notes that almost 90% of member nations believe

that their gastronomy serves as a key attribute in defining their destination image, and that 68% of member states are actively marketing their destination's authentic, traditional, local cuisine to tourists. Doing so can differentiate one destination from another (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2006). Furthermore, there appears to be rising demand at several tourist destinations for restaurants serving local cuisine (The Nielsen Company, 2014; Raskin, 2015). For example, Lahaina, Hawaii, which is a major tourist destination known for its local restaurants, has been identified as the top market for restaurant growth in the U.S. (The Nielsen Company, 2014). When tourists *actively* seek out unique food-related experiences at destinations, they are participating in food tourism, which is a growing area of tourism (UNWTO, 2012). The following section expands upon the segment of tourism called food tourism.

2.3 FOOD TOURISM

Food tourism, also known as culinary tourism or gastro tourism, represents a wide array of activities, but has been broadly defined as the consumption of the culinary "other" (Henderson, 2009; Long, 2004). Thus, it represents experiences that individuals have with food that differs from their daily routine. More specifically, Long (2004), who is often viewed as the one who seminally defined food tourism, describes it as "the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other- participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one's own" (Long, 2004, p. 21). In short, based on Long's (2004) definition, food tourism typically includes unique experiences while one is traveling that involve tasting or observing the preparation of a different culture's cuisine.

Hall and Mitchell (2001) note that food tourism could include visits to food production facilities, festivals, restaurants, or food tasting rooms while traveling. Long (2006) also suggests that food tourism encompasses chef demonstrations, tours of wineries, and certain agritourism experiences, such as trips in which tourists accompany farmers or fishermen for harvesting. Furthermore, Shenoy (2005) suggests that food tourism comprises any the following activities as well: dining at restaurants known for local cuisines, purchasing local food products, consuming local beverages, and dining at high-quality restaurants while traveling.

It is important to note that the above seminal definition presented by Long (2004) includes but is not constrained by the eating or consumption of cuisine. Similarly, Smith and Xiao (2008) define food tourism as "any tourism experience in which one learns about, appreciates, or consumes branded local culinary resources" (p.289). A study by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture (2011) also suggests that along with eating, food tourism encompasses activities where an individual can appreciate or study a destination's culinary offerings. Other definitions of food tourism are even broader and completely omit references to food consumption. Notably, Wolf (2006) defines food tourism more broadly as the memorable food- and drink-related experiences that one has while traveling. All in all, it is clear from the research on food tourism that food tourism consists not of a single activity, but rather of a set of activities where individuals learn about, study, appreciate, or consume a destination's culinary offerings (Long, 2004; Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture, 2011; Smith & Xiao, 2008; Wolf, 2006).

Along with the above definitions of food tourism, several other studies have also noted that many food tourism activities, such as visiting a winery or participating in

agritourism, overlap with other forms of tourism (McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus, 2008; Richards, 1996). Smith and Xiao (2008) argue that food tourism comprises "travel specifically motivated by culinary interests as well as travel in which culinary experiences occur but are not the primary motivation for the trip" (p. 289). Conversely, according to Y. H. Kim et al. (2010), one only participates in "food tourism" when one's primary purpose of travel is interacting with a destination's cuisine.

While researchers have noted that food tourism may be composed of several different activities, the consumption of a destination's authentic, traditional, local cuisine is notably popular (Kim, Eves, & Scarles, 2009; Quan & Wang, 2004; Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). For example, Quan and Wang (2004) have argued that the consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine while traveling is considered a unique and novel experience. Furthermore, in their study based on grounded theory, Kim et al. (2009) note that many tourists are excited to taste a destination's local cuisine even before they travel. Sims's (2009) qualitative study of local food consumption by tourists in England further indicated that the consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine evokes positive memories of a destination.

In the U.S., several cities have been identified as popular food tourism destinations, including New Orleans, San Francisco, Chicago, and Charleston, SC (Mandala Research, 2013; Sietsema, 2015). Restaurants at these destinations offer unique and gourmet foods in a variety of unique atmospheres. They also offer other food-related experiences, such as farmer's markets and cooking classes (Mandala Research, 2013).

On the whole, the published definitions of food tourism do vary to some degree, but they also share similar concepts, including interaction with cuisines in a manner that

differs from one's day-to-day life while traveling. Within this framework, the consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine is a notably popular activity (Kim et al., 2009; Quan & Wang, 2004; Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). Quan and Wang (2004) suggest that this elicits a peak experience among tourists, and Kim et al. (2009) state that eating a destination's local cuisine can elicit excitement and prestige. Sims (2009) notes that many tourists seek authentic local cuisine when they travel. Therefore, destinations that offer multiple opportunities to consume authentic, traditional, local cuisine are appealing to many tourists (UNWTO, 2012). However, authenticity, and specifically restaurant authenticity, is a complex subject. Thus, the following discusses its forms and conceptualizations, prior restaurant authenticity research, and authenticity measurements in greater detail. Subsequently, the chapter examines food tourists, who represent a large subsection of tourists who often actively seek out authentic, traditional, local cuisine.

2.4 AUTHENTICITY

The concept of authenticity relates to how accurately something reflects its original source (Rudinow, 1994; Taylor, 2001). In some previous foodservice and food tourism studies, authenticity has been found to positively influence satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang et al., 2011; Jiang, Ramkissoon, Mavondo, & Feng, 2016; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Shen, Guo, & Wu, 2014). This broad definition of authenticity helps guide the definition of restaurant authenticity, which is the perception that a restaurant is truly representative of a given culture (Vásquez & Chik, 2015). Beyond its broad definition, authenticity can be segmented into two distinct forms: object-related and subject-related. Subject-related is also known as "existential" authenticity (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999) and is introduced next.

Subject-related authenticity, also called existential authenticity in some studies, represents a feeling of ease that is elicited when an individual participates in enjoyable activities (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Selwyn, 1996; Wang, 1999). In the hospitality and tourism context, it relates to an individual's process of making sense of an experience, and interpreting the meanings of encounters and the context of situations (Jamal & Hill, 2004). According to Wang (1999), subject-related authenticity can be thought of as an individual feeling more authentic or more like him or herself after interacting with a good, service, or experience. Conceptually, it is closely related to Maslow's (1971) "peak experience", a concept that is more commonly examined in the hospitality and tourism literature (Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen, 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004; Relph, 1976). Subject-related authenticity and peak experience are discussed in greater detail in a later section; now, the following discussion introduces object-related authenticity, the second form of authenticity (Wang, 1999).

Object-related authenticity is related to the perception that goods and services are truly connected to a referent source (Rudinow, 1994; Taylor, 2001; Wang, 1999). This form of authenticity comprises multiple conceptualizations, two of which are generally used to assess restaurant authenticity: objective authenticity, where perceptions of authenticity are based on facts and verification; and constructive authenticity, where one's personal experiences, such as prior experiences with a given culture, shape perceptions of authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005; Wang, 1999). However, some other relevant conceptualizations of object-related authenticity have also been utilized in the non-foodservice hospitality and tourism literature. These include staged authenticity,

which occurs in situations where a local community exhibits its heritage in an effort to develop a perception of authenticity for a tourist audience; indexical authenticity, which represents the perceived originality of a product; iconic authenticity, which refers to one's perceptions of reproductions, recreations, or copies; and expressive authenticity, which represents the extent to which a good or service espouses the spirit or feeling of its place of origin (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973, 2008; Wang, 1999). The following section provides more details regarding each of these conceptualizations.

2.4.1 OBJECT-RELATED AUTHENTICITY

2.4.1.2 OBJECTIVE AUTHENTICITY

Objective authenticity represents a form of authenticity that is associated with evidence of something's connection to a referent source. It is most often utilized as a means of verifiability in the natural sciences and is especially important for geologists who must pinpoint the time, location, and date of certain events in the natural world (Jamal & Hill, 2004). More broadly, it has historically been associated with museums (such as natural history museums), where it is often important to date artifacts and verify their authenticity (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

Furthermore, objective authenticity has also been employed by marketers and practitioners in the contexts of marketing, hospitality, and tourism. Notably, marketers have used it as a means of adding credibility to their brands (Beverland, 2005; MacCannell, 1973). For example, Beverland (2005) notes that the luxury brand Gucci has attempted to show that its products have been used by Italian royalty. In the tourism literature, it has been shown that tourists who visit historic or cultural destinations often

attempt to link the cultural presentations that they experience to historic events as a means of verifying authenticity (MacCannell, 1973). In the context of the foodservice industry, restaurant consumers will also often attempt to verify the historical accuracy of recipes (Lu & Fine, 1995). In an ethnic restaurant, for instance, restaurant customers may attempt to verify the origin of restaurant decorations or furniture. For example, a Greek-themed restaurant may appear more authentic if its furniture originates from Greece (Ebster & Guist, 2005). In the context of food tourism, Walter's (2016a) study of cooking classes in Thailand suggests that food tourists' perception of objective authenticity increases by visiting the local market in Thailand, as this allows them to verify that they are using authentic, traditional local ingredients.

2.4.1.2 STAGED AUTHENTICITY

Staged authenticity can be broadly defined as the perception that one has truly interacted with a traditional culture (MacCannell, 1973). It is often experienced in the context of tourism, when individuals visit communities whose cultures differ from their own (Boorstin, 1961; Goffman, 1959; MacCannell, 1973). At these destinations, there are different areas or "stages" to which tourists are provided differing levels of access. Spaces designated for tourists are defined as "front stages". These spaces are typically absent of objectively authentic objects, habits, culture, and behaviors; thus, they are not accurately representative of daily life at a destination. On the other hand, "back stages" are areas typically off-limits to tourists, where the objectively authentic attributes of a host community exist (Boorstin, 1961; Goffman, 1959; MacCannell, 1973). Between the front stage and back stage areas lies a "staged" area that has the appearance, to visitors, that it is part of a destination's authentic backstage. Yet, in reality, this area is not

objectively part of the back stage as it is not a place where true, "local" life takes place. Nevertheless, given that these staged areas project the appearance of the back stage, visitors can perceive that they have experienced authentic local life (Boorstin, 1961; Goffman, 1959; MacCannell, 1973, 2008).

Several hospitality and tourism studies have assessed individuals' perceptions of staged authenticity (e.g. Daugstad & Kirchengast, 2013; MacCannell, 2008; Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013; Walter, 2016b). MacCannell (2008) provides a distinct example of staged authenticity in the context of hospitality and tourism: an impromptu sing along (in English) that took place at a safari lodge in Kenya between local tribes-people and western tourists. In this instance, the tourists felt that they were having sincere, authentic interactions with the local tribes-people but, according to MacCannell (2008), they were not truly experiencing the destination's authentic backstage as these tribes-people rarely visit safari lodges or sing in English in their day-to-day life (MacCannell, 2008). Ultimately, it was an interaction that was more stilted and "staged" than the western tourists realized (MacCannell, 2008).

Similarly, Stepchenkova and Zhan's (2013) study of Peru's destination image examined Peru's destination marketing organization's (DMO) development of promotional brochures. These brochures contained photos showing tourists and local hosts happily carrying out farm work, milking cows, and trekking on the Incan trail with llamas. These activities are not unrepresentative of daily life in Peru, but the brochures provide potential visitors with a perspective that is overly rosy and sensationalized. Daugstad and Kirchengast's (2013) study of agritourism showed that staged authenticity plays a key role in agritourists' experiences. They note that many agritourists want to

spend time in their host's actual farm home to better understand farming life. However, these visits are often curated, as the hosts often put away many of their personal belongings, not wanting visitors to see them. This leaves these visits with an aspect of staged authenticity, where the visitors feel they are experiencing farm life but are actually visiting an area that has been curated for them. Walter (2016b) provides a unique example of a destination that attempts and fails to elicit staged authenticity. In reviewing Baan Tong Luang, a tourist attraction exhibiting different hill tribe communities in Thailand, he notes that destination marketers attempt to portray the site as an opportunity to experience traditional Thai life. Unfortunately, the site has been poorly executed, is seen as a tourist trap, and is described as a "human zoo" (Walter, 2016b).

Staged authenticity has also been closely linked to another conceptualization of authenticity known as "fabricated authenticity" (Hede & Thyne, 2010). Fabricated authenticity was first introduced in Belk and Costa's (1998) study of mountain man festivals, which are reenactments of gatherings of fur-traders in the Rocky Mountains. It represents a form of perceived authenticity in which an individual imagines aspects of history. According to these authors, certain festival-visitors use equipment that, through the "social construction of unreality" (p. 232), or a perceived alternative reality, has become embedded in the culture of mountain man festivals, even though these objects were not worn or used at the original gatherings. More specifically, cap-lock firearms, modern brands of beer and whiskey, and porcelain camp-ware did not exist in the early 1800s, but they are frequently brought to modern mountain man festivals. Due to their frequent presence at these modern events, these items have become associated with mountain man history, thus creating fabricated authenticity (Belk & Costa, 1998).

2.4.1.3 CONSTRUCTIVE AUTHENTICITY

Constructive authenticity represents a form of perceived authenticity in which observers create their own perceptions of authenticity (Wang, 1999), based on their own individual judgment, personal rubrics, and personal history (Cohen, 1988; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jamal & Hill, 2004). In the context of hospitality and tourism, further research suggests that constructive authenticity is associated with one's background, personal beliefs, personal perspectives, the socio-political landscape in one's domicile, one's destination image, and one's heritage (Jamal & Hill, 2004; Lasten & Upchurch, 2012). Overall, constructive authenticity is in the eye of the beholder and is negotiable. In other words, if the traits of a good or service being monitored by an observer are adequate, authentication can be bestowed (Cohen, 1988; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Wang, 1999).

Research in the hospitality and tourism context suggests that customers are often unconcerned with the concrete criteria or objective authenticity of a good or service. Unlike members of the natural sciences, who require specific dates, shapes, and materials to confer authenticity, individuals participating in hospitality- and tourism-related activities are more likely to be seeking what they perceive to be indicators of authenticity (Cohen, 1988). Therefore, constructive authenticity represents a key means for restaurant customers to judge the authenticity of a restaurant's food, environment, or service, as well as the authenticity of a destination (Cohen, 1988; Salamone, 1997). For example, Van Veuren's (2004) study of tourism in South Africa notes that many of the cultural villages sell a menu that is pan-African rather than South African, because a pan-African menu matches their visitors' expectations of authentic, traditional, South African cuisine.

Similarly, at Italian restaurants, customers who have never visited Italy will assess authenticity based on their dining experiences in their home locales at other Italian restaurants (Albrecht, 2011).

2.4.1.4 INDEXICAL AUTHENTICITY

Indexical authenticity, also referred to as nominal authenticity by Dutton (2003), represents a form of perceived authenticity in which individuals see a good or service as authentic when it is original or one of a kind (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). To date, this form of authenticity has received limited attention in the foodservice literature, but has seen greater exposure in tourism research. For example, indexical authenticity has been used in a case study relating to the famed Grauman's Chinese Theater in Los Angeles: in front of the theater, there are several sets of Hollywood actors' handprints, cast in cement. Researchers assert that individuals perceive the hand prints to be authentic since they were originally created by the actors and are one of a kind (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; O'Guinn, 1991). Castéran and Roederer (2013) provide another example of indexical authenticity in their assessment of the Christmas market in Strasburg, France. The market is perceived as authentic in part because it is both the original and the largest Christmas market in France. Therefore, the market has a high level of indexical authenticity, as there are no imitators.

In the restaurant context, indexical authenticity has seen little exposure. Nevertheless, based on related research, there is some reason to believe that increases in perceived indexical authenticity for a restaurant's attributes will positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. More specifically, some prior restaurant studies have assessed chain restaurants, which often standardize or copy restaurant

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attributes from location to location, leaving them with low indexicality, and have shown that a negative relationship exists between restaurant standardization and perceived restaurant authenticity (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002).

Chain restaurants often standardize their menu (including both the food and beverage), environment (including their furnishings, décor, table settings, restaurant layout, music, and menu design), and operations procedures as a means of increasing efficiency and economies of scale (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Ritzer, 1996). For example, having an institutionalized means of preparing meals can increase yields and reduce waste production (de Vries, 2013). Yet, Ritzer's (1996) McDonaldization theory suggests that this standardization process renders the restaurants less indexically authentic as they are copies of each other. Specifically, Ritzer (1996) describes these environments as "dehumanizing setting[s] to eat and work" (Ritzer, 1996, p. 13). In contrast, independent restaurants have the opportunity to create a unique image, menu, and overall setting, thereby possibly increasing indexical authenticity.

2.4.1.5 ICONIC AUTHENTICITY

Iconic authenticity relates to an individual's level of tolerance with regard to the authenticity of goods or services that have been reproduced or recreated from an original (Grayson & Martinec, 2004). In other words, it is the level of realness that one perceives from a good or service, based on how well it is adapted or copied from an original (Castéran & Roederer, 2013; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). It is also referred to as "postmodern" authenticity by both Ebster and Guist (2005) and Eco (1986).

To date, this conceptualization of authenticity has received limited attention in the foodservice literature. However, one notable example is Kjeldgaard and Ostberg's (2007)

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qualitative study of cafes in Sweden and Denmark, in which they note that there are several Austrian-style cafes in Sweden that are iconically authentic because they prepare their food and drink in the way reminiscent of a café in Vienna. A further example is Bardhi, Ostberg, and Bengtsson's (2010) qualitative study assessing American tourists' perceptions of dining in China. As part of the study, the authors interviewed respondents after they had dined at an Italian restaurant while in China. Based on their interviews, the dishes consumed were described as having a level of iconic authenticity. They incorporated several Chinese ingredients, such as noodles instead of spaghetti, suggesting that the dishes were not indexically authentic, but the process of preparing the dishes was based on traditional Italian cooking techniques.

Iconic authenticity has also seen some exposure in the tourism literature. For instance, it has been used to investigate items sold at museum gift shops, and it has been asserted that when an individual perceives precise reproductions of museum artifacts sold at the gift shop to be authentic, he or she utilizes iconic authenticity as a means of perceiving the authenticity of those objects (Costa & Bamossy, 1995; Grayson & Martinec, 2004). Costa and Bamossy (2001) provide another clear example of iconic authenticity in their assessment of guest perceptions of authenticity at the Disneyland Paris theme park. According to the authors, Disney has carefully designed an area at Disneyland Paris to represent the U.S. in the 1950s. In this way, Disney is relying on guests' tolerance for a carefully developed re-creation (Costa & Bamossy, 2001). Similarly, Andriotis's (2011) qualitative assessment of heritage tourism presents Abraham Lincoln's homestead in Kentucky as a destination with a high level of iconic authenticity as it is a re-creation, but also made to resemble the original home.

2.4.1.6 EXPRESSIVE AUTHENTICITY

First introduced by Dutton (2003), expressive authenticity relates to the perception that a good or service is a "true expression of…a society's values and beliefs" (p. 259). That is, a good or service produced in a manner that espouses the feeling or spirit of its place of origin has high levels of expressive authenticity. For instance, Milman's (2013) study of Disney's Epcot notes that the restaurants that contribute to its World Showcase area are not always objectively authentic, but reflect the spirit of the countries they represent and thus have high levels of expressive authenticity.

Furthermore, Carroll (2015) suggests that restaurants that source their food in a manner that is in keeping with the values of a region have high levels of expressive authenticity. For example, a restaurant will have elevated levels of expressive authenticity if it is situated in a region that values organic farming and only sources organic foods. Some researchers have also equated expressive authenticity with goods or services that are made by individuals perceived to have high levels of passion for a given region (Beverland, Lindgreen, & Vink, 2008). For example, Beverland et al. (2008) suggest that craft brewers who painstakingly adhere to a region's traditional beer brewing techniques have elevated levels of expressive authenticity. It is important to note that expressive authenticity has also been referred to as moral authenticity by Beverland et al. (2008) and approximate authenticity by Carroll (2015).

This section has discussed objective, staged, constructive, indexical, iconic, and expressive authenticity, each of which falls under the broad category of object-related authenticity. The following section now discusses another form of authenticity, known as subject-related authenticity (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). It also covers peak experience,

which is closely related to subject-related authenticity and has been more extensively researched in the hospitality and tourism literature (Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen, 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004; Relph, 1976).

2.4.1.7 SUBJECT-RELATED AUTHENTICITY AND PEAK EXPERIENCE

Subject-related authenticity, also referred to as existential authenticity in some studies, represents an emotional "output" experienced during enjoyable situations (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999). More specifically, according to Wang (1999), on a day-to-day basis, individuals often put on a façade when they interact with their coworkers. They only feel more like themselves, or like a more authentic version of themselves, when they are in certain enjoyable situations (Wang, 1999). In the context of hospitality and tourism, these situations are thought to include times of relaxation, rehabilitation, diversion, recreation, entertainment, refreshment, sensation-seeking, sensual pleasures, excitement, and play (Cohen, 1988; Mergen, 1986).

Tourists' visits to cultural sites are commonly associated with feelings of subject-related authenticity (Lasten & Upchurch, 2012). In these contexts, where the destination is often unique, novel, and pleasurable, tourists have a strong emotional output and find their "true self" (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Golden's (1996) case study on Jewish visitors to museums in Israel provides a clear example of the use of subject-related authenticity in the context of hospitality and tourism. In certain museums in Israel, Jewish visitors have the opportunity to trace their heritage and lineage. In doing so, they often feel a stronger connection to the wider Jewish community and the artifacts displayed in the museums. Similarly, Yi, Lin, Jin, & Luo's (2017) study of subject-related authenticity in China

demonstrates that when Chinese tourists visit certain famous Chinese heritage sites, they feel more like themselves and are able "to escape from their normal self-control or self-constraint" (Yi et al., 2017, p. 1033).

Subject-related authenticity also relates to situations in which an individual feels a connection to a social group (Wang, 1999). More specifically, it represents the togetherness experienced by social units, such as a family, which are elicited in certain key contexts. For example, Wang (1999) notes: "From most tourists' personal point of view, tourism or a holiday is itself a chance for the primary tourist group, such as a family, to achieve or reinforce a sense of authentic togetherness and an authentic 'we-relationship'" (Wang, 1999, p. 364).

Since subject-related authenticity relates to one's feelings (Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Wang, 1999), several studies have attempted to link it to more prominent social psychological concepts. These include Maslow's (1943) concept of self-fulfillment, which represents one's ability to find meaning in life; Csikszentmihalyi's (1996) concept of flow, which represents one's complete emotional absorption in an activity being carried out; and Maslow's (1971) concept of peak experience, which is an affective, transient moment of ecstasy (Matteucci, 2013). Of these, Cohen (2010) argues that only peak experience is synonymous with subject-related authenticity (Cohen, 2010). This is because only subject-related authenticity and peak experience possess "an 'aura' and an ineffability" (Cohen, 2010, p. 70). The concept of peak experience is discussed in more detail below.

Peak experience represents a passing moment of ecstasy occurring during unique pleasurable situations outside of one's day-to-day activities (Cohen, 2010; Maslow,

1971). The concept was originally connected with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, a theory suggesting that individuals have: (1) physiological needs, or needs for health, food, and sleep; (2) a need for safety, or a need for shelter and removal from danger; (3) a need for belonging, or a need for love, affection, and being connected to a group; (4) esteem needs, or a need for a strong self-esteem and esteem from others; and (5) self-actualization needs, or a need to achieve self-potential. In this theory, peak experience was originally described as one of the sensations experienced when an individual carries out self-actualizing behaviors, or behaviors that correspond to his or her talents.

Of the terms subject-related authenticity and peak experience, the latter is considerably more prevalent throughout the hospitality and tourism literature. In particular, it has been examined by several seminal studies, such as Relph's (1976) study of place, Mannell and Iso-Ahola's (1987) study into the psychological nature of tourism, and Beedie and Hudson's (2003) study of adventure tourism. Both Relph (1976) and Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) argue that going on a vacation elicits a peak experience, while Beedie and Hudson (2003) state that for adventure tourists, rock climbing elicits such an experience.

Furthermore, there is greater precedent for the concept of peak experience being used in the food tourism literature (Chang et al., 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Horng & Tsai, 2012; Quan & Wang, 2004). Quan and Wang (2004) suggest that food tourists have peak experiences, in which they are affectively "purified", when they participate in food-related activities while traveling. Similarly, Chang et al. (2010) indicate that for Chinese tourists seeking to learn about a destination's cuisine, the consumption of local cuisine represents a peak experience. Horng and Tsai (2012) note

that many destinations' local cuisines have received relatively large amounts of attention in certain media outlets such as tourism bureau websites and brochures. In turn, this has led to cuisine being a greater part of many destinations' images and has further led food-related activities in these destinations to become peak experiences. Furthermore, Goolaup and Mossberg (2017) have recently proposed a conceptual framework, using grounded theory, which highlights elements which positively influence food tourists' peak experience levels (termed "extraordinary experience"): a non-ordinary experience, opportunities for togetherness, opportunities for learning, the presence of quality service, a sense of opulence, and the presence of a pleasant environment. As can be seen from these prior studies of food tourism experiences, particularly experiences related to the consumption of a destination's authentic local cuisine have been shown to elicit peak experiences (Chang et al., 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017; Horng & Tsai, 2012; Quan & Wang, 2004).

In summary, this section has introduced object-related authenticity, its key conceptualizations, and subject-related authenticity. It also introduced peak experience, which has been shown to be closely related to subject-related authenticity and is a concept that is more prominent in the hospitality and tourism literature than subject-related authenticity (Cohen, 2010). However, prior research suggests that restaurant authenticity is typically assessed by either object-related or subject-related authenticity, and not both. This is because object-related authenticity tends to act as an antecedent to subject-related authenticity (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Determining which form of authenticity to use in studying restaurant authenticity requires a review of prior restaurant authenticity literature, which follows in the next section.

2.5 AUTHENTICITY IN RESTAURANTS

Multiple studies have been conducted to better understand perceived restaurant authenticity. These studies have often been limited in scope (only assessing a limited number of restaurant attributes) and have typically only used constructive and objective authenticity. Nevertheless, they indicate that certain key restaurant attributes may influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity, including the restaurant environment, food and beverage, others in the restaurant, and marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Costa & Besio, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang et al., 2011; A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015; Kovács, Carroll, & Lehman, 2013; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Tiu Wright, Nancarrow, & Kwok, 2001; Wood & Muñoz, 2007; Zeng et al., 2012). Each of these key restaurant attributes are reviewed in the following sections.

2.5.1 PERCEPTIONS OF THE RESTAURANT ENVIRONMENT

A restaurant's environment traditionally includes furnishings, décor, paintings, table settings, design, music, and the aesthetic design of its menu. Moreover, it may also include the exterior of the restaurant, and employee appearance and dress (Jang et al., 2011; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007).

Prior research suggests that there is a positive relationship between perceptions of a restaurant's environment and overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Lee, Hwang, & Mustapha, 2014; Muñoz et al., 2006; Gaytán, 2008). In fact, Lee et al. (2014) argue that having an authentic environment is "critical" for ethnic restaurants. In general, the environment has primarily been assessed using constructive authenticity in previous research (Lee et al., 2014; Muñoz et al., 2006; Gaytán, 2008). This means that prior

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studies have shown that restaurant customers assess attributes related to a restaurant's environment using their prior experiences as a reference. These studies are discussed in further detail in the following discussion.

At international ethnic restaurants, perceptions of authenticity related to the environment can be enhanced for customers when the walls are adorned with objects perceived to be connected to the culture of the restaurant. Irish pubs are perceived to be more authentic when the walls are adorned with Irish artifacts and symbols such as four-leaf clovers, large beer mugs, pictures of leprechauns, and beer casks (Muñoz et al., 2006). Similar observations have been made at Mexican-themed restaurants in the U.S. Specifically, Mexican-themed restaurants adorned with Mexican blankets, horse saddles, or lanterns are perceived to be more authentic than those without these items (Gaytán, 2008). Similarly, the environment at restaurants serving domestic local cuisine can also influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. For example, some local restaurants display photos of local farmers on their walls (Costa & Besio, 2011). By including such aspects in their environment, these restaurants create an image in the mind of their customers that they align themselves with local culture and tradition (Costa & Besio, 2011). Similarly, DiPietro and Levitt (2017) also determined that certain specific environmental attributes of an American Southern restaurant could positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity, including the table settings, decorations, furnishings, exterior, and menus.

Although multiple studies suggest a strong relationship between elements of the restaurant environment and perceived authenticity, others indicate that this relationship is more muted (George, 2000; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012). This is

notably the case for studies assessing ethnic, Asian restaurants. Studies conducted on Thai restaurants (both full-service and fast food) have assessed the influence of the restaurant environment on perceived restaurant authenticity, including the uniforms, menu design, restaurant greeting, table setting, music, and exterior and interior of the restaurant environment, and found it to be of marginal influence (Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012). Similarly, research on Chinese restaurants suggested that environmental items, consisting of employee dress, Chinese music, and interior decoration, are of little importance to overall customer perceptions of authenticity (George, 2000).

Overall, attributes related to a restaurant's environment that are perceived to be authentic have been found to positively influence perceptions of overall restaurant authenticity. However, not all studies support this, suggesting that there is a need for further inquiry to determine this relationship. Next, the following discusses the perceptions of a restaurant's food and beverage with regard to authenticity.

2.5.2 PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Prior studies suggest that perceptions of a restaurant's food and beverage positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Chi & Jackson, 2011; George, 2000; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012). In general, these studies have assessed attributes related to food and beverage using constructive and objective authenticity, which means that they have investigated a combination of a restaurant customers' prior experiences with a cuisine and some sort of verification process (Ceccarini, 2014; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Muñoz et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012).

Sukalakamala and Boyce's (2007) study determined that the presence of ingredients perceived to be Thai in menu items and the presence of "hot and spicy" flavors, which are traditionally associated with Thai food, were the attributes of highest importance to customers in an authentic Thai restaurant. On a 10-point Likert-type scale anchored by 1=not important to the dining experience and 10=very important to the dining experience, traditional hot and spicy dishes scored 7.02, while authentic Thai dishes using authentic Thai ingredients scored even higher at 7.76. Similarly, Tsai and Lu's (2012) research, which expanded upon Sukalakamala and Boyce's (2007) work, determined that the presence of recipes with ingredients perceived to be authentic was of the greatest importance for customers' dining experiences. Moreover, they also observed a strong positive correlation between their food and beverage factor (termed "food concern") factor and "authentic dining satisfaction" ($r = 0.442$, $p < .001$) among their respondents. With regard to beverages, Muñoz et al.'s (2006) qualitative study suggests that authentic Irish pubs need to serve beers brewed in Ireland.

The criteria used to assess food and restaurant authenticity can also differ from region to region (Chi & Jackson, 2011), which reinforces the assertion that restaurant customers use constructive authenticity to assess restaurant authenticity. Ethnic restaurants located in other countries often serve dishes that do not exist in their own home country. For example, in Taiwan, Thai restaurants frequently serve a dish called "moon shrimp pancake", but this dish, developed to accommodate Taiwanese tastes, is unknown in Thailand (Chi & Jackson, 2011). This implies that this dish would only influence perceptions of authenticity in Taiwan (Chi & Jackson, 2011).

On the supply side, restaurateurs tend to view the development of an objectively authentic menu as a means of increasing overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Chi & Jackson, 2011). To this end, several organizations have developed food authenticity certifications both to protect the heritage of their cuisine and to allow restaurant owners to market the authentic and traditional nature of their restaurant (Ceccarini, 2014; Chi & Jackson, 2011). A notable example is the Thai Ministry of Culture's "Thai Select" designation, which identifies "authentic" Thai restaurants throughout the world which meet the criteria for proper, traditional Thai food (Chi & Jackson, 2011). Similarly, multiple organizations in Italy certify restaurants that use traditional ingredients and preparation processes to make Neapolitan-style pizza (Ceccarini, 2014).

Overall, prior studies suggest that when restaurant customers perceive a restaurant's food and beverage to be authentic, it can positively influence their perceptions of overall restaurant authenticity. The following section discusses the other people in a restaurant and how they may influence perceptions of overall restaurant authenticity.

2.5.3 PERCEPTIONS OF OTHER PEOPLE IN A RESTAURANT

Multiple studies into ethnic restaurants have attempted to link the presence of others in a restaurant, assessed using constructive, objective authenticity, and staged authenticity, to perceived restaurant authenticity. These studies have shown that restaurant customers assess others in the restaurant using either their prior experiences as a reference (constructive authenticity), some sort of verification process (objective authenticity), or a link between others in the restaurant and their level of immersion in a

restaurant's referent culture (staged authenticity) (MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). Other people in the restaurant can include other consumers in the dining room, the restaurateurs (owners), and the restaurant managers and employees (Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012). These people create the overall social environment of the restaurant (Muñoz et al., 2006).

A restaurant's social environment, or the mood set by a group of individuals, has been observed to have an impact on perceived restaurant authenticity (Muñoz et al., 2006). For example, based on the way Irish people are often portrayed in the media, an authentic Irish pub is expected to be social, boisterous, or "jovial". Moreover, patrons at an authentic Irish pub should be consuming beer (Muñoz et al., 2006). Similarly, Hanks, Line, and Kim (2017) have noted that there are well-defined norms for the social environment of an American sports bar: typically, they are busy, fast-paced, and noisy.

Furthermore, if the clientele in a restaurant is perceived to be affiliated with the ethnicity of the restaurant, it can positively influence a consumer's perception of the restaurant's authenticity (Gaytán, 2008). Similarly, the creation of a perceived sense of family or community among restaurant customers at local family-owned restaurants has led some customers to feel a greater sense of perceived restaurant authenticity (Costa & Besio, 2011; Kovács et al., 2013). Conversely if a restaurant's clientele is viewed as being composed solely of tourists or outsiders, it can have a negative influence on perceived restaurant authenticity via the social environment (Waller & Lea, 1999).

Beyond other consumers in the restaurant, multiple studies have analyzed the relationship between restaurant employees and perceived authenticity (Sukalakamala &

Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012). Zeng et al.'s (2012) study of restaurants in China suggests that a server's accent can influence perceptions of restaurant authenticity. If a server's accent matches the accent of other Chinese people one has interacted with, it can be seen as authentic. Similarly, some diners at international ethnic restaurants in the U.S. have noted that their perception of restaurant authenticity is influenced by their ability to order in the restaurant's native language (Gaytán, 2008). This is specifically the case at Mexican restaurants, where diners' perceptions of authenticity are influenced by their ability to order in Spanish (Gaytán, 2008). In doing so, they are able, to some extent, to verify that the staff originates from the same region as the restaurant's cuisine (Gaytán, 2008).

While many studies have shown that the ethnic and cultural background of restaurant staff can positively influence customer perceptions of restaurant authenticity, however, some further research suggests that it is a relatively inconsequential factor. This was notably the case in Sukalakamala and Boyce's (2007) as well as Tsai and Lu's (2012) studies of Thai restaurant authenticity. Specifically, in the former study, the perceived importance of employee heritage received a mean score of 4.96 on a 10-point Likert-type scale anchored by 1=not important and 10=very important; and in the latter, the same item received a mean score of 3.42 on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by 1=strongly unimportant and 5=strongly important.

In general, attributes related to others in the restaurant that are perceived to be authentic have been found to positively influence perceptions of restaurant authenticity. However, some studies suggest that others in the restaurant are of limited importance in this regard, indicating that further inquiry is required to determine the influence that

others in the restaurant have on perceived overall restaurant authenticity. The following discusses restaurant marketing and branding and their relationship with restaurant authenticity.

2.5.4 MARKETING AND BRANDING

Multiple restaurant studies have attempted to link restaurant marketing and branding, assessed primarily via constructive authenticity, to perceived restaurant authenticity (Chadwell, 2002). Thus, these studies have generally shown that restaurant customers assess attributes related to a restaurant's marketing and branding using their prior experiences.

Restaurants, and particularly international ethnic restaurants, employ marketing as a means of associating their establishment with their culture's perceived traditions (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Mkono, 2012). For example, in America, Italians are sometimes perceived as dining in large, boisterous family gatherings. Therefore, the Italian restaurant chain Olive Garden has run promotions suggesting that large Italian family gatherings take place at their establishments. In creating promotions like this, restaurants try to convince diners that visiting them will offer a unique and authentic cultural experience (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002). In the case of restaurants selling domestic cuisine, the Canadian coffee and donut shop Tim Hortons has developed the "True Stories" campaign, which highlights memorable moments that have taken place at their coffee shops. In highlighting these stories, Tim Hortons aims to link its brand with Canadian culture and tradition (Cormack, 2008).

With regard to branding, restaurants often utilize key buzzwords on their menus and signage as a means of eliciting customer perceptions of restaurant authenticity

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(Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Mkono, 2012). Some notable terms include "authentic", "homemade", "family recipe", and "real". Overall, marketing in the form of advertisement campaigns and branding through restaurant menus and signage has been found to positively influence restaurant customer perceptions of restaurant authenticity.

All in all, a large portion of prior research suggests that perceptions of certain restaurant attributes, including the environment, the food and beverage, the perceptions of others in the restaurant, and the marketing and branding, can positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. However, some conflicting studies indicate that this may not be the case for the restaurant environment and others in the restaurant, thereby highlighting the need for further inquiry to assess these restaurant attributes. Nevertheless, the restaurant authenticity research assessed in this section does provide guidance regarding which prior conceptualizations have been used in the literature and should be considered when developing a possible comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale (RAS). It is important to note, however, that each prior study reviewed in this section used one or more conceptualization(s) of object-related authenticity to assess the perceived authenticity of a restaurant attribute (Wang, 1999). Therefore, the following section discusses the relationship between object-related authenticity and restaurant authenticity in further detail.

2.5.5 OBJECT-RELATED AUTHENTICITY AND RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY

Between object-related and subject-related authenticity, conceptualizations of object-related authenticity have generally been used to assess customer perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005). There appears to be sound reasoning for doing this, as object-related authenticity assesses the perceptions of goods, services, and

experiences, and the attributes that have been shown to potentially influence restaurant authenticity are types of goods, services, or experiences, such as the environment, food and beverage, others in the restaurant, and marketing and branding (e.g. Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; George, 2000; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012).

Regarding the restaurant environment, the authenticity of several services, including employee uniforms, menu design, restaurant greeting, table settings, restaurant music, exterior decorations, and interior decorations, have been linked to overall restaurant authenticity (e.g. George, 2000; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012). In terms of food and beverages, prior studies have linked the authenticity of goods in the form of perceived dish flavors and perceived recipe traditionality to overall restaurant authenticity (e.g. Chi & Jackson, 2011; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012). With regard to others in the restaurant, research suggests a link between the perceived experience of dining among others from a restaurant's referent culture, including other diners, restaurant employees, owners, and managers, and overall restaurant authenticity (e.g. Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012). Finally, for marketing and branding, prior studies have linked the experiences generated from marketing campaigns, restaurant promotional materials, and signage to overall restaurant authenticity (e.g. Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Cormack, 2008; Mkono, 2012).

Overall, one large shortcoming of the reviewed restaurant authenticity literature is that almost none of these studies have used a comprehensive measurement of restaurant authenticity. Instead, they have been qualitative, have measured only certain restaurant attributes, or have contained extremely simplistic measurements of restaurant authenticity (e.g. Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Jang et al., 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013). Therefore, developing a comprehensive RSA is a priority of the current study. However, outside of the restaurant authenticity literature, there have been some very limited attempts to develop measurements of authenticity in the greater hospitality and tourism field. These are discussed in the following section.

2.6 AUTHENTICITY MEASUREMENTS IN THE LITERATURE

Although some prior hospitality and tourism studies have attempted to assess perceived authenticity, they have done so without using a comprehensive measurement (Camus, 2004; Chhabra, 2008; Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Robinson & Clifford, 2012; Wang & Mattila, 2013). In general, existing measurements are unidimensional, and only consider one or two conceptualizations of authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005). Moreover, previous authenticity research has been conducted in many different contexts, and thus, few existing constructs have been developed specifically to measure authenticity in a restaurant setting. These research studies have not all considered the perceived authenticity of some key restaurant attributes, including perceptions of others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and branding. Nevertheless, extant hospitality and tourism research containing some form of authenticity measurement is now discussed.

As noted, some of the constructs developed to assess authenticity in the context of hospitality and tourism are unidimensional and only examine one or two conceptualizations of authenticity (Chhabra et al., 2003; Robinson & Clifford, 2012). For instance, Chhabra et al.'s (2003) study of customer perceptions of authenticity at the Flora MacDonald Scottish Highland Games held in North Carolina investigated authenticity using one eight-item construct that assessed the perceived staged authenticity of the Highland dancing, the Parade of Tartans, Scottish education, the setting, the souvenirs, events for families, opportunities to interact with one's Scottish clan, and family reunion opportunities. Similarly, Robinson and Clifford's (2012) study of customer perceptions of the authenticity at medieval festivals in Australia included a single one-dimensional construct that only measured perceptions of the festival's food.

While some hospitality and tourism studies have developed more comprehensive, multi-construct measurements, these have still only assessed a constrained number of authenticity conceptualizations. In a study of the facets of food authenticity, Camus (2004) developed a 12-item, multi-dimensional construct to examine the perceived authenticity of a food product. Dimensions included food origin, food uniqueness, and the relationship between consumers and the product, for example, if a food item was produced in a manner that matched customers' values. Furthermore, in Chhabra's (2008) study of museum authenticity, a multi-dimensional construct was developed to determine how museum curators defined authenticity. First, the objective factor, termed "essentialist" authenticity, measured perceptions that artifacts in a museum were real and not manufactured, and whether the museum contained artifacts that were objectively historic. Second, the staged authenticity factor (termed "negotiated" authenticity)

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assessed perceptions that a museum accurately portrayed history and was an able steward for customers and the community. Lastly, the constructive authenticity factor examined perceptions that the museum met expectations and perceptions of today's culture and society. Thus, Chhabra's (2008) multi-dimensional factor still only considered three conceptualizations of authenticity. Finally, in their study of manager perceptions of authenticity in the context of cultural tourism, Kolar and Zabkar (2010) developed two separate constructs that measured: (1) the perceived object-related authenticity; and (2) the peak experience of Romanesque sites in Europe.

As was shown in the literature, there have only been limited attempts to develop thorough measurements of authenticity or restaurant authenticity. This shortcoming suggests a need to develop a more comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale. Doing so would allow researchers and practitioners, particularly those at tourist destinations, to more rigorously assess the perceptions of large consumer groups regarding authenticity. This is important and useful as certain consumer groups, such as food tourists, actively seek out restaurants perceived to be authentic (Sims, 2009).

The following section will discuss food tourists, their relationship with authenticity, and their importance as a market segment. Subsequently, general tourists and locals are covered. These are also large groups of consumers at tourist destinations, but they may have differing perceptions and behaviors compared with food tourists.

2.7 FOOD TOURISTS

Food tourists represent a subset of overall tourists, and they come from a wide set of demographic backgrounds (Hjalager, 2003; Mandala Research, 2013; Ontario Ministry of Tourism, 2007). Studies done to distinguish food tourists from the general tourist

population have found that for the most part, they are evenly split between males and females; are generally between 26 and 57 years old; and earn above-average incomes (Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Y. H. Kim et al., 2010; Kim, Kim, Goh, & Antun, 2011). A large proportion of food tourists also appear to have at least a college or university degree (Y. H. Kim et al., 2010; Shenoy, 2005).

Several prior studies have noted that food tourists have unique lifestyle characteristics. Notably, they often have robust relationship values. More specifically, they wish to dine with a group of individuals, enjoy interacting with their co-diners while dining, and often brag or boast to friends and colleagues regarding their unique food tourism experiences (Fields, 2002; Ignatov & Smith, 2006). Many, but not all, food tourists also have relatively strong levels of food involvement and food neophilia; in other words, they are highly involved with food in their daily lives, and enjoy tasting new foods (Crespi-Vallbona & Dimitrovski, 2016; Robinson & Getz, 2016). Many food tourists also self-identify as food enthusiasts (Robinson & Getz, 2014).

Overall, food tourists come from a broad set of demographic backgrounds, and have unique lifestyle characteristics (Hjalager, 2003; McKercher et al., 2008; Ontario Ministry of Tourism, 2007). Along with this, some prior research has indicated that food tourists actively seek out authentic, traditional, local cuisine while they are traveling (e.g. Blichfeldt & Therkelsen, 2010; Getz & Robinson, 2014; Sims, 2009). In this vein, the following section elaborates upon studies related to food tourists and authentic local cuisine.

2.7.1 FOOD TOURISTS AND AUTHENTICITY

Prior research suggests that food tourists are intrinsically motivated to seek out a destination's authentic, traditional, local cuisine for two key reasons: (1) to immerse themselves in a destination's local culture; and (2) for educational purposes (Blichfeldt & Therkelsen, 2010; Boyne, Hall, & Williams, 2003; Crespi-Vallbona & Dimitrovski, 2016; Mitchell & Hall, 2003; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009; Stewart, Bramble, & Ziraldo, 2008). These intrinsic motivators are examined below.

Several studies support the idea that food tourists seek out a destination's authentic, traditional, local cuisine as a means of immersing themselves in a destination's local culture (Blichfeldt & Therkelsen, 2010; Robinson & Getz, 2014; Sims, 2009). Sims's (2009) qualitative study of food tourism in the Lakes District in the United Kingdom determined that many food tourists actively look for authentic restaurants that champion a destination's local charm. Similarly, Blichfeldt and Therkelsen's (2010) qualitative assessment of different food tourism experiences suggests that eating "authentic culinary delights" in Tuscany, Italy represents a key means of experiencing Tuscan culture. Furthermore, Robinson and Getz's (2014) profile of food tourists in Australia determined that these tourists seek out destinations based on the presence of a distinct colonial past and strong cultural heritage.

Similarly, several studies have noted that food tourists aim to educate themselves about the unique characteristics of a destination's cuisine (Boyne et al., 2003; Crespi-Vallbona & Dimitrovski, 2016; Mitchell & Hall, 2003; Stewart et al., 2008). Mitchell and Hall (2003) found that food tourists actively look for knowledge and want to educate themselves about cuisines while traveling. Stewart et al.'s (2008) study on challenges in

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the food tourism industry determined that food tourists "are driven to discover and explore the rural highways and byways of their chosen destination" (p. 309). Furthermore, in their work on food tourism marketing and promotions, Boyne et al. (2003) noted that committed food tourists seek to learn about a destination's gastronomic heritage. Chang et al.'s (2010) study of Chinese food tourists in Australia showed that many food tourists look for authentic Australian fare as a means of educating themselves about the cuisine. Crespi-Vallbona and Dimitrovski (2016) also note that the education process can commence prior to travel, as many food tourists actively research a destination's authentic, traditional, local cuisine when planning a trip.

Along with seeking out authentic cuisine while traveling, it is also important to note that food tourists represent a large and growing market segment (Mandala Research, 2013). Thus, the following section discusses their importance for the restaurant and tourism industries.

2.7.2 FOOD TOURISTS AS A MARKET SEGMENT

Due to a unique set of characteristics, it is advantageous for restaurants and food tourism practitioners to reach out to food tourists. Firstly, several studies indicate that food tourists earn high or above-average incomes (ACP Publishing, 2002; Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture, 2011; Robinson & Getz, 2014). This is important as individuals with higher levels of disposable income are more likely to partake in leisure travel (Nicolau & Más, 2005; Uysal & Crompton, 1985). The Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture's (2011) assessment of food and wine tourists in Canada determined that 62.3% of food tourists, defined as "moderate" and "high" interest food tourists, earned above $60,000, and more than 35% earned at least $100,000. A demographic

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analysis of subscribers to Australian Gourmet Traveler magazine, a publication for food enthusiasts, suggests that most food tourists are "white collar" workers (ACP Publishing, 2002; Mitchell & Hall, 2003). Moreover, the Travel Industry Association of America's (TIAA) (2006) profile of "culinary travelers" indicates that American food tourists are generally well-educated and affluent. Finally, in Robinson and Getz's (2014) study, Australian food tourists' median incomes were A\$50,000-A\$60,000 (approximately U.S. \$37,300 - \$44,800), which was markedly higher than the average Australian income of A\$45,300 (approximately U.S. \$33,800).

Some further studies also indicate that food tourists spend more while traveling than general tourists do. Notably, the World Food Travel Association's assessment of the American culinary traveler suggests that food tourists spend \$1,322 on average per trip, in comparison with \$1,200 for general tourists (Mandala Research, 2013). Kim et al. (2011) also determined that food tourists have very low price sensitivity when spending on food. Similarly, several studies have noted the strong, positive economic impact that food tourist spending can have on a region. Notably, in Ontario, Canada, food tourists visiting from the U.S. have contributed C\$816 million (Approximately U.S. \$606 million) to the local economy (Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture, 2011).

Overall, food tourists represent a prominent market segment. It is beneficial for restaurants and food tourism practitioners to reach out to them as they tend to spend more, on average, than general tourists do (\$1,322 on average per trip, compared to \$1,200). They also tend to have low price sensitivity for food expenditures while traveling (Kim et al., 2011; Mandala Research, 2013). Yet, a large number of other tourists, general tourists, do not actively look for unique dining experiences while

traveling (Robinson & Getz, 2014). These individuals may be relatively less concerned with food and unique, authentic operations, but still often need to dine out while traveling. General tourists are discussed in the following section.

2.8 GENERAL TOURISTS AND DINING

While food tourists actively seek out unique and authentic dining experiences, findings in relevant extant studies suggest that general tourists, who do not actively look for such experiences, are generally less concerned with food choices while traveling, but also dine out (Andriotis et al., 2007; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016; Kirillova, 2012; Torres, 2002). Furthermore, some research suggests that general tourists may even be less concerned about food than the locals at a destination (Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016). The following examines the literature on general tourists' expectations and perceptions relating to food and dining out while traveling.

Torres's (2002) study of tourist dining behavior in the Yucatan indicates that general tourists often resist tasting local cuisines. According to Cohen and Avieli (2004), at many leisure destinations, such as beach destinations, there is little variety in terms of food as diners at these locations have only a limited desire to taste different cuisines. Similarly, Andriotis et al. (2007) note that most general tourists to Crete, Greece only dine within the vicinity of their hotels. In their study of Chinese tourists in Australia, Chang et al. (2010) note that many tourists are "not fastidious" about meals; they pay little attention to where and what they eat; and they are more concerned with compromising with their fellow travelers regarding dining. Kirillova (2012) examined volunteer tourists—tourists who volunteer and carry out leisure activities when they

travel—and leisure tourists, neither of which actively seek out food-related activities when traveling. The author found food and beverage spending for both groups to be less than 12% of travel expenditures, which is significantly less than the level for food tourists (Mandala Research, 2013). SelectUSA (2017) has placed this figure at around 20%, but this is still below food tourist levels (Mandala Research, 2013).

General tourists are still an important market segment, as by some accounts they represent more than 70% of all tourists and approximately $100 billion in annual restaurant sales (Robinson & Getz, 2014). Furthermore, research by Yun, Hennessey, and MacDonald (2011) indicates that general tourists are open to eating local cuisine while traveling if the food is familiar and recognizable to them.

Overall, prior research suggests that general tourists may be less concerned with food when they travel (Andriotis et al., 2007; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016; Torres, 2002). Nevertheless, they do represent a large proportion, approximately 70%, of all tourists, which suggests that they should not be ignored by restaurants at tourism destinations (Robinson & Getz, 2014; SelectUSA, 2017; Yun et al., 2011). The following section discusses locals, how their perceptions and behaviors may differ from those of general tourists or food tourists, and why they can also be important to restaurants and destinations that cater to visitors.

2.9 LOCALS AND DINING

At times, locals can also serve as a key constituency for restaurants and destinations that cater to visitors. Firstly, locals still spend approximately 50% of their overall food budget on dining out, which suggests that they will frequent restaurants in and around their community (National Restaurant Association, 2017b; USDA, 2016).

Furthermore, during shoulder or off-peak seasons when there are fewer tourists at a destination, locals can make up the majority of a restaurant's business. For example, Vieregge, Scanlon, and Huss (2007) conducted their study of diners at a tourist destination in Switzerland during a shoulder season and obtained 78% of their responses from locals.

There is also some evidence that expectations and perceptions of restaurants differ between locals and visitors. Baldacchino's (2015) study into dining at rural tourism destinations suggests that visitors often expect their dining experiences to contain unique stories, histories, and cooking techniques, all of which are of less importance to locals. Similarly, Yi and Choi (2012) compared restaurant perceptions between locals and tourists in Korea and found that: (1) locals were less careful than tourists when selecting restaurants; and (2) tourists were more likely to prefer the cuisine from their hometown to the destination's local cuisine. Conversely, some studies suggest that expectations and perceptions between locals and tourists may not be that different. Notably, Vieregge et al. (2007) did not observe any differences in perception between locals and non-locals, although they did see differences between Swiss and non-Swiss respondents who lived near the restaurant under study. The disparities observed in prior studies comparing locals and tourists indicate that there is need for further assessment.

Overall, the previous sections have discussed food tourists, general tourists, and locals. Next, the following discusses Southern cuisine and food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S, and introduces this cuisine and this region as the context of the present study.

2.10 SOUTHERN CUISINE AND FOOD TOURISM DESTINATIONS

To date, the majority of restaurant authenticity studies have assessed restaurants serving international ethnic cuisine (e.g. Chi & Jackson, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Mkono, 2012; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Liu, 2012). Thus, a key shortcoming in the literature is that domestic regional American cuisine, which represents the most commonly served cuisine in the U.S. has been neglected (Alvarez, 2015, 2016b).

The current study is contextualized around (1) American Southern cuisine, which is a form of American regional cuisine; and (2) food tourism destinations, destinations where food plays an important part of the overall tourism experience, in the Southeastern U.S. (Hrelia, 2015). This is because American Southern cuisine is a prominent regional, American cuisine that encompasses a large swathe of geography, has a rich history, and includes a distinct set of historic recipes and dishes. Furthermore, several prominent food tourism destinations are located in the Southeastern U.S. The geography, history, recipes, and food tourism destinations related to Southern cuisine in the Southeastern U.S. are now discussed in further detail.

With regard to geography, Southern food is associated with more than 25% of American states and the majority of the Southeastern U.S. This vast territory runs into the American states of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Florida (Williamson, 1999). Oklahoma and Virginia serve as the respective northwest and northeast borders for Southern cuisine, and Texas and Florida as the respective southwest and southeast borders (Williamson, 1999).

Several deeply traditional dishes are closely linked to Southern cuisine. These include slow-cooked vegetables such as collard greens and black-eyed peas; fried dishes, such as fried chicken, fried green tomatoes, fried pickles, and hush puppies (fried balls of dough); hot-smoked dishes, such as pork barbecue and pork ribs; smothered dishes such as biscuits and sausage gravy, and shrimp and grits; baked goods such as corn bread; and rich desserts such as banana pudding and sweet potato pie (Duarte Alonso & O'Neill, 2012; Edge, 2014; Latshaw, 2009).

These Southern dishes and recipes originated from a unique and distinct set of cultures. Notably, European migrants coming from England and Scotland introduced deep-frying techniques and pork to North America; Native Americans in the American South contributed smoking techniques and food staples such as beans and corn; and lastly, the slave trade contributed spices and vegetable ingredients such as okra and black-eyed peas (Edge, 2014).

Restaurants serving Southern cuisine represent a useful and advantageous platform to assess perceptions of restaurant authenticity for several reasons. With regard to perceptions of authenticity, diners at Southern restaurants tend to expect that traditional dishes, prepared using traditional recipes, be served (Edge, 2014). This is because compared to other American regional cuisines, Southern cuisine has an extensive history, dating as far back as the 17th century. Thus, Southern cuisine has become inextricably linked to the culture, traditions, personality, and heritage of the states comprising its geographical territory (Duarte Alonso & O'Neill, 2012; Edge, 2014; Latshaw, 2009). With regard to food tourism, multiple cities located in the American Southeast have been identified as top food tourism destinations, or cities with unique

culinary offerings, in the U.S, including Charleston, SC, Louisville, KY, Nashville, TN,

Savannah, GA, and Atlanta, GA (Hunt, 2016; Sietsema, 2015; Zagat, 2016).

Overall, Southern cuisine is defined by a vast geography, a set of traditional

dishes and recipes, and its unique history. It represents an advantageous cuisine and

region in which to contextualize the current study as it has an especially rich history and

many cities based in its territory have been recognized as top food tourism destinations

(Zagat, 2016). Next, the theoretical foundations of the current study are introduced.

2.11 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section presents the theories used to provide the framework for this study.

First, the social cognitive theory is discussed, as it is a seminal consumer behavior theory

in the hospitality and tourism literature (Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006; Bandura, 1986;

Kakoudakis et al., 2017; Lu, Mao, Wang, & Hu, 2015; Song & Chon, 2012). However,

hospitality and tourism studies based on this theory have assessed a wide and disparate

variety of variables, suggesting that a review of further theory is required to guide the

specific factors and relationships that are included in the present study's proposed model.

Thus, to supplement the social cognitive theory, the section reviews the Mehrabian-

Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and

associative network theory as well. In the following section, the social cognitive theory is

first introduced.

2.11.1 SOCIAL COGNITIVE THEORY

The social cognitive theory is a seminal theory assessing influences on

individuals' behavior (Bandura, 1986). In the hospitality and tourism literature, it has

generally been used to examine consumers' motives or behaviors (Munar & Jacobsen,

2014). It includes three key factors: the environment, personal characteristics, and behavior, and is based on a foundation of triadic reciprocality. This means that in the social cognitive theory, each of the factors has the potential to influence the other two factors. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the relationships in the social cognitive theory.
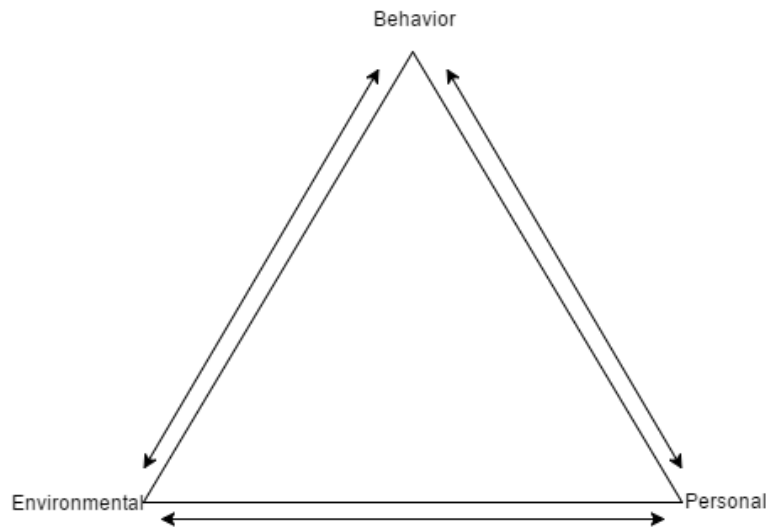
Figure 2.1. The Framework for Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986)

In the context of assessing resultant behaviors, one's environment and personal characteristics serve as potential antecedents to behavior, but because social cognitive theory is based on a foundation of triadic reciprocality, the manner with which they potentially influence behavior can differ: they can directly and positively influence behavior; environment can mediate a relationship between personal characteristics and behavior; and personal characteristics can mediate a relationship between environment and behavior. These potential antecedents of the environment and personal characteristics are now covered in greater detail, followed by behavior and its actualization in the context of hospitality and tourism. Subsequently, the chapter discusses how prior

hospitality and tourism studies grounded in social cognitive theory have organized their path relationships between environment, one's personal characteristics, and behavior.

The environment represents external attributes that influence an individual's behavior. It is important to note that there are different types of environments: social environments and physical environments. The social environment represents external influences derived from other individuals such as friends, peers, and family members, while the physical environment represents external influences of a location's tangible and intangible attributes (Bandura, 1986).

The environment construct has been operationalized in a variety of different forms in the hospitality and tourism literature (Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006; J. Lu et al., 2015; Kakoudakis et al., 2017; Song & Chon, 2012). For instance, Ariyabuddhiphongs's (2006) study of casinos in Thailand considers both the social environment and aspects of the physical environment, including the level of prize money and the availability of certain games at a destination. These factors serve as antecedents for the frequency of gaming behavior. On the other hand, some studies have only considered the social environment. Among them, J. Lu et al.'s (2015) investigated tourists' adoption of travel applications on their smart phones and assessed destinations' social norms regarding technology adoption. Lastly, some have only considered the physical environment, like Kakoudakis et al.'s (2017) mixed-methods study into the cognitive and behavioral effects of social tourism, or free tourism opportunities provided to the underprivileged. Using social cognitive theory, Kakoudakis et al. (2017) examined whether the relaxing nature of a destination positively influenced respondents' perceived efficacy in dealing with life challenges. In general, the environment represents external attributes that impact one's

behavior, and there are both social environments and physical environments. Some hospitality studies have assessed both of these, while others have only considered one.

The personal characteristics construct can be derived from four distinct cognitive categories: (1) one's self-observation, which represents the mechanism in which one assesses one's progress towards attaining a goal; (2) one's self-evaluation, which refers to a process in which one compares one's current and desired performance; (3) one's self-efficacy, which represents the extent to which one believes that one has the capacity to carry out a behavior; and lastly, (4) one's self-reaction, which is the mechanism for adjusting behavior that might need to be changed (Bandura, 1986).

In the hospitality and tourism literature, a variety of these categories and a multitude of distinct factors have been used to assess personal characteristics and determine their influence on behavior (e.g. Keisidou, Sarigiannidis, & Maditinos, 2011; J. Lu et al., 2015; Song & Chon, 2012; White, 2008). In general, these studies have examined different combinations of two or three of the aforementioned cognitive categories. White's (2008) study of influences on intentions to participate in outdoor recreation included a personal antecedent which contained the cognitive categories of self-evaluation and self-efficacy for carrying out outdoor activities as factors. Similarly, in Keisidou et al.'s (2011) study on online shopping behavior, a personal antecedent was included comprising the cognitive categories of self-observation and self-efficacy for shopping online as factors. Furthermore, Song and Chon's (2012) research into career choice behavior in the hospitality industry considered a personal antecedent containing the cognitive categories of self-observation and self-efficacy for working in a given career as factors. Finally, J. Lu et al.'s (2015) study on travel application (app) adoption

examined a personal antecedent which contained the cognitive categories of self-evaluation regarding using travel apps, perceived personal outcomes from using travel apps, and self-efficacy for using apps.

While most of the hospitality and tourism literature grounded in social cognitive theory considers two or three cognitive categories, some only assess one (Adukaite, van Zyl, & Cantoni, 2016; Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006). For instance, Ariyabuddhiphongs's (2006) study included a personal antecedent containing only a factor related to self-observation, called "cognitive bias", which is the belief that random events, such as the outcomes of gambling, are controllable. Adukaite et al.'s (2016) qualitative study on hospitality educator technology adoption only considered the personal factor of self-efficacy as an antecedent to this adoption. Overall, the personal variable in the social cognitive theory can be derived from four distinct cognitive categories. In the hospitality and tourism literature, many studies include two or three of these categories, but some include as few as one.

The third part of the triad, or the construct of behavior, broadly represents an individual's array of actions and mannerisms (Minton, 2013). However, like the environment and personal constructs, it has been examined in a multitude of different ways in the hospitality and tourism literature utilizing social cognitive theory (i.e. Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006; J. Lu et al., 2015; Song & Chon, 2012; White, 2008). Ariyabuddhiphongs (2006) assessed frequency of gambling as a behavioral variable; White (2008) studied one's intention to participate in outdoor recreation; Song and Chon (2012) investigated hospitality career choice goals; and lastly, J. Lu et al.'s (2015) study into travel app adoption included intention to use travel apps as a behavioral variable.

Overall, the behavior construct can be measured via actual behavior or intentions to behave in a certain way depending on a study's context.

The path models for hospitality and tourism studies grounded in social cognitive theory have also taken a variety of forms. Both Ariyabuddhiphongs (2006) and J. Lu et al. (2015) tested models hypothesizing that one's personal and environmental attributes would directly influence behavior. Both studies also found that one's personal characteristics significantly influenced behavior, while the relationship between environment and behavior was not significant. On the other hand, Song and Chon (2012) tested a model in which the environment variable partially mediated a relationship between the personal characteristic variables and the behavior variable of career choice. Lastly, Kakoudakis et al.'s (2017) study of job-seeking behavior in the tourism industry showed that one's environment positively influenced personal characteristics, which in turn positively influenced behavior; in other words, personal characteristics mediated a relationship between the environment and behavior.

Overall, social cognitive theory is a seminal theory of consumer behavior in the hospitality and tourism literature. Yet, it does have some shortcomings. Firstly, as can be seen above, a wide and disparate variety of environment, personal, and behavior variables have been used in this literature, suggesting that a review of further theory is required to guide the specific factors to use in the current study. Furthermore, the theory is based on a foundation of triadic reciprocality, meaning that it does not have a clear direction or clearly lay out which variables serve as independent and dependent variables. In turn, prior hospitality and tourism studies grounded in social cognitive theory have tested a variety of different path models containing personal, environmental, and behavioral

variables (Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2006; Kakoudakis et al., 2017; J. Lu et al., 2015; Song & Chon, 2012; White, 2008). This suggests that, on its own, the social cognitive theory does not sufficiently guide the directional relationships for a proposed model. In the following discussion, the Mehrabian-Russell framework is reviewed to provide greater theoretical clarity regarding how one's personal, environmental, and behavioral variables may be related.

2.11.2 THE MEHRABIAN-RUSSELL MODEL

The Mehrabian-Russell model, first developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), argues that an external "stimulus" influences an internal "organism", which in turn leads to a behavioral "response". A stimulus represents the external factors that influence an individual (Chang, Eckman, & Yan, 2011), while an organism refers to the cognitive and affective responses that an individual experiences in relation to an external stimulus (Bagozzi, 1986; Chang et al., 2011). Lastly, the response represents an individual's behavior due to that stimulus and its interaction with the individual's affect (organism) (Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2001). In general, the stimulus factor corresponds to social cognitive theory's environment factor; the organism factor to social cognitive theory's personal characteristics factor; and the response factor to the behavior factor (Bandura, 1986; Sullivan & Adcock, 2002). This can best be seen in Sullivan and Adcock's (2002) seminal retail text, which uses the variable names from the Mehrabian-Russell model and social cognitive theory interchangeably. The Mehrabian-Russell model is displayed in Figure 2.2. For each variable in the figure, the corresponding variable name from the social cognitive theory has been included to demonstrate where they relate.
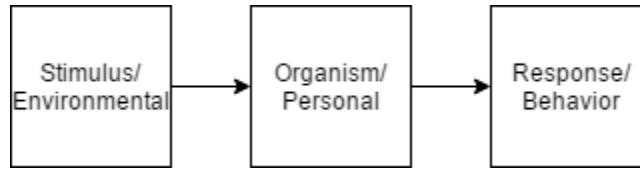
Figure 2.2. The Mehrabian-Russell model (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974)

It is important to note that Mehrabian and Russell (1974) originally tested their model with a specific set of constructs. The original stimulus variable was "physical environment", which represented a location's level of novelty and complexity, while the organism variables were: (1) pleasure, representing one's level of happiness or joyfulness at a given moment; (2) arousal, referring to the extent to which an individual becomes excited or stimulated; and (3) dominance, or the extent to which an individual feels influential, prominent, or powerful. Finally, the response variables were approach, or a desire to stay in an environment; and avoidance, or a desire to leave an environment. Yet, similar to the hospitality and tourism literature framed by social cognitive theory, the studies framed by the Mehrabian-Russell model have taken liberties on the specific variables they have utilized namely, they have used a multitude of stimulus, organism, and response variables (Jang & Namkung, 2009; Liu & Jang, 2009b; Manthiou, Ayadi, Lee, Chiang, & Tang, 2016).

Based on the Mehrabian-Russell model, Jang and Namkung (2009) assessed the influence of product quality, atmospherics, and service quality (stimuli) on emotions (organism) and behavioral intentions (response). In Liu and Jang's (2009b) study on the influence of restaurant atmospherics on emotions, perceived value, and behavioral intentions, also based on the Mehrabian-Russell model, atmospherics served as the stimulus; the customer's emotions and perceived value served as the organism variables;

and behavioral intentions represented the response. Lastly, in Manthiou et al.'s (2016) Mehrabian-Russell model-based study, which examined the roles of self-concept and future memory at a large consumer event in France, both the physical environment of the event space and staff interaction served as the stimuli; the consumer's self-concept and memory served as the organism factors; and behavioral intentions served as the response.

Overall, in the context of the current study, the Mehrabian-Russell model guides the causal relationships of the factors first presented in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive model of triadic reciprocity. Yet, as is the case with the social cognitive theory, the variables in the Mehrabian-Russell model have been manifested in a multitude of different ways, suggesting that it may not sufficiently explain which specific "personal" and "behavioral" variables may be influenced by restaurant authenticity either. Thus, to obtain greater conceptual guidance, the following section discusses the consumer-based model of authenticity. This model provides a clearer theoretical link between object-related authenticity, which is the form of authenticity that frames restaurant authenticity; subject-related authenticity; and loyalty (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010).

2.11.3 THE CONSUMER-BASED MODEL OF AUTHENTICITY

Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) consumer-based model of authenticity was originally designed to assess the influence of object-related authenticity on customer loyalty in the context of heritage tourism. However, it has since been used in several different tourism contexts. It proposes that a positive relationship between object-related authenticity and destination loyalty is partially mediated by subject-related authenticity. The model is based upon Reisinger and Steiner's (2006) seminal conceptual study of authenticity in tourism. In that study, the authors make two key propositions regarding object-related

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and subject-related authenticity: (1) while they are both related to the broader notion of "authenticity", object-related and subject-related authenticity are distinct concepts; and (2) they are correlated. More specifically, if one perceives a good or service to be authentic (object-related authenticity), it can lead to a feeling of ease (subject-related authenticity) (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

In the extant foodservice literature, the attributes that have been shown to potentially influence restaurant authenticity include the restaurant environment, food and beverage, others in the restaurant, and marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; George, 2000; Kovács et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2014; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Wang, 1999; Zeng et al., 2012). Each of these attributes is a type of good, service, or experience. This suggests that restaurant authenticity is associated with object-related authenticity (Wang, 1999). In the context of the present study, this means that a relationship between restaurant authenticity, based on object-related authenticity, and restaurant loyalty would be partially mediated by subject-related authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010).

Although it is a relatively new model, the consumer-based model of authenticity has been used to frame a variety of tourism studies, and each of them has confirmed a relationship between object-related and subject-related authenticity. Several have demonstrated that subject-related authenticity partially mediates the relationship between object-related authenticity and loyalty (Bryce, Curran, O'Gorman, & Taheri, 2015; Shen, et al., 2014; Zhou, Zhang, & Edelheim, 2013; Zhou, Zhang, Zhang, & Ma, 2015). For

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example, Shen et al.'s (2014) study of the relationship between perceived authenticity and loyalty at World Heritage Sites in China determined that subject-related authenticity partially mediated the relationship between object-related authenticity and behavioral loyalty. In their study of Japanese heritage sites, Bryce et al. (2015) found that subject-related authenticity partially mediated the relationship between object-related authenticity and behavioral loyalty. Furthermore, Zhou et al. (2013) and Zhou et al. (2015) observed a positive relationship between object-related and subject-related authenticity, but could not confirm a positive relationship between subject-related authenticity and loyalty. Some expanded models of the consumer-based model of authenticity, such as those by Girish and Chen (2017), and Nguyen and Cheung (2016), have also suggested that there is a positive relationship between subject-related authenticity and satisfaction.

Overall, the consumer-based model of authenticity helps provide insight into the specific factors used in the current study's theoretical framework. More specifically, it suggests that a relationship between restaurant authenticity as assessed using object-related authenticity and restaurant loyalty may be partially mediated by subject-related authenticity, or peak experience (Kolar & Zabkar, 2010). Relating this back to the social cognitive theory, it should also be mentioned that object-related authenticity serves as an "environmental" variable, subject-related authenticity is a "personal" variable, and loyalty is a "behavioral" variable.

However, along with the theory and models reviewed above, the consumer-based model of authenticity still fails to address certain variables that are important to food tourism literature, such as lifestyle-congruence (e.g. Robinson & Getz, 2014; Liu & Jang,

2009a; Tsai & Lu, 2012). To address these shortcomings, the following section discusses congruence theory, which brings more variables to light.

2.11.4 CONGRUENCE THEORY

The congruence theory, first developed by Sirgy (1982), is reviewed to guide the proposed mediating variable in the current study's proposed model. This theory asserts that individuals compare their self-concept, which is the totality of beliefs one holds about oneself and the responses of others, against the perceived image of a brand (Rosenberg, 1979; Sirgy, 1982). When a brand's image matches one's self-concept, it leads to increases in self-congruence (Sirgy, 1982). In turn, increases in one's self-congruence can positively influence one's satisfaction and behavioral intentions to purchase a good or service (Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982). In more recent years, research has expanded congruence theory to consider not only one's self-concept, but also one's lifestyle, or living patterns. In other words, if a brand's image matches one's lifestyle, it can lead to increases in lifestyle-congruence (Casswell & Maxwell, 2005; Nam et al., 2011; Solomon, 2002). In the context of the present study, this means that when a restaurant's authenticity matches one's lifestyle, it leads to increases in lifestyle-congruence, which in turn increases one's satisfaction and restaurant loyalty.

The assertion that increases in self-congruence and lifestyle-congruence can positively influence satisfaction and behavioral intention has made congruence theory an important theoretical foundation for previous tourism research. It should be noted that some of these studies have adjusted self- and lifestyle-congruence with a brand to assess congruity with a destination as well (Beerli, Meneses, & Gil, 2007; Chon, 1992; Litvin & Goh, 2004).

Congruence theory was first adopted in Chon's (1992) seminal study on tourist perceptions of Norfolk, Virginia. Respondents were asked to complete a mail-based questionnaire following their trip to Norfolk, which assessed their satisfaction and their self-image congruity, or their perception that they were analogous to a normal Norfolk visitor. Overall, a positive relationship was observed between congruity and satisfaction with Norfolk as a destination.

Several more recent tourism studies have also been grounded in congruence theory. Litvin and Goh (2004) investigated visitor perceptions of Singapore and determined that when perceptions of Singapore were consistent with actual self-congruity, which is the way one views oneself, or ideal self-congruity, which is the way one hopes to be viewed, satisfaction levels were higher than when individuals had low levels of either type of self-congruity. Unlike these studies, Beerli et al. (2007) examined Spanish tourists and tested the role of self-congruity as a mediator between destination image and behavior. Using regression analyses, the authors determined that increases in the relationship between perceived destination image and self-concept (both actual and ideal) led to increases in intentions to visit a destination. Furthermore, Usakli and Baloglu's (2011) study of tourist self-congruity in Las Vegas determined that increases in both actual and ideal self-congruity positively influenced both intentions to return and intentions to recommend the destination to others.

To sum up, in the context of the present study, congruence theory helps to frame a relationship between restaurant authenticity, lifestyle-congruence, satisfaction, and restaurant loyalty, where restaurant authenticity is the "environmental" variable, lifestyle-congruence and satisfaction are "personal" variables, and restaurant loyalty is a

"behavioral" variable. Yet, neither congruence theory nor the above theory and models fully consider all relevant outcome variables. Specifically, they do not examine how restaurant authenticity may influence one's attachment to a destination, which is an important variable in the tourism and food tourism literature (Gross & Brown, 2008; Tsai, 2016). To address this shortcoming, the next section incorporates and reviews the associative network theory.

2.11.5 ASSOCIATIVE NETWORK THEORY

Anderson's (1983) associative network theory posits that an individual's memory comprises a set of "nodes", or basic information units for goods or services, and "links", or mental associations (Ding & Chai, 2012). When one develops a link between nodes, a meaningful association between two objects exists in one's memory. In the context of consumer behavior, these meaningful associations have the potential to influence one's buying behavior (Aaker, 1990; Keller, 2003). More specifically, an individual's perceptions and resultant behaviors towards a given product or brand can be transferred to brands he or she deems to be related (Aaker, 1990). For example, perceptions and resultant behaviors towards Courtyard hotels are linked to individuals' attachment to the parent company, Marriott International (Wang & Korschun, 2015).

In the context of hospitality and tourism, associative network theory has been used to show that individuals mentally link their perceptions of a destination's goods and services with overall perceptions of a destination (Chalip & Costa, 2005; Sohn, Yuan, & Jai, 2014). For example, Sohn et al. (2014) found that loyalty to a food festival in Korea, which highlights a region's cuisine, positively influenced overall attachment with that region of Korea. Similarly, Chalip and Costa's (2005) conceptual study suggests that

there is a link between sports club (team) loyalty and destination attachment. In the context of the present study, this suggests that loyalty to a restaurant, a "behavioral" variable, may positively influence attachment to a place or destination where the restaurant is located.

The hospitality and tourism literature has thoroughly examined consumer behavior and the variables influencing those behaviors as a concept. A large portion of the research has adopted theoretical frameworks grounded in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, which generally considers personal and environmental constructs as antecedents to behavior. However, the specific personal and environmental factors used in these studies have differed considerably. Environmental variables have ranged from the availability of certain games at a destination in Ariyabuddhiphongs's (2006) casino study, to the relaxing nature of a destination in Kakoudakis et al.'s (2017) study of social tourism; moreover, personal variables have ranged from self-efficacy for working in a given career in Song and Chon's (2012) career choice study, to perceived personal outcomes from using travel apps in J. Lu et al.'s (2015) study of travel app adoption. This suggests that in hospitality and tourism research, the social cognitive theory has no specific or dominant personal or environmental factors. Furthermore, the original social cognitive theory was based on a model of triadic reciprocality, where each of the theory's factors had the potential to positively influence the other two factors. Thus, the Mehrabian-Russell model was reviewed to address issues relating to the path relationships. Furthermore, the consumer-based model of authenticity, congruence theory, and associative network theory were also discussed to help determine which the possible relationships and paths should be investigated in the current study's model.

Based on the reviewed literature and the assessed theories and models, the following section proposes the independent, mediating, and dependent variables of the present study. Subsequently, the hypotheses are presented in order to help develop the current study's model.

2.12 INDEPENDENT "ENVIRONMENTAL" VARIABLES

2.12.1 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY

Restaurant authenticity is the perception that a restaurant is truly representative of a given tradition or culture (Vásquez & Chik, 2015). In the current literature, authenticity measurements have: (1) only considered a limited number of authenticity conceptualizations; and (2) not tested restaurant authenticity in conjunction with several important foodservice and tourism-related factors (Camus, 2004; Chhabra, 2008; Chhabra et al., 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Milman, 2013; Robinson & Clifford, 2012; Wang & Mattila, 2013). Therefore, the current study aims to develop a restaurant authenticity scale, and to do so using items associated with several conceptualizations of object-related authenticity, which have received attention in the greater hospitality and tourism literature (e.g. Castéran & Roederer, 2013; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jamal & Hill, 2004; MacCannell, 1973).

These conceptualizations of object-related authenticity are the following: objective authenticity, based on facts; staged authenticity, which is the perception that one has experienced a traditional culture and occurs in situations where a community puts its local heritage and traditions on display for visitors; constructive authenticity, based on one's personal history; indexical authenticity, based on the perceived originality of a product; iconic or postmodern authenticity, which represents the "realness" that one

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perceives from a good or service; and expressive authenticity, or the extent to which a good or service espouses the spirit of its place of origin (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). These conceptualizations of authenticity are included in items assessing perceptions of restaurant attributes that appear to positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. These attributes include the food and beverage, environment, others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and branding (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Costa & Besio, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang et al., 2011; A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015; Kovács, et al., 2013; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Wood & Muñoz, 2007; Zeng et al., 2012).

Restaurant authenticity is the independent variable in this study. In the current literature, there is no comprehensive scale to assess restaurant authenticity. Therefore, a RAS was developed before testing the theoretical model. First, the following section discusses peak experience, satisfaction, and lifestyle-congruence, which are the current study's mediating variables.

2.13 MEDIATING "PERSONAL" VARIABLES

2.13.1 PEAK EXPERIENCE

The present study examines peak experience in lieu of subject-related authenticity, a concept with which it is almost synonymous (Cohen, 2010). Peak experience is assessed rather than the closely related subject-related authenticity, due to its greater prominence in the tourism literature, and specifically the food tourism literature (e.g. Beedie & Hudson, 2003; Chang et al., 2010; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2017;

Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987; Quan & Wang, 2004). This is most notably seen in Quan and Wang's (2004) explanation that for many tourists, the consumption of local cuisine while traveling elicits a peak experience. Furthermore, prior food tourism research suggests that peak experiences can positively influence tourist perceptions and behavior (Y. H. Kim et al., 2010; Quan & Wang, 2004) and therefore is relevant in the current study.

Maslow (1971) defined peak experience as an affective, transient moment of ecstasy (Maslow, 1971). In Maslow's early research, it was associated with carrying out self-actualizing behaviors, or behaviors that maximize one's talents. In further research, it has been associated with pleasurable situations that occur outside of one's day-to-day life (Cohen, 2010; Maslow, 1971). Hence, peak experience is a passing moment of ecstasy that occurs during unique pleasurable moments.

2.13.2 SATISFACTION

Satisfaction represents an emotional state related to one's attainment of a goal or desire (Burr, 1970). In hospitality and tourism, however, satisfaction more specifically represents a sense of pleasure and contentment obtained by carrying out a transaction (Oliver, 1980). It is further conceptualized as the difference between the expectations and perceptions that an individual has regarding a good or service (Oliver, 1980). Higher satisfaction scores are represented by higher differences between expectations and perceptions where perceptions exceed expectations from an experience (Oliver, 1980).

Satisfaction is an important factor for the hospitality, tourism, and foodservice industries as it can have strong implications for practice. Firstly, research suggests that satisfaction levels can be positively influenced by strong perceptions of object-related

authenticity (Kovács et al., 2013; Lehman, Kovács, & Carroll, 2014; Robinson &

Clifford, 2012). Furthermore, in restaurants, increases in satisfaction can lead to positive

behavioral outcomes including increases in customer return intentions and customer

loyalty (Hyun, 2010; Ryu, Lee, & Gon Kim, 2012), thereby increasing sales and profits.

2.13.3 LIFESTYLE-CONGRUENCE

Lifestyle can be broadly defined as an individual's living patterns as articulated

by his or her opinions, interests, and activities (Gladwell, 1990). Moreover, there are two

components to a lifestyle: actual lifestyle, which is how one views one's own lifestyle,

and ideal lifestyle, which is how one hopes others view one's lifestyle (Nam et al., 2011).

In turn, lifestyle-congruence can be defined as the level to which a destination or brand

supports an individual's lifestyle, or living patterns (Gladwell, 1990; Nam, et al., 2011).

It is important to note that in the consumer behavior literature, lifestyle-

congruence is very similar, but not completely synonymous with, self-congruence. With

regard to lifestyle-congruence, individuals actively assess the overlap between their

living patterns and a brand's image. In contrast, self-congruence is determined via an

overlap between the totality of one's thoughts and feelings and a brand's image (Foxall,

Goldsmith, & Brown, 1998; Gladwell, 1990). In the hospitality and tourism literature,

items pertaining to self-congruence tend to ask respondents the extent to which they

agree that a brand's image is similar to how they are; similar to how they would like to

see themselves; consistent with how they see themselves; or consistent with how they

would like to see themselves. On the other hand, items pertaining to lifestyle-congruence

tend to ask respondents the extent to which they agree that a brand's image reflects their

personal lifestyle; supports their lifestyle; or is totally in line with their lifestyle (Chen, Leask, & Phou, 2016; Nam et al., 2011).

Lifestyle-congruence serves as an optimal variable for the current study, as previous research has shown that food tourists have unique lifestyle characteristics including the wish to dine in groups, strong desires to brag about their food tourism experiences, elevated levels of food involvement, and high levels of food neophilia (Crespi-Vallbona & Dimitrovski, 2016; Fields, 2002; Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Robinson & Getz, 2016).

It should also be noted that prior empirical research suggests that lifestyle-congruence is an important concept for hospitality and tourism, because tourists consciously assess their purchasing goals, desired activities, interests, and personal opinions as concrete means of evaluating their fit with a destination (Nam et al., 2011). Moreover, it is also an important concept in the broader consumer behavior literature as increases in lifestyle-congruence may lead to increases in emotional attachment, brand loyalty, and destination loyalty (Foxall et al., 1998).

In this section, peak experience, satisfaction, and lifestyle-congruence have been introduced as the current study's mediating variables. Next, the following section discusses restaurant loyalty and place attachment, which serve as the dependent variables in this study.

2.14 DEPENDENT "BEHAVIORAL" VARIABLES

2.14.1 RESTAURANT LOYALTY

Loyalty is broadly defined as frequent repurchase behavior from a goods or service provider accompanied by: (1) positive attitudes towards that provider; and (2)

positive word of mouth behavior regarding that provider (Kandampully & Suhartanto, -2000). It is often asserted that loyalty is comprised of two distinct dimensions: behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty (Baldinger & Rubinson, 1996). Behavioral loyalty represents an individual's frequent, repeat purchases of the same good or service, and also indicates one's partiality toward a specific brand (Bowen & Shoemaker, 1998). On the other hand, attitudinal loyalty represents one's emotional attachment to a brand (Getty & Thompson, 1994).

In the context of the foodservice industry, if a restaurant is perceived to be authentic, this has been shown to positively influence behavioral loyalty to that restaurant. In other words, higher perceptions of authenticity positively influence intentions to revisit a restaurant, spread positive word of mouth, recommend the restaurant, and induce individuals to choose one restaurant over another (A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015; Ryu et al., 2012). Similarly, research suggests that individuals with higher levels of satisfaction with a restaurant tend to have higher levels of behavioral loyalty towards that restaurant (Hoare & Butcher, 2008). Thus, for the purposes of the present study, loyalty relates to one's behavioral loyalty towards a given restaurant.

2.14.2 PLACE ATTACHMENT

Place attachment represents individuals' connection to a destination that they are visiting or where they live (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). Furthermore, Yuksel, Yuksel, and Bilim (2010) define it as a "sense of belonging" or feeling of "being home". It can manifest itself in several forms including affective attachment, such as happiness, pride, and love towards a destination; cognitive attachment, such as positive memories of a destination; and behavioral attachment, in which individuals maintain close proximity to

a location to which they are attached (Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Research suggests that place attachment is influenced by both a destination's physical and social features and by an individual's distinct culture and characteristics (Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006; Reitsamer, Brunner-Sperdin, & Stokburger-Sauer, 2016; Scannell & Gifford, 2010). More specifically, Reitsamer et al. (2016) suggest that it is one's cognitive evaluation of one's time at a destination.

Place attachment is an important concept in the tourism literature as increased levels of it, particularly cognitive and affective place attachment, can positively influence important outcome variables including return intentions, word of mouth intentions, and loyalty (Alexandris, Kouthouris, & Meligdis, 2006; Lee & Shen, 2013; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Notably, Alexandris et al.'s (2006) study of ski resorts determined that place attachment positively influenced destination loyalty. In their investigation of tourism in Mauritius, Prayag and Ryan (2012) determined that place attachment positively influenced both return and word of mouth intentions. Finally, Lee and Shen's (2013) study into place attachment (termed "place identity" and "place dependence") among locals determined that attachment to an urban park positively influenced both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

All in all, restaurant authenticity, peak experience, satisfaction, lifestyle-congruence, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment are the constructs of the present study's model. The following section presents the hypothesized relationships between these variables based on previous literature.

2.15 HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIPS

2.15.1 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY AND RESTAURANT LOYALTY

There is a paucity of research specifically assessing the relationship between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty, but several previous hospitality and tourism studies have observed a positive relationship between constructs based on object-related authenticity and loyalty (Bryce et al., 2015; Chhabra, Zhao, Lee, & Okamoto, 2012; Jang et al., 2012; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015; Novello & Fernandez, 2014; Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011; Shen et al., 2014; Tsai & Lu, 2012). This means that prior studies have tested authenticity conceptualizations relevant to restaurant authenticity, but have not necessarily examined restaurant attributes or used a comprehensive measure of restaurant authenticity. These studies are now discussed in some detail.

In their study on tourism in Mauritius, Ramkissoon and Uysal (2011) assessed and confirmed the positive relationship between authenticity and behavioral intentions to visit Mauritius. Tsai and Lu (2012) surveyed 538 individuals, and their results demonstrated a strong relationship between authenticity and return intentions at a Thai restaurant. In Jang et al.'s (2011) study of ethnic restaurant authenticity, an indirect relationship was observed between perceived authenticity and behavioral intentions. Furthermore, Chhabra et al. (2012) investigated the travel behavior of the Indians living outside of India and found a positive relationship between self-authenticated experiences, or experiences perceived to be authentic in a constructive manner, and attitudinal loyalty towards visiting India. Novello and Fernandez's (2014) study of perceived authenticity at events indicated a positive relationship between the perceived authenticity of an event and event loyalty, mediated by satisfaction. In their study of customer perceptions in

ethnic restaurants, A. C. C. Lu et al. (2015) tested and confirmed a positive relationship between authenticity (termed customer authenticity perception) and loyalty, which was mediated by brand awareness, brand association, and perceived quality.

Furthermore, Kolar and Zabkar (2010) developed the consumer-based model of authenticity and tested it in the context of heritage tourism destinations in Europe; they found a positive relationship between object-related authenticity and loyalty. Other studies have also tested and confirmed relationships between authenticity and loyalty using versions of Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) model (Bryce et al., 2015; Shen et al., 2014). For instance, Shen et al.'s (2014) study of world heritage site visitation in China tested a model based on that of Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) and confirmed a positive relationship between constructive authenticity and loyalty, which was mediated by peak experience. Moreover, Bryce et al.'s (2015) work on perceptions of Japanese heritage sites also tested a model based on Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) and indicated positive relationships between object-related authenticity and loyalty. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis was developed:

H1: Restaurant authenticity positively influences restaurant loyalty.

2.15.2 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY AND PEAK EXPERIENCE

Prior hospitality and tourism research has tested and confirmed the relationship between object-related authenticity and peak experience (Almeida & Garrod, 2017; Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008; Laing, Wheeler, Reeves, & Frost, 2014; Mkono, Markwell, & WIlson, 2013; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). Belhassen et al.'s (2008) study of pilgrimage tourism suggests that many pilgrims visiting the Middle East have peak experiences as they are visiting the same locations visited by Jesus Christ, making these

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locations indexically authentic. Mkono et al. (2013) assert that food tourists in Zimbabwe

have peak experiences from consuming authentic, traditional, local cuisine. Furthermore,

Laing et al. (2014) found that some Chinese tourists have peak experiences as a result of

visiting "heritage assets" in Australia. Almeida and Garrod's (2017) study of food

tourism in Madeira, Spain indicates that for some tourists, the consumption of authentic,

traditional, local cuisine causes a peak experience. Similarly, Özdemir and Seyitoğlu's

(2017) conceptual study of tourist dining behavior links the consumption of authentic,

traditional, local cuisine with peak experience. Based on these findings, the following is

hypothesized:

H2: Restaurant authenticity positively influences peak experience.

2.15.3 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY AND SATISFACTION

A small number of studies in the hospitality and tourism literature have assessed

the relationship between perceived authenticity of an entire restaurant and satisfaction. In

general, these studies have found this relationship to be positive (Kovács et al., 2013;

Lehman et al., 2014). For example, Kovács et al.'s (2013) big data assessment of online

consumer reviews of restaurants in three large American cities determined that

satisfaction was positively influenced by the perceived authenticity of a restaurant.

Similarly, Lehman et al. (2014) used big data to examine approximately 400,000 online

restaurant reviews, and determined via logistic regression analysis that a positive

relationship exists between perceived restaurant authenticity and customer satisfaction.

Along with research that has found a positive relationship between overall

restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, several further studies have observed a positive

relationship between key restaurant attributes found in previous literature to contribute to

overall restaurant authenticity, such as the restaurant environment, food and beverage, and satisfaction (Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2014; Engeset & Elvekrok, 2015; Jang et al., 2012; Jang et al., 2011; Robinson & Clifford, 2012; Björk, Vanhonacker, Lengard, Hersleth, & Verbeke, 2010; Waller & Lea, 1999). With regard to the restaurant environment, Jang et al. (2012) and Jang et al. (2011), whose studies both assessed the environment of ethnic restaurants, observed positive relationships between the perceived authenticity of the restaurant's environment and satisfaction. Robinson and Clifford's (2012) investigation of perceived authenticity at medieval festivals determined that the festival servicescape, a factor closely related to restaurant environment, had the strongest positive influence on customer satisfaction. With regard to a restaurant's food and beverage, Björk et al.'s (2010) study of dining habits in Europe suggests that most European diners hold positive perceptions of authentic, traditional recipes. Based on these findings the following hypothesis was developed:

H3: Restaurant authenticity positively influences satisfaction.

2.15.4 RESTAURANT AUTHENTICITY AND LIFESTYLE-CONGRUENCE

Limited previous studies into foodservice have observed a positive relationship between restaurant authenticity and lifestyle-congruence, while further research in the hospitality and tourism literature supports a positive relationship between object-related authenticity and lifestyle-congruence (Hohenstein, Sirgy, Herrmann, & Heitmann, 2007; Lin & Ryan, 2016; A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015). In the foodservice literature, A. C. C. Lu et al. (2015) investigated customer perceptions in ethnic restaurants; they tested and confirmed a positive relationship between authenticity and brand association, which

represents one's cognitive and affective connection to a brand and is as such a variable closely related to lifestyle-congruence (Aaker, 1991).

In the greater hospitality and tourism literature, Hohenstein et al.'s (2007) study of the antecedents and consequences of self-congruence, a variable closely related to lifestyle-congruence , determined that congruity with a good or service (termed "product congruity") positively influenced self-congruence. Given that many restaurant customers seek out authentic dining experiences, especially at food tourism destinations, it can be assumed that a restaurant that is perceived to be more authentic should have higher levels of product congruity, which should in turn positively influence self-congruence (Hohenstein et al., 2007; Sims, 2009). Similarly, Lin and Ryan's (2016) study of airline branding found a positive relationship between the perceived authenticity of an airline's mission statement and self-congruence. The following is hypothesized based on these previous findings:

H4: Restaurant authenticity positively influences lifestyle-congruence.

2.15.5 PEAK EXPERIENCE AND SATISFACTION

Prior hospitality and tourism research has tested and confirmed the relationship between peak experience and satisfaction (Bilgihan, Okumus, Nusair, & Bujisic, 2014; Esfahani, Musa, & Khoo, 2014; Hosany & Gilbert, 2010; Lipscombe, 1999). For instance, based on a qualitative assessment, Lipscombe (1999) asserts that when one feels a peak experience when skydiving, it leads to greater levels of satisfaction. Hosany and Gilbert's (2010) study of holiday destination selection indicated that individuals who feel greater peak experience at a destination are more satisfied with that destination. Moreover, Bilgihan et al.'s (2014) study of online purchase behavior determined that

increases in peak experience (termed "flow experience") while carrying out purchases online leads to greater levels of satisfaction. Finally, Esfahani et al. (2014) investigated mountaineering and found that increases in peak experience (termed "spirituality") positively influenced satisfaction. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis was developed:

H5: Peak experience positively influences satisfaction.

2.15.6 LIFESTYLE-CONGRUENCE AND SATISFACTION

Previous studies have observed a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence and satisfaction (Ha & Stoel, 2014; Nam et al., 2011; Solomon, 2002). In his seminal study on consumer behavior, Solomon (2002) argues that the brands to which an individual is loyal represent an expression of his or her lifestyle. He further posits that increases in equivalence between a brand's image and one's lifestyle will lead to greater satisfaction with a brand. Nam et al.'s (2011) investigation into the mediating influences of satisfaction on the relationship between brand equity and brand loyalty in the tourism and hospitality industry revealed a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence and customer satisfaction. Lastly, Ha and Stoel's (2014) study of loyalty programs indicated a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence (termed "identity congruence") and satisfaction. Based on these findings, the following is hypothesized:

H6: Lifestyle-congruence positively influences satisfaction.

2.15.7 PEAK EXPERIENCE AND RESTAURANT LOYALTY

To date, there has been a paucity of research into the relationship between peak experience and loyalty, but relationships between several closely related variables have been tested and confirmed (Bilgihan et al., 2014; Lin, 2014; Løvoll, Vittersø, & Wold,

2016; Wirtz, Kruger, Scollon, & Diener, 2003). For instance, Wirtz et al. (2003) found that individuals who have greater peak experiences during a spring break vacation are more likely to repeat the experience. Bilgihan et al.'s (2014) research on online purchase behavior suggests that increases in peak experience (termed "flow experience") while carrying out purchases online leads to increases in intentions to revisit and spend additional time on a website. Similarly, in a study of hot springs tourists, Lin (2014) observed a positive relationship between peak experiences and intentions to revisit. Furthermore, Løvoll et al.'s (2016) study of outdoor recreation determined that individuals who have higher levels of peak experience while hiking are more likely to repeat the same exact hike. The following hypothesis was developed based on these findings:

H7: Peak experience positively influences restaurant loyalty.

2.15.8 SATISFACTION AND RESTAURANT LOYALTY

Previous research has found a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty in both the consumer behavior and the foodservice literature (Saad Andaleeb & Conway, 2006; Bennett, Härtel, & McColl-Kennedy, 2005; Hoare & Butcher, 2008; Hyun, 2010; Jani & Han, 2011; Ryu, Han, & Kim, 2008; Szymanski & Henard, 2001).

In the consumer behavior literature, Szymanski and Henard's (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of satisfaction research and determined that 15 studies had observed significant and positive relationships between satisfaction and loyalty. Bennett et al.'s (2005) seminal study of antecedents influencing loyalty in business-to-business transactions determined that satisfaction had the strongest positive influence ($\beta = 0.53$) on attitudinal brand loyalty.

A positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty has also been observed in the foodservice literature (Han & Ryu, 2009; Hoare & Butcher, 2008; Hyun, 2010). Hoare and Butcher's (2008) study of Chinese restaurant customers' cultural values found a positive relationship between satisfaction and restaurant loyalty. Such a relationship was also observed in Han and Ryu's (2009) study of antecedents of customer loyalty in the U.S. restaurant industry. Similarly, Hyun's (2010) investigation of the factors that influence relationship quality and loyalty in the chain restaurant industry determined that satisfaction had a strong positive influence on restaurant loyalty. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis was developed:

H8: Satisfaction positively influences restaurant loyalty.

2.15.9 LIFESTYLE-CONGRUENCE AND RESTAURANT LOYALTY

To date, limited research has assessed the relationship between lifestyle-congruence and restaurant loyalty, but the greater hospitality and tourism literature suggests a positive relationship between the two constructs (Alnawas & Altarifi, 2015; Chen, Peng, & Hung, 2015; Ha & Stoel, 2014; Kressmann et al., 2006; Nam et al., 2011; Sirgy, Lee, Johar, & Tidwell, 2008). Kressmann et al.'s (2006) study on perceptions of self-image congruence among car owners found a positive relationship between self-congruence, a variable closely related to lifestyle-congruence, and loyalty. Sirgy et al.'s (2008) assessment of the influences of self-congruity with sponsorship and brand loyalty also indicated a positive relationship between these variables. Furthermore, Nam et al. (2011) examined destination brand equity and observed a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence and destination attitudinal loyalty, mediated by consumer satisfaction. Ha and Stoel's (2014) study of loyalty programs determined a positive

relationship between lifestyle-congruence (termed "identity congruence") and loyalty. In their study of cultural quarters, or destinations with a large number of cultural activities and facilities compared with other areas, Chen et al. (2015) observed a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence and loyalty to a cultural quarter. Alnawas and Altarifi's (2015) study of hotel brand loyalty in Jordan tested a model which observed a positive relationship between lifestyle-congruence (termed "brand-lifestyle similarity") and loyalty which was mediated by customer brand identification. Based on these findings, the following is hypothesized:

H9: Lifestyle-congruence positively influences restaurant loyalty.

2.15.10 RESTAURANT LOYALTY AND PLACE ATTACHMENT

To date, the relationship between restaurant loyalty and place attachment has not been tested, but related hospitality and tourism research indicates a positive relationship between these two constructs (Cardinale, Nguyen, & Melewar, 2016; Folgado-Fernández, Hernández-Mogollón, & Duarte, 2017; Lee, & Yoo, 2015; Lim & Weaver, 2014; Rabbanee, Ramaseshan, Wu, & Vinden, 2012; Sohn et al., 2014; Sparks, et al., 2003). For instance, Sparks et al. (2003) assert that restaurants guide travelers' selection of a destination, and Rabbanee et al. (2012) found that for some visitors, store loyalty positively influences mall loyalty. Cardinale et al.'s (2016) study into wine tourist behavior determined that positive experiences at a winery positively influences both winery and destination loyalty. Furthermore, Lim and Weaver (2014) observed a positive relationship between the purchasing of a state's food products and destination loyalty. Lastly, Sohn et al. (2014), Lee and Yoo (2015), and Folgado-Fernández et al. (2017) each

observed positive relationships between event loyalty and destination loyalty. Based on these findings, the following hypothesis was developed:

H10: Restaurant loyalty positively influences place attachment for a destination.

2.15.11 LOCALS, GENERAL TOURISTS, AND FOOD TOURISTS

To date, there is a paucity of research comparing perceptions and resultant behaviors between food tourists, general tourists, and locals. However, related extant work suggests that these variables do differ between these three groups (Almeida & Garrod, 2017; Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen & Avieli, 2004). For example, in their study of the attractions and impediments of consuming local cuisine while traveling, Cohen and Avieli (2004) note that in many mass tourism destinations, little local cuisine is served as it is considered undesirable by general tourists. Chang et al.'s (2010) study of Chinese tourists' dining habits in China notes that the consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine is considered a memorable experience for food tourists, but not for general tourists. Almeida and Garrod (2017) report a similar observation in their study of tourists in Madeia, Spain. Finally, in their study of restaurants in Antalya, Turkey, Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst (2016) determined that general tourists rarely dined at the same restaurants as locals did. Thus, the following hypothesis was developed based on these findings:

H11: Relationships in the hypothesized model will differ between locals, general tourists, and food tourists.

2.16 PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL MODEL

Overall, this study has formulated 11 hypotheses. The theoretical model comprising these hypothesized relationships is presented in Figure 2.3.
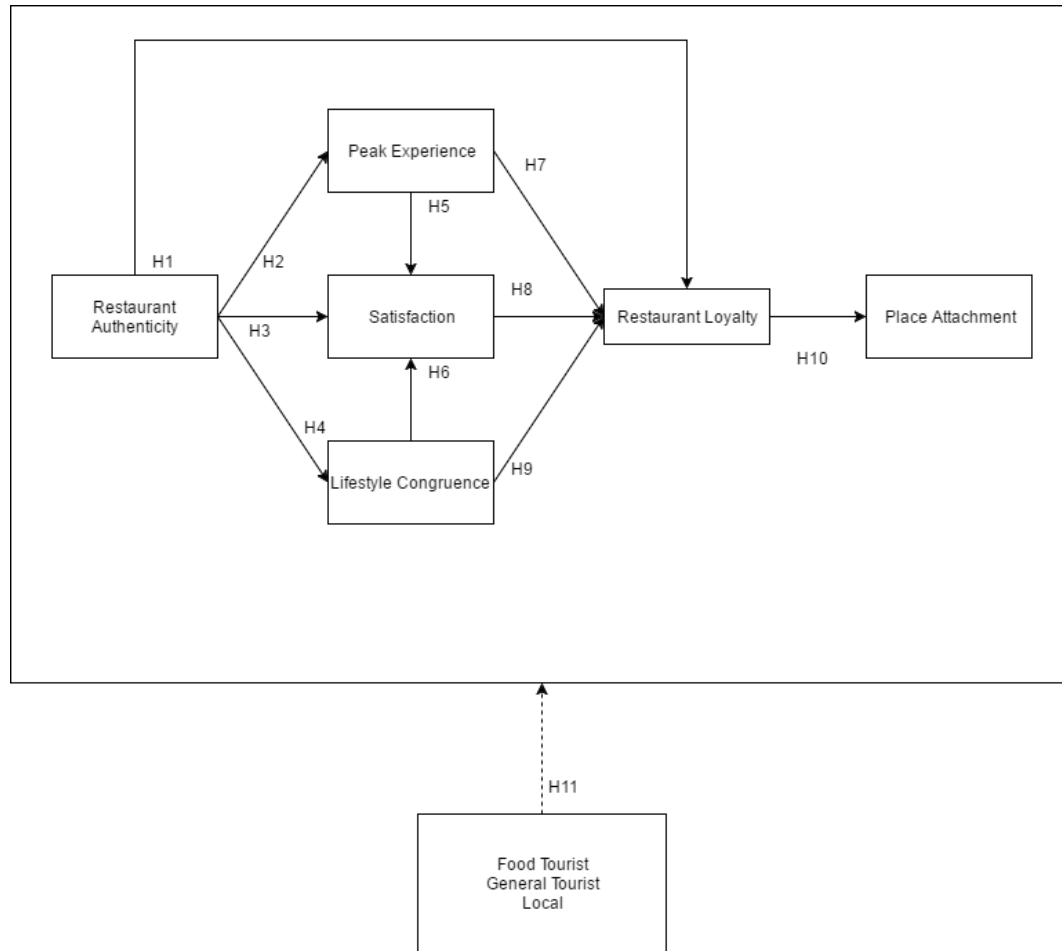
Figure 2.3. Proposed Model

2.17 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter was composed of five key sections: (1) a comprehensive review of the literature supporting the current research, including a review of the American foodservice industry, restaurants and tourism, food tourism, authenticity and restaurant authenticity, food tourists, general tourists, locals, and American Southern cuisine; (2) a review of the literature assessing the theoretical frameworks underpinning and guiding the current study; (3) a review of the independent variable, mediating variables, and dependent variables that comprise this study's conceptual model; (4) the development of the hypothesized relationships between those variables; and (5) the presentation of the proposed model. These five parts are briefly summarized below.

First, the scope of the American foodservice industry was discussed, followed by restaurants, tourism, and food tourism. Subsequently, different conceptualizations of authenticity were presented, along with a discussion of the literature related to the influence of different restaurant attributes on overall perceived restaurant authenticity. Next, prior measurements of authenticity were discussed. This section showed that to date, no study has developed a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale (RAS). After this, food tourists', general tourists', and locals' characteristics and behavior were assessed. Lastly, Southern cuisine was defined and its relationship to both authenticity and food tourism was discussed.

Subsequently, the second part of the chapter introduced the current study's theoretical framework, which comprises social cognitive theory, the Mehrabian-Russell model, the consumer-based model of authenticity, congruence theory, and associative network theory. Following this, the third part of the chapter reviewed the independent

variable (restaurant authenticity), mediating variables (peak experience, lifestyle-congruence and satisfaction), and dependent variables (restaurant loyalty and place attachment). Next, in the fourth part of the chapter, 11 hypotheses were developed based on a review of relevant literature. Finally, the last part presented the conceptual model that used to test the hypotheses guiding this study. Next, the following chapter presents the methodology used in the current study and the accompanying method of data analysis.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Having presented the authenticity conceptualizations and restaurant attributes to use in the restaurant authenticity scale (RAS) and the framework of the current study in Chapter 2, the following section will discuss the methodology used to develop the RAS and to test the current study's model. The RAS is being developed in order to fill several gaps in the literature. Notably, it will address the fact that current literature has: (1) only assessed a limited set of authenticity conceptualizations and attributes; (2) only assessed a limited set of restaurant attributes and (3) generally only focused on restaurants serving international ethnic cuisine rather than geographically focused authentic restaurants. Developing the scale serves as the first phase of data analysis. The results of which will be presented in Chapter 4. Model testing will also be done to address several gaps in the literature: (1) the tourism market, which is rapidly growing has generally been ignored in the restaurant authenticity literature; and (2) prior studies have not tested restaurant authenticity in conjunction with several important foodservice and tourism-related factors. Testing the model serves as the second phase of data analysis, results of which will be displayed in Chapter 5. The following will discuss the methodology for developing the RAS, which is the first phase of data analysis.

3.1 SCALE DEVELOPMENT

The current study adopted the four-step mixed methods scale development procedure put forward by Netemeyer, Bearden, and Sharma (2003). These four steps

will now be briefly introduced. Initially, in the first step of Netemeyer et al.'s (2003) process, the domain and potential dimensions for the proposed model were developed. In the second step, an initial item pool was developed via a review of the literature and layperson interviews with 11 individuals. The item pool was then refined via a review by a stakeholder panel of foodservice experts and individuals who had dined at Southern restaurants within the last six months. Following this, in step three, the measurement scale was further refined by carrying out a pilot test and analyzing the data via exploratory factor analysis (EFA). In step four, a full data collection process was carried out. Furthermore, the RAS's validity was tested via exploratory and two confirmatory factor analyses. Lastly, the predictive validity of the RAS was tested by measuring the influence of perceived restaurant authenticity on peak experience, lifestyle-congruence, satisfaction, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment. These steps are shown in Table 3.1. Each step will now be discussed in greater detail.

Table 3.1. Scale Development Steps

Step One : Determination of scale dimensions
- Development of construct domain
- Development of potential dimensions

Step Two: Item generation
- Layperson interviews
- Stakeholder panel (Expert reviewers and diner reviewers)

Step Three: Item purification
- Pilot test
- Exploratory factor analysis

Step Four: Reliability and validity assessment
- Data collection
- Confirmatory factor analysis on calibration sample
- Confirmatory factor analysis on validation sample
- Invariance testing

Note: Adapted from Netemeyer et al. (2003)

3.1.1 STEP ONE: DETERMINATION OF SCALE DIMENSIONS

Under Netemeyer et al.'s (2003) scale development process it is important that scale factors be developed. These factors should include a broad overview of definitions for the concept being assessed, and more specifically, based on the outstanding literature, determine which specific tangible and intangible attributes fall under the decided-upon definition (Bandura, 2006). In the case of the current study, it was important to determine which restaurant attributes and conceptualizations of authenticity fell under a broader definition of restaurant authenticity.

3.1.2 STEP TWO: ITEM GENERATION

A pool of items was generated via a review of the relevant authenticity, and restaurant authenticity literature. Following this, layperson interviews were conducted to generate items not uncovered during the literature review process. Each interviewee for the semi-structured interviews met the following criteria:

- They were over the age of 18
- They had dined at a Southern restaurant within the last six months.

Respondents were obtained via snowball sampling where each interviewee recommended another potential interviewee who over the age of 18 and had dined at a Southern restaurant within the last six months. The specific number of interviews conducted was determined based on when data saturation was achieved. This is to say that interviews were ceased when further coding was no longer feasible (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Interviews were semi-structured and thus included some questions which were predetermined questions as well as some questions which were probing questions. This method allows an interviewer to clearly define questions, but also permits an interviewee

to provide insight and viewpoints that are not necessarily elicited from the questions (Brinkmann, 2014). Furthermore, semi-structured interviews also fit the needs of studies which are in their early stages where key issues have not yet been uncovered (Brinkmann, 2014). In the case of this study, the interviews generated items not found in the extant literature.

An interview protocol, as suggested by Creswell (1998), was designed and executed for the current study. First, respondents were asked a set of introductory questions which asked them to reflect on the last time they had dined at an independent, full service Southern-style restaurant, including where they ate, what they ate, and who they ate with. This was then followed by non-directive open-ended questions relating to their restaurant's food and beverage, environment, others in the restaurant, branding and marketing, and the entire restaurant in order to get their opinions and perceptions, with regard to authenticity, on relevant restaurant attributes. Lastly, they were given a chance to reflect on any other attributes which have not been discussed in the literature and were not asked about in the interview. For each restaurant attribute, probing questions were also used to better understand the conceptualizations of authenticity being used by respondents. Overall, this process allowed interviewees to talk freely, to discuss their perceptions on all restaurant attributes, and to highlight which conceptualizations of authenticity they used to assess each restaurant attribute.

After interviews were completed, the item pool faced a stakeholder panel review to refine the item pool. The panel contained the following: (1) seven foodservice experts, specifically seven academics who teach and research in the area of foodservice; and (2) seven individuals who had dined at a full-service Southern-style restaurant within the last

six months. Using a stakeholder panel was deemed appropriate based on related seminal scale development studies (Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Main et al., 2016).

3.1.3 STEP THREE: ITEM PURIFICATION

A pilot test was then conducted in step three of the scale development process. The pilot study allowed for more items to be removed from the proposed scale and, after completing an exploratory factor analysis, also placed items into factors (Netemeyer et al., 2003).

A self-administered questionnaire containing the items retained from step two were administered to a convenience sample of individuals dining at three independent full-service restaurants serving American Southern cuisine at a food tourist destination in the Southeastern U.S. A convenience sampling technique was deemed appropriate since this study is exploratory in nature, being the first attempt to: (1) develop a restaurant authenticity scale, and (2) assess resultant perceptions and behaviors of restaurant authenticity in the context of food tourism. Full-service restaurants were used for three reasons: (1) based on sales, full-service restaurants are the largest sector of the restaurant industry; (2) the tourism industry has the largest influence, based on sales, on full-service restaurants (versus limited-service restaurants); and (3) full-service restaurants tend to have a comparatively higher number of restaurants attributes which can be assessed by restaurant customers in comparison with restaurants of a lower service level (Jani & Han, 2011; National Restaurant Association, 2017a, 2017c; SelectUSA, 2017). Independent restaurants were utilized as they are generally perceived to be more authentic than chain restaurants (Kovács et al., 2013). Each of the restaurants used for the pilot was open seven-days-a-week for both lunch and dinner.

A diner intercept technique was used as the method for data collection to maximize the response rate. More specifically, every other diner was approached at their tables, following their meals. By approaching diners at the end of their meals, they have had maximum exposure to all of the restaurant attributes being assessed. At that time, the potential respondents were greeted by one of the current study's researchers and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with regard to perceived authenticity on all of the statements using a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree.

An exploratory factor analysis (principal axis factoring) with oblique promax rotation was then performed on the data. A promax rotation was used as there was expected to be some correlation between the dimensions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Eigenvalues were assessed to determine the number of factors to extract. Items which cross loaded or had a low loading, below .71, were dropped (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, a full data collection process was carried out to assess the reliability and validity of the scale.

3.1.4 STEP FOUR: RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY ASSESSMENT

3.1.4.1 DATA COLLECTION

Following the pilot test, an updated self-administered questionnaire was developed and used to conduct surveys at six restaurants in two different food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S. This data collection process was designed to test reliability and validity of the RAS. It also contained items to assess the RAS in the current study's proposed model. Thus, this questionnaire had multiple sections.

The first section contained screening questions to determine if respondents were food tourists, general tourists, or locals. This was assessed via two items. The first categorized respondents as tourists or locals by assessing if individuals lived more than 50 miles away from the data collection site, which is the industry definition of a tourist (National Tourism Resources Review Commission, 1973). Second, tourists were classified as general tourists and food tourists based on an item developed by the World Food Travel Association which assesses whether tourists generally actively seek out food-related activities while travel. This section also contained questions to determine which restaurant that respondents had dined in and at which meal they had been surveyed. The second section of the survey contained the scale items retained in step three of the scale development process to assess perceived restaurant authenticity (independent variable). The second section also contained items adapted from previous studies to measure the proposed model's mediators and dependent variables: peak experience, which was adapted from Schindehutte et al. (2006) and contained 10 items (α=.85); lifestyle-congruence, which was adapted from Nam et al. (2011) and contained three items (α=.88); satisfaction, which was adapted from Ryu et al. (2008) and contained three items (α=.92); restaurant loyalty which was adapted from Hoare and Butcher (2008) and contained five items (α=.82); and place attachment which was adapted from Reitsamer et al. (2016) and contained four items (α=.90).

For the items in the second section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement on all of the statements using a 7-point Likert-type scale where 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. A third section of the survey measured the demographic information including gender, age, household income, individual check

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amount spent at the restaurant; and individual daily trip expenditures if they were tourists or food tourists. These demographics were assessed to reconfirm findings in prior studies which have shown that food tourists are aged 26 and 57 years old; earn above average incomes; tend to have college degrees; and spend more overall on travel than many general tourists (Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Y. H. Kim et al., 2010; Kim et al., 2011; Mandala Research, 2013).

The questionnaire was administered by researchers to a convenience sample of general tourists, food tourists, and locals at six full-service independent restaurants, serving American Southern cuisine, located at two food tourism destinations in the Southeastern region of the U.S (three restaurants at each destination). A convenience sampling technique was deemed appropriate since this study is exploratory in nature, being the first attempt to: (1) develop a restaurant authenticity scale; and (2) assess resultant perceptions and behaviors of restaurant authenticity in the context of food tourism. Independent restaurants were utilized as they are generally perceived to be more authentic than chains (Kovács et al., 2013). Full-service restaurants serving American Southern cuisine were utilized rather than restaurants with a lower level of service such as a quick-service restaurant, as full-service restaurants tend to have a comparatively greater number of attributes which can be assessed by restaurant customers (Jani & Han, 2011).

The restaurants that allowed data collection were open every day of the week for lunch and dinner. Data was collected between approximately three lunch and three dinner periods at each restaurant. This provided the current study's researcher with a representative sample of food tourists, general tourists and locals that was sufficient for

data analysis. A diner intercept technique was used as the method for data collection to maximize the response rate. More specifically, every other diner was approached at their tables, following their meals. By approaching diners at the end of their meals, they have had maximum exposure to all of the restaurant attributes being assessed. At that time, the potential respondents were greeted by one of the current study's researchers and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. Those who agreed to participate first answered a screening question to determine if they met the study's definition of a food tourist, general tourists, or local, and then they were instructed to rate their agreement with the items pertaining to restaurant authenticity, peak experience, lifestyle-congruence, satisfaction, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment. They were also asked to record their demographic information.

3.1.4.2 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS ON FULL DATA COLLECTION

An exploratory factor analysis (principal axis factoring) with oblique promax rotation was then performed on the full data set. This factor analysis was carried out to: (1) determine if any further items should be removed from the proposed scale; and (2) further assess the dimensionality of the scale, or the number of factors with which the scale was comprised. A promax rotation was used as there was expected to be some correlation between the dimensions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Eigenvalues were assessed to determine the number of factors to extract. Items which cross loaded or had low loading, below .50, levels were dropped (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Next, univariate normality, multivariate normality, outliers, and missing data were assessed. Then, the data set was split and confirmatory factor analyses were carried out on a "calibration" and "validation" sample.

3.1.4.3 CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSES

To develop the current study's completed RAS, the full data collection sample was split, at random, into a "calibration" and "validation" sample (Bowen & Guo, 2012). The calibration sample was utilized to assess psychometric properties of the scale and to carry out item purification. The validation sample was utilized to determine if the results from testing the calibration sample can be replicated with regard to model fit, construct validity. and reliability (Bowen & Guo, 2012).

Using only the items and factors assessed in the full data collection's EFA, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was carried out on the calibration sample to assess model fit, construct validity and reliability. According to Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson (2010, p. 646), model fit indices show "how well a specified model reproduces the observed covariance matrix among the indicator terms". For the current study, the following model fit thresholds were considered: $\chi^2/df < 3$; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) < .07; Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) > .90; Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) > .95; and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) > .95 (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). Reliability was confirmed when construct reliability (CR) values for each factor were greater than 0.60. Convergent validity was confirmed when average variance extracted (AVE) values for each factor were greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010). Lastly, Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion where discriminant validity is confirmed when the square roots of AVEs for each of the factors is higher than the correlation of that factor with other factors in the scale.

After the calibration model achieved satisfactory fit, reliability, and validity, the validation sample was tested, to reconfirm the fit of the measurement model, construct validity, and reliability.

Following the assessment of the calibration and validation samples, invariance between the two samples was tested, as was predictive validity, which is a form of criterion validity, and nomological validity, which is the assertion that a scale correlates to another construct in a way that would be suggested by theory. Both the predictive and nomological validity tests used the entire data set. Then, a mediation analysis was carried out based on the guidelines set forth by Baron and Kenny (1986).

Lastly, the combined dataset was used to test the current study's proposed structural model. Testing the proposed model represents the second phase of data analysis. The methodology for testing the model will be discussed in the following section.

3.2 TESTING THE PROPOSED MODEL

In preparing to test the proposed model, a CFA was carried out on first order measurement model containing the current study's proposed model constructs as a means of assessing model fit, reliability, and validity using AMOS v 21.0 software. The following model fit indices thresholds were considered: $\chi^2/df < 3$; RMSEA < .07; GFI > .90; TLI > .95; and CF) > .95 (Hooper et al., 2008). Reliability was confirmed when CR values for each factor were greater than 0.60.Convergent validity was confirmed when AVE values for each factor were greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010). Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion where discriminant validity is confirmed when the square roots of AVEs for each of the factors

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is higher than the correlation of that factor with other factors in the model. Then, the second order measurement model was tested to evaluate the second-order factor for restaurant authenticity. After that, for the estimation of the structural model, covariance based (CB) path modeling method was carried out. Lastly, a multigroup moderation analysis was conducted on the structural model to compare path relationships between food tourists, general tourists, and locals. After all structural equation modeling tests were carried out, a MANOVA analysis was conducted to further compare food tourists, general tourists, and locals.

3.3 MANOVA ANALYSIS

After the data collected from this survey was analyzed via structural equation modeling, a MANOVA analysis was carried out to determine if food tourists, general tourists, and locals differ in terms of their restaurant authenticity, lifestyle-congruence, satisfaction, peak experience, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment levels. This was done to further assess differences between the three consumer groups. The following section will conclude this chapter.

3.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Overall, this chapter presents a methodology to develop the RAS and test that scale in the current study's proposed model. Scale development was based on the process developed by Netemeyer et al. (2003). First, the definition of the proposed scale was developed and domains were proposed. Then, item generation was carried out to develop items for the current study's scale. Also, a stakeholder panel was conducted. Following this, a pilot test was conducted on restaurant customers dining at three American Southern restaurants at a food tourism destination in the Southeastern U.S. An

exploratory factor analysis was conducted on this pilot data to assess dimensionality and item retention. Then, a larger sample of food tourists, general tourists, and locals dining at a Southern restaurant at two food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S., was obtained. With that data, and exploratory factor analysis was carried out. Then confirmatory factor analyses were conducted on the calibration and validation samples. The current study's proposed measurement and structural models were then tested and a multi group moderation analysis was carried out using AMOS v. 21.0. Lastly, a MANOVA analysis was carried out to compare the three consumer groups. The results of the scale development and model testing are reviewed in the following section of this paper.

CHAPTER 4

SCALE DEVELOPMENT RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results and findings from the development of the RAS.

First, the literature was reviewed regarding authenticity and restaurant authenticity to

develop an item pool. Then, semi-structured layperson interviews were carried out to add

items to the item pool following a review of the literature. Following this, a stakeholder

panel including seven foodservice academics and seven individuals who had dined at

Southern restaurants in the last six months was carried out to refine the item pool. Then, a

pilot study was conducted to further refine the scale and to place items into factors.

Lastly, a full data collection process was carried out to validate the scale and test the

proposed model and relationships of the current study. First the scale was demined and

domains were specified.

4.2 DEFINTION AND DOMAIN SPECIFICATION

For the current study, based on the extant literature it was determined that the

RAS should assess whether a restaurant is truly representative of a given tradition or

culture source. It was further determined that perceptions of different conceptualizations

of object-related authenticity for key restaurant attributes including the food and

beverage, restaurant environment, others in the restaurant, and restaurant marketing and

branding would make up the RAS (Albrecht, 2011; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Gaytán, 2008; Jang et al., 2011; Wang & Mattila, 2013).

Following the development of a scale domain, potential scale factors were considered. For the current study, the following dimensions, based on restaurant attributes, were developed: (1) food and beverage, (2) the environment, (3) others in the restaurant, (4) branding and marketing, and (5) the entire restaurant. Next, items were generated via a review of relevant literature.

4.3 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Authenticity studies in the fields of hospitality, tourism, business, geography and the arts were reviewed to develop an initial item pool. Based on this review of the literature, 80 items were adapted and added to the pool (Borrie & Roggenbuck, 1996; Castéran & Roederer, 2013; Chhabra, 2008; Choi, Ko, Kim, & Mattila, 2015; Derbaix & Derbaix, 2010; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Guojun & Ling, 2014; Ilicic & Webster, 2016; Jang et al., 2012; Jang et al., 2011; Kadirov, 2015; Kim & Jang, 2016; Merchant & Rose, 2013; Mhlanga, Moolman, & Hattingh, 2013; Molleda & Jain, 2013; Moulard, Garrity, & Rice, 2015; Moulard, Rice, Garrity, & Mangus, 2014; Napoli, Dickinson, Beverland, & Farrelly, 2014; Pace, 2015; Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011; Robinson & Clifford, 2012; Spiggle, Nguyen, & Caravella, 2012; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsiotsou, 2012; Wang & Mattila, 2013; Wolz & Carbon, 2014; Zeng et al., 2012). Following this, interviews were conducted to generate items not observed in prior studies.

4.4 INTERVIEW RESULTS

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were applied to help generate items not found in the literature to date. Moreover, as stated previously, because no study has

developed a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale, a qualitative study method is
necessary to explore items and concepts not discussed in prior authenticity and restaurant
authenticity research (Netemeyer et al., 2003). The specific recruiting criteria used to
determine potential interview candidates are as follows:

1. Adults aged 18 or above

2. Having dined in an independent, full service Southern-style restaurant in the
   past 6 months

The respondents were selected via snowball sampling. The interviews were continued
until the content gradually reached saturation. After 11 interviews, interviewees'
responses started to repeat, and little new information was collected.

The interviews were semi-structured and thus included some questions which
were predetermined questions as well as some questions which were probing questions.
For the current study's protocol, respondents were asked to reflect on the last time they
had dined at an independent, full service Southern-style restaurant. They were then asked
to assess the perceived authenticity of several restaurant attributes relevant to the
restaurant authenticity literature, including the food and beverage, restaurant
environment, others in the restaurant, branding and marketing, and the entire restaurant.
Lastly participants were further asked, via an open-ended question, to reflect on the
perceived authenticity of any restaurant attributes not covered. Probing questions were
used to better understand the conceptualizations of authenticity being used by
respondents. Most of the open-ended and probing questions were developed based on a
review of the restaurant authenticity literature, but given the nature of the interviews,
there was some flexibility in the direction that interviews took.

The lengths of interviews ranged from 10-29 minutes. The digital recordings of the interviews were transcribed by a professional transcription service for further analysis. As shown in Table 4.1, eleven individuals were recruited for interviews and there were five females and six males. Most respondents, eight of them, were Caucasian, but three were Asian. The respondents' ages ranged from 24-59 years old.

Although the interviews were carried out in a way which allowed respondents to reflect on all aspects of their dining experience, emergent themes tended to relate to the restaurant attributes which have been relevant to the restaurant authenticity literature. This is not to say that several new themes did not emerge, but when they did, they tended to relate to these already relevant restaurant attributes including the food and beverage, restaurant environment, others in the restaurant, branding and marketing, and the entire restaurant. The following sections will discuss the unique themes observed in the interviews, which had not been previously observed in the literature. Quotations from interviewees which exemplify each theme have been included.

Table 4.1. Semi-Structured Interview Respondents

Speaker Number	Gender	Ethnicity	Age
1	Female	Caucasian	24
2	Female	Caucasian	58
3	Female	Asian	32
4	Male	Caucasian	29
5	Male	Asian	39
6	Male	Caucasian	51
7	Female	Caucasian	40
8	Male	Caucasian	26
9	Male	Asian	30
10	Male	Caucasian	55
11	Female	Caucasian	59

4.4.1 FOOD AND BEVERAGE

With regard to the restaurant's food and beverage, respondents generally discussed different aspects of the restaurant's dishes. Notable concepts discussed included dish recipes and ingredients ("*I'd never had green tomatoes or fried green tomatoes outside of any other restaurant than a Southern restaurant. Fried food is often associated with Southern food.*" (Speaker #7)); the presence of specific, traditional dishes on a restaurant's menu ("*I think barbecue, in general is very southern. Again, because it's very familiar in a lot of Southern locations. It was probably meat that was available back in the day.*" (Speaker #11)); the configuration of a dish ("*The appearance of the dishes they served is very Southern as well, because they tend to serve a big meal with all kinds of different sides.*" (Speaker #3)); cooking techniques "*Southern food is usually deep fried*" (Speaker #9)); the use of local ingredients ("*Ingredients come from close by.*" (Speaker #5)); and the perception that dishes are homemade, or house made ("*She served food out of her own kitchen.*" (Speaker #1)).

4.4.2 ENVIRONMENT

Interviewees' comments regarding restaurant environments tended to relate to either intangible or tangible elements. For intangible elements, they discussed uniqueness ("*The style and the décor that was laid out was rather unique as compared to some of the other place I've seen.*" (Speaker #4)); history ("*The [historic] building was what made it authentic.*" (Speaker #6)); and feeling ("*I think the casual nature of the fine dining restaurant was authentic to my perception of Southern restaurants.*" (Speaker #10)). For tangible elements, they discussed imagery ("*The décor was related to things I expected to see.*" (Speaker #11), "*The décor was definitely what you would expect in a barbecue.*"

(Speaker #11)); theming ("*Well, football is quite famous here, and sports tends to be like very famous here. People like to involve that in the restaurant a lot.*" (Speaker #3)); surrounding areas (*"There we have the ocean view"* (Speaker #5)); and restaurant layout ("*The layout... how the tables are arranged, that makes me feel like [the restaurant is authentic].*" (Speaker #3)).

4.4.3 OTHERS IN THE RESTAURANT

Interviewees' comments regarding others in the restaurant related to restaurant customers, employees and owners. For restaurant customers, key themes which emerged related to customer dress ("*coming from Charleston, I think people dress a particular way. When you see the seersucker suit...*" (Speaker #10)); the diction of customers ("*They speak very fast.*" (Speaker #9)); the personality of customers ("*It attracted a very local, casual crowd of people.*" (Speaker #1)); and the dwelling place of customers ("*the majority of them seemed to be residents of the area.*" (Speaker #4)). For restaurant employees, a key theme which emerged related to employees' knowledge of regional cuisine ("*employees, they share their knowledge about what is the local food.*" (Speaker #5)). The theme which emerged for restaurant owners related to their connection to the region ("*I know the owners are local.*" (Speaker #2)). Lastly, one final theme which emerged related to customers and employees knowing one another (*[She] knew them by name.*" (Speaker #1)).

4.4.4 BRANDING AND MARKETING

Four key themes emerged relating to branding and marketing: the match between a brand and the region ("*They're using a name which is synonymous with the region*" (Speaker #11)); promotional events ("*I think it's Monday nights. They have, it's like moon*

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pie night" (Speaker #2)); branding imagery ("*[Their logo was a] pig, which [is] typical*

[of] Southern restaurants that are serving pulled pork." (Speaker #6)); and promotions

which focus on the use of local ingredients ("*They're promoting local ingredients.*"

(Speaker #3)).

4.4.5 THE ENTIRE RESTAURANT

One theme which emerged relating to the entire restaurant was a perception that

the restaurant was independent and not a chain ("*[it is authentic because] it is not a*

chain" (Speaker #9)).

Overall, several new themes emerged via semi-structured layperson interviews.

These observed themes were used to develop new items for the item pool. These new

items are presented in Table 4.2. Overall 34 items were generated via interviews.

Table 4.2. Interview Results

Items	Theme
Food and beverage	
This restaurant's brand exemplifies that of other traditional restaurants from this region	Cooking techniques
This restaurant markets special promotions which are authentic to this region	Dish recipes and ingredients
This restaurant's brand includes logos that are reminiscent of the region	The configuration of a dish
This restaurant's brand includes imagery that makes me think of this region	The perception that dishes are homemade or house made
This restaurant's brand matches this region's personality	The presence of specific, traditional dishes on a restaurant's menu
This restaurant's marketing focuses on their use of local ingredients from this region	The use of local ingredients
This restaurant's slogan matches this destination's personality	The use of local ingredients
Environment	
This restaurant's interior and exterior design give off a feeling which is authentic to this region	Feeling
This restaurant's interior and exterior design give off a feeling which matches others traditional	Feeling

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restaurants in this region

This environment gives me the feeling that I am dining like the people from this region — Feeling

This restaurant's environment is representative of the history of this region — History

This restaurant is an originator of restaurant environmental design for this region — History

The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region — Imagery

This restaurant's interior has a layout authentic to this region — Restaurant layout

The environment in areas surrounding this restaurant is authentic to this region — Surrounding areas

The theming of this restaurant's interior and exterior are authentic to this region — Theming

This restaurant's interior and exterior are unique to this region — Uniqueness

Others in the restaurant

The dress of diners at this restaurant is consistent with the region — Customer dress

Customers and employees at this restaurant seem to know each other — Customers and employees knowing one another

The diners at this restaurant are knowledgeable about this region's cuisine — Employees' knowledge of regional cuisine

I believe the owners of this restaurant appear to be from this region — Owners' connection to the region

The diction used by customers at this restaurant is traditional for this region — The diction of customers

The diners at this restaurant live in the community — The dwelling place of customers

The personality of the diners of this restaurant is seems to be consistent with this region — The personality of customers

Branding and marketing

This restaurant's brand includes imagery that makes me think of this region — Branding imagery

This restaurant's brand includes logos that are reminiscent of the region — Branding imagery

This restaurant markets special promotions which are authentic to this region — Promotional events

This restaurant's marketing focuses on their use of local ingredients from this region — Promotions which focus on the use of local ingredients

This restaurant's brand matches this region's personality — The match between a brand and the region

This restaurant's brand exemplifies that of other traditional restaurants from this region — The match between a brand and the region

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This restaurant's slogan matches this destination's personality	The match between a brand and the region
Entire restaurant	
This restaurant is independent and not a chain	The perception that a restaurant is independent and not a chain

4.5 STAKEHOLDER PANEL

Following interviews, the item pool faced a stakeholder panel review to refine the item pool (Netemeyer et al., 2003). Seven of the panel judges were experts in the foodservice industry, foodservice researchers at American universities, and seven laypersons who had dined at independent full-service Southern restaurants in the last six months. It should also be noted that the demographic makeup of the diners matched that of other foodservice studies which have occurred in the Southeastern U.S. (Levitt, Zhang, DiPietro, & Meng, 2017).

The judges were asked to associate each item with one of the proposed domains. They then rated each of the items in the item pool using a three-point scale (1 = not representative, 2 = somewhat representative, 3 = clearly representative) to indicate the extent to which each item is representative of the domain it has been associated with. To assess face and content validity, a decision rule that focuses on the overall evaluation of all the judges was used; that is, items rated by at least 80% of the judges as at least somewhat representative, or by 60% as clearly representative, were retained (Hardesty & Bearden, 2004; Zaichkowsky, 1985). Ultimately, following the stakeholder panel, 50 items were retained. Fifteen of those items were generated from interviews and 35 were adapted from previous literature. Next, pilot data was obtained and an exploratory factor analysis was carried out on the pilot data.

4.6 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS ON PILOT DATA

4.6.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

As previously noted, data was collected from diners at three full-service restaurants serving Southern cuisine at a food tourism destination in the Southeastern U.S. Overall, 384 individuals were approached and 317 samples were obtained for a response rate of 82.5%. This sample size was deemed appropriate by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) who suggest that a sample size of 300 is required to conduct an exploratory factor analysis.

The respondents included 127 males (40.1%) and 190 females (59.9%). It also contained 230 tourists (72.6%) and 87 residents (27.4%). A majority of respondents were under the age of 45 (64.7%) and the gross annual income for the majority of subjects was below US$100,000 (54.7%). With regard to dining expenses, diners spent, on average, more than $25 for their meal. Lastly, on a daily basis, tourist respondents were spending approximately $89 in travel expenses for their trips.

4.6.2 PILOT STUDY DATA ANALYSIS

A principal axis factoring (PAF) factor analysis with promax oblique rotation was run on the retained item pool items using The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) v. 24. A promax rotation was used as it is an oblique rotation, which assumes that there will be some level of correlation between factors. For the current study factors were expected to be correlated to some extent (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Inspection of the correlation matrix showed that all variables had at least one correlation coefficient greater than 0.71, the threshold which is defined as "excellent" by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) with regard to convergent validity. An initial PAF test demonstrated that 23 items had double loadings or insufficient loadings. As such, they were removed prior to the final

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PAF test. The removal of these items serves as an effective way to bolster the internal consistency of the final scale (Comrey, 1988). It should also be noted that this level of reduction is consistent with many other scale development processes (Morgado, Meireles, Neves, Amaral, & Ferreira, 2018). For the final PAF test, the overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was greater than 0.9 and individual KMO measures were all greater than 0.7, sufficient according to Kaiser (1974). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also statistically significant ($P<.0005$) (Bartlett, 1950).

The PAF, using Promax oblique rotation to aid in interpretability, revealed four components that had eigenvalues greater than one and which explained 57.10% for food and beverage, 9.32% for restaurant heritage, 6.83% for restaurant environment, and 6.52% for restaurant diners. The four-component solution explained 79.79% of the total variance of overall restaurant authenticity. Discriminant validity for the four constructs was confirmed via a review of the pattern matrix. Since each item in the final EFA test loaded only on to one factor, discriminant validity was confirmed (Farrell, 2010).

The results of the PAF determined that perceptions of authenticity for regional American-style restaurants are comprised of four overarching factors:

1. *Factor number 1: food and beverage:* Perceived authenticity of the ingredients, menu items, and beverages served by the restaurant.

2. *Factor number 2: restaurant heritage:* Perceived heritage and adherence to tradition by the restaurant.

3. *Factor number 3: restaurant environment:* Perceived authenticity of the restaurant exterior, interior, and décor.

4. *Factor number 4: restaurant diners:* Perception that the diners in the restaurant are associated with the region with which the restaurant is located.

Component loadings and communalities of the rotated solution are presented in Table 4.3. After the pilot data was assessed, the full data collection process was carried out. Results from the full data collection process are presented next.

Table 4.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis in Pilot Data

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Food and beverage				
The recipes at this restaurant are authentic to this region	0.915			
The food and beverage really represented this region's cuisine	0.874			
This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes	0.873			
This restaurant's menu consists of more dishes that are traditional to this region, than non-traditional	0.872			
This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region	0.866			
The food and beverages produced are authentic to this region	0.850			
This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region	0.822			
This restaurant serves meals which are traditional to this region	0.813			
The food and beverages are presented in ways which are authentic to this region	0.809			
The food and beverage ingredients are authentic to this region	0.797			
This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region	0.795			
Restaurant heritage				
This restaurant is true to this region's history		0.905		
This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region		0.892		
This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region		0.876		
This restaurant seems to embody the essence of this region		0.872		
This restaurant is representative of a restaurant from this region		0.847		
This restaurant represents the values of this region		0.841		
This restaurant appears to connect with what I know about this region		0.833		
This is an authentic restaurant for this region		0.831		
This restaurant sticks to the principles of this region		0.752		
Restaurant environment				
This restaurant's environment is representative of the history of this region			0.912	
This restaurant has interior décor authentic to this region			0.859	
The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region			0.849	
This restaurant's interior has a layout authentic to this region			0.798	
Restaurant diners				
The diners at this restaurant live in this region				0.983
Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region				0.848

The personality of the diners at this restaurant is representative of this region				0.817
Eigenvalues	15.41	2.51	1.84	1.76
Percent of Variance Explained	57.10	9.32	6.83	6.52
Cronbach's Alpha	.96	.96	.92	.91

4.7 DEMOGRAPHICS FOR FULL DATA COLLECTION

For the full data collection process, data was collected from diners at six full-service restaurants serving Southern cuisine at two food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S. Overall, 937 diners were approached and 806 of them completed questionnaires. This led to a response rate of 86.0%. The respondents included 343 males (42.1%) and females (59.9%). It also contained 327 food tourists (40.1%), 248 general tourists (30.4%), and 231 locals (28.3%). A majority of respondents were under the age of 45 (64.8%) and the gross annual income for the majority of subjects was below US$125,000 (57.5%). With regard to dining expenses, diners spent, on average, more than $27 for their meal. Demographics are displayed in Table 4.4. Next an exploratory factor analysis was carried out on the full data set.

Table 4.4. Full Data Collection Demographic information

Food Tourist Demographic Items	Frequency (N)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	343	42.7
Female	461	57.3
Age		
18-25	184	22.6
26-35	212	26.0
36-45	125	15.4
46-55	131	16.1
56-65	105	12.9
66-75	32	3.9
76 and above	4	0.5
Total 2016 annual household income		
25,000 or Less	74	9.1
$25,001 - $50,000	93	11.4
$50,001 - $75,000	102	12.5
$75,001 - $100,000	100	12.3

$100,001 - $125,000	87	10.7
$125,001 - $150,000	58	7.1
$150,001 - $175,000	40	4.9
$175,001 - $200,000	21	2.6
$200,001 or above	86	10.6

4.8 EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS ON FULL DATA SET

A principal axis factoring (PAF) factor analysis with promax oblique rotation was run on the retained item pool items using SPSS v. 24 A promax rotation was used as it is an oblique rotation, which assumes that there will be some level of correlation between factors. For the current study factors were expected to be correlated to some extent (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Inspection of the correlation matrix showed that all variables had at least one correlation coefficient greater than 0.5, the threshold which is defined as "good" by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) with regard to convergent validity. An initial PAF test demonstrated that eight items had double loadings or insufficient loadings. As such, they were removed prior to the final PAF test. For the final PAF test, the overall Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was greater than 0.9 and individual KMO measures were all greater than 0.7, sufficient according to Kaiser (1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity was also statistically significant ($P<.0005$) (Bartlett, 1950).

The PAF, using Promax oblique rotation to aid in interpretability, revealed three components that had eigenvalues greater than one and which explained 64.13% for restaurant environment and heritage, 7.11% for food and beverage, 6.24% for restaurant diners. This differed from the pilot data as restaurant heritage and environment combined into a single factor in the full data set. The three-component solution explained 77.49% of the total variance of restaurant authenticity. Discriminant validity for the four constructs

was confirmed via a review of the pattern matrix. Since each item in the final EFA test loaded only on to one factor, discriminant validity was confirmed (Farrell, 2010).

The results of the PAF determined that perceptions of authenticity for regional American-style restaurants are comprised of three overarching factors containing 20 items:

1. *Factor number 1: restaurant heritage and environment:* Perceived authenticity of the restaurant exterior, interior, and décor as well as the perceived heritage and adherence to tradition by the restaurant.

2. *Factor number 2: food and beverage:* Perceived authenticity of the ingredients, menu items, and beverages served by the restaurant.

3. *Factor number 3: restaurant diners:* Perception that the diners in the restaurant are associated with the region with which the restaurant is located.

Component loadings and communalities of the rotated solution are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Exploratory Factor Analysis on Full Data Set

	Items	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
E-2	The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region	0.965		
E-3	This restaurant has interior décor authentic to this region	0.938		
E-4	This restaurant appears to connect with what I know about this region	0.923		
R-3	This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region	0.868		
R-4	This restaurant sticks to the principles of this region	0.860		
R-5	This restaurant represents the values of this region	0.770		
R-6	This restaurant's environment is representative of the history of this region	0.764		
R-7	This restaurant seems to embody the essence of this region	0.757		
R-8	This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region	0.709		
R-9	This is an authentic restaurant for this region	0.653		
F-1	This restaurant serves meals which are traditional to this region		0.942	
F-2	This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region		0.916	
F-3	The food and beverages produced are authentic to this region		0.798	
F-4	This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region		0.761	
F-5	This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region		0.752	
F-6	This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes		0.651	
F-8	This restaurant's menu consists of more dishes that are traditional to this region, than non-traditional		0.617	

F-9	The recipes at this restaurant are authentic to this region		0.540	
O-2	Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region			0.912
O-3	The diners at this restaurant live in this region			0.883
	Eigenvalues	12.82	1.42	1.24
	Percent of Variance Explained	64.13	7.11	6.24
	Cronbach's Alpha	.94	.97	.89

Within these three factors, 12 items were adapted from previous studies and eight items were developed via interviews. Of these, for the restaurant heritage and environment factor, two items, E-2 and R-6, were developed via interviews; for the food and beverage factor, four items, F-3, F-4, F-5, and F-6, were developed via interviews; and for the restaurant diners factor, two items, O-2 and O-3, were developed via interviews.

Following this EFA, a data screening process was carried out using SPSS v. 24 to ensure that the full data set contained no outliers, and had acceptable skewness and kurtosis. Tests shows that the values for univariate skewness did not exceed three and the values for univariate kurtosis did not exceed 10. More specifically, restaurant heritage and environment had a skewness of 1.67 and kurtosis of 1.64; food and beverage had a skewness of 1.87 and kurtosis of 1.72; and restaurant diners had a skewness of 1.05 and kurtosis of 1.99. Thus, based on Kline's (2011) criteria, the data from the full data set did not deviate from normal distribution. Furthermore, as there was little missing data, any missing responses were replaced with item mean values. After the data screening process, two CFA's were carried out on randomly split halves of the data (a calibration and validation group). Each of those CFA's will be displayed in the following section.

4.9 CFA ON CALIBRATION GROUP

A first-order CFA was performed using AMOS v. 21 on the RAS to ensure the data fit the a priori assumptions from the resultant EFA. As such, 20 items were posited

to three latent constructs. Due to the continuous nature of the data, maximum likelihood

estimation procedure along with the covariance matrix method was appropriate for latent

structure analysis and convergent validity checks. The model was tested in AMOS v. 21

and was scrutinized against key fit indices. Results are displayed in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1. Calibration Group CFA

The CFA model solution initially did not produce satisfactory model fit ($\chi^2 =$

747.94; $df = 167$; $p < .001$; $\chi^2/df = 4.47$; RMSEA = .093; GFI = .829; TLI = .926; CFI =

.935). after relevant error terms were covaried, determined based off of modification

indices and including E-2 to E-3, E-3 to E-4, E-4 to R-3, E-3 to R-3, R-4 to R-5, R-8 to

R-9, F-1 to F-2, F-1 to F-4, F-3 to F-4, and F-4 to F-6, satisfactory fit was obtained

(χ^2 = 390.85; *df* = 157; *p* < .001; χ^2/df = 2.49; RMSEA = .06; GFI = .911; TLI = .968; CFI = .974) (Hooper et al., 2008). The authenticity-related factors were shown to have moderately strong correlations: *restaurant diners* and *food and beverage* (*r* = 0.57), *restaurant environment and heritage* and *food and beverage* (*r* = 0.63), and *restaurant heritage and environment* and *food and beverage* (*r* = 0.86).

4.9.1 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY FROM THE CALIBRATION GROUP

Convergent validity, which explains how well observed variables posited to a latent construct converge or share a high proportion of variance, is supported by item reliabilities in Table 4.6, where alpha values for the final first-order CFA constructs were greater than 0.70. During the CFA, composite reliability (CR > 0.60) and average variance extracted (AVE > 0.50) were also calculated. As shown in Table 7, CR and AVE estimates ranged from 0.95 to 0.97 and 0.73 to 0.79, respectively. Given these values, convergent validity of the RAS instrument was supported (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.6. Construct Validity for the Calibration Group

Constructs	Loadings	CR	AVE
Restaurant heritage and environment (α=0.97)		0.97	0.79
E-2	0.87		
E-3	0.89		
E-4	0.87		
R-3	0.87		
R-4	0.88		
R-5	0.88		
R-6	0.90		
R-7	0.92		
R-8	0.87		
R-9	0.85		
Food and beverage (α=0.94)		0.95	0.73
F-1	0.76		
F-2	0.74		
F-3	0.85		

F-4	0.85	
F-5	0.86	
F-6	0.84	
F-8	0.84	
F-9	0.84	
Restaurant diners (α=0.90)		0.95 0.91
O-2	0.91	
O-3	0.90	

Discriminant validity on the other hand provides evidence that each construct can capture its own unique information not obtained from other constructs in the model and where each observed variable is posited to only one construct. Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. With regard to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, discriminant validity is confirmed when the square roots of AVEs for each of the factors is higher than the correlation of that factor with other factors in a scale. For the current study, the square roots of AVEs for each of the factors was higher than the correlation of that factor with other factors in a scale, which confirms discriminant validity. Results are displayed in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Fornell and Larcker Discriminant Validity for the Calibration Sample

	1	2	3
Restaurant heritage and environment	**0.893**		
Food and beverage	0.811	**0.855**	
Restaurant diners	0.584	0.517	**0.955**

4.10 CFA ON VALIDATION GROUP

A first-order CFA was performed using AMOS v. 21 on the validation group to reconfirm the satisfactory fit indices obtained from the CFA of the calibration group. Results are displayed in Figure 4.2.
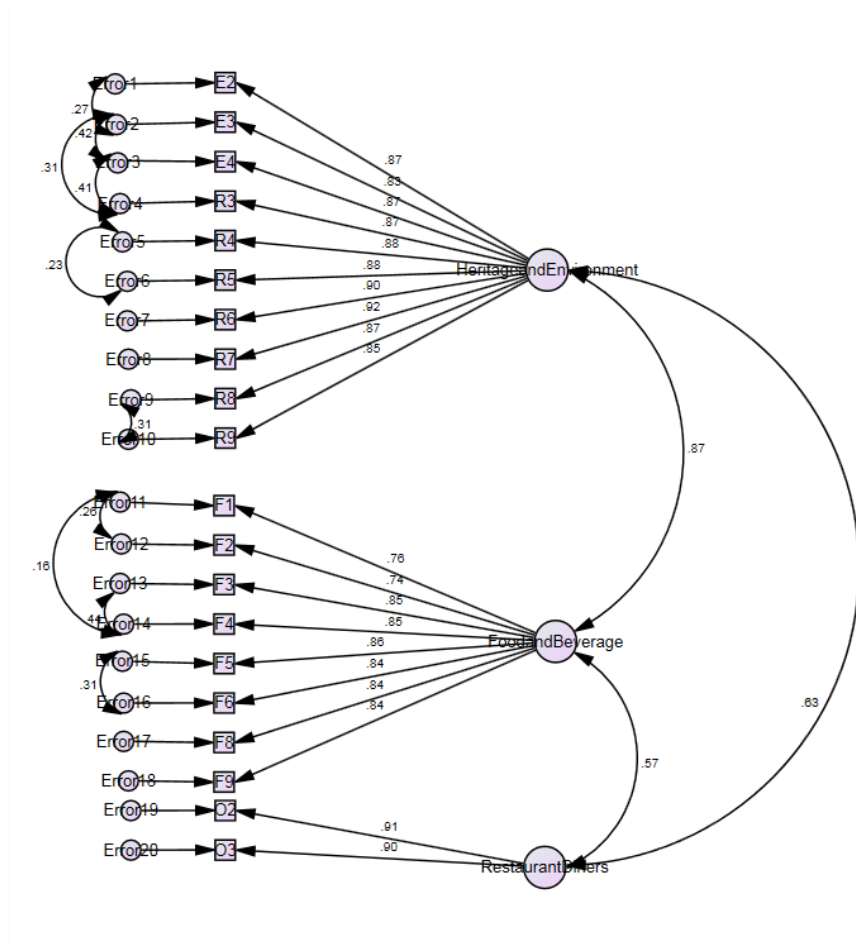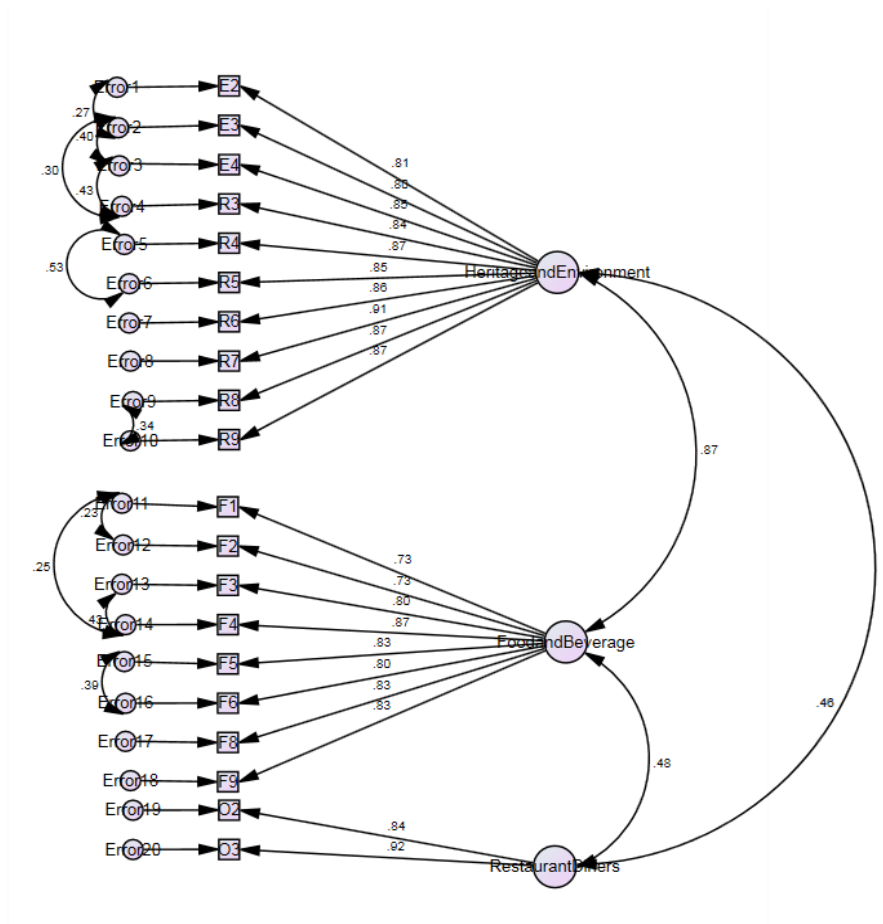
Figure 4.2. Validation Group CFA

The CFA model solution initially did not produce satisfactory model fit (χ^2 = 959.93; df = 167; p < .001; χ^2/df = 5.74; RMSEA = .109; GFI = .796; TLI = .891; CFI = .904). After relevant error terms were covaried, determined based off of modification indices and including E-2 to E-3, E-3 to E-4, E-4 to R-3, E-3 to R-3, R-4 to R-5, R-8 to R-9, F-1 to F-2, F-1 to F-4, F-3 to F-4, and F-4 to F-6, satisfactory fit was obtained (χ^2 = 452.26; df = 157; p < .001; χ^2/df = 2.88; RMSEA = .06; GFI = .901; TLI = .957; CFI = .964) (Hooper et al., 2008). The authenticity-related factors were shown to have moderately strong correlations: *restaurant diners* and *food and beverage* (r = 0.48),

restaurant heritage and environment and *food and beverage* ($r = 0.46$), and *restaurant heritage and environment* and *food and beverage* ($r = 0.87$).

4.10.1 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY FROM THE VALIDATION GROUP

Convergent validity, which explains how well observed variables posited to a latent construct converge or share a high proportion of variance, is supported by item reliabilities in Table 4.8, where alpha values for the final first-order CFA constructs were greater than 0.70. During the CFA, composite reliability (CR > 0.70) and average variance extracted (AVE > 0.50) were also calculated. As shown in Table 4.8, CR and AVE estimates ranged from 0.95 to 0.97 and 0.70 to 0.88, respectively. Given these values, convergent validity of the RAS instrument was supported (Hair et al., 2010).

Table 4.8. Construct Validity for the Validation Group

Constructs	Loadings	CR	AVE
Restaurant heritage and environment (α=0.96)		0.97	0.77
E-2	0.81		
E-3	0.80		
E-4	0.85		
R-3	0.84		
R-4	0.87		
R-5	0.85		
R-6	0.86		
R-7	0.91		
R-8	0.87		
R-9	0.87		
Food and beverage (α=0.94)		0.95	0.70
F-1	0.73		
F-2	0.73		
F-3	0.80		
F-4	0.87		
F-5	0.83		
F-6	0.80		
F-8	0.83		
F-9	0.83		

Restaurant diners (α=0.87)		0.95	0.88
O-2	0.84		
O-3	0.92		

Discriminant validity on the other hand provides evidence that each construct can capture

its own unique information not obtained from other constructs in the model and where

each observed variable is posited to only one construct. Discriminant validity was tested

using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. For the current study, the square roots of

AVEs for each of the factors was higher than the correlation of that factor with other

factors in a scale, which confirms discriminant validity. Results are displayed in Table

4.9.

Table 4.9. Fornell and Larcker Discriminant Validity for the Validation Group

	1	2	3
Restaurant heritage and Environment	**0.878**		
Food and beverage	0.805	**0.839**	
Restaurant diners	0.583	0.606	**0.841**

Model fit, reliability, and construct validity were satisfactory in both the

calibration and validation samples. The following section will test invariance between the

two samples.

4.11 INVARIANCE TESTING

To develop a valid measurement scale, the equality of the factor loadings across

groups needs to be assured (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2010). A measurement

invariance test using CFA was carried out to assess whether the measurement model of

the three RAS dimensions was equivalent across the calibration and validation samples.

The chi-square difference between the unconstrained model and full metric invariance

model was not significant, $\Delta\chi^2(17) = 11.95$, p >.05, suggesting that the factor loadings are invariant across samples. The following section will assess predictive validity.

4.12 PREDICTIVE VALIDITY

In developing a new scale, it is important to assess predictive validity, which is a form of criterion validity and refers to the extent to which measurement scores are able to precisely predict other related measures of the construct they represent (Kline, 2011; Lee & Crompton, 1992). To check predictive validity, a correlation analysis was conducted as executed in previous studies. For the current study this test assessed the relationship between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, a relationship which has been tested in some prior research and carried out using SmartPLS v. 3 (Kovács et al., 2013; Lehman et al., 2014). There was a significant positive relationship between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction (β=0.507, $p < .001$). This demonstrated the predictive validity of the scale, as restaurant authenticity was positively correlated with satisfaction. The following section will discuss nomological validity of the RAS.

4.13 NOMOLOGICAL VALIDITY

Using the full data set, restaurant loyalty was included into the model as a means of establishing the nomological validity of the RAS scale. For nomological validity, the behavior of the latent constructs of interest is investigated on the basis of their theoretical relationships with each other (Netemeyer et al., 2003). To corroborate the existence of nomological validity, the constructs should possess distinct antecedent causes and consequential effects and/or modifying conditions (Netemeyer et al., 2003), support for which is typically established using structural equation modeling. In this case, the relationship between the RAS and restaurant loyalty was tested using AMOS v. 21.

Model fit was satisfactory (χ^2 = 811.33; df = 260; $p < .001$; χ^2/df = 3.12; RMSEA = .05; GFI = .923; TLI = .970; CFI = .974) (Hooper et al., 2008) and there was a significant positive relationship between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty (β=0.57, $p < .001$). Thus, nomological validity was established. The following section will summarize the current chapter.

4.14 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This section has reported on the results related to the development of the RAS. This process has included a review of the literature to generate items; 11 interviews to further generate items; a stakeholder panel to refine the item pool; a pilot test and exploratory factor analysis to further refine the item pool and develop scale factors; lastly a full data collection process and confirmatory factor analysis were carried out to further refine the scale and confirm scale reliability and validity. Ultimately, following the EFA and the two CFAs, the RAS contains three factors and 20 items. The following chapter will test the current study's proposed model, which is the second phase of data analysis.

CHAPTER 5

MODEL RESULTS AND FINDINGS

5.1 TESTING THE PROPOSED MODEL

The mean values of each construct were calculated. Results suggest that all constructs scored at least 4.04 on a 7-point Likert-type scale. Individual principal component analyses were employed to examine the dimensions of each construct. The results show that all constructs were uni-dimensional and explained more than 71% of their respective average variances. All of the item loadings were above 0.64. Alpha values of each construct ranged from 0.82 to 0.95. The mean values of each construct were calculated. Results suggest that all constructs scored at least 4.04 on a 7-point Likert-type scale. Individual principal component analyses were employed to examine the dimensions of each construct. The results show that all constructs were uni-dimensional and explained more than 71% of their respective average variances. All of the item loadings were above 0.64. Alpha values of each construct ranged from 0.82 to 0.95. The following section will discuss model fit for the measurement model.

5.2 MEASUREMENT MODEL FIT

5.2.1 FIRST-ORDER MEASUREMENT MODEL FIT

The measurement model, containing the constructs of restaurant environment and heritage, food and beverage, restaurant diners, peak experience, satisfaction, lifestyle-congruence, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment, was tested using AMOS v. 21. After covarying relevant error terms, the model solution produced satisfactory fit indices

for all values except for GFI (χ^2 = 2823.78; df = 902; $p < .001$; χ^2/df = 3.13;

RMSEA = .05; GFI = .86; TLI = .946; CFI = .951) (Hooper et al., 2008). The GFI value

was slightly below the desired threshold of .90, but the obtained value was deemed

acceptable as GFI is often negatively influenced by large sample sizes (Sharma,

Mukherjee, Kumar, & Dillon, 2005). Next construct reliability was tested for the first

order measurement model.

5.2.2 CONSTRUCT RELIABILITY

Firstly, all the constructs' average variance extracted values were above the

minimum criteria of 0.50 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009), suggesting satisfactory

convergent validity. Secondly, the indicators' cross loadings inform that no indicator

loaded higher on an opposing construct (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Thirdly, all

indicators displayed significant standardized loadings above 0.60, demonstrating

indicator reliability. Correspondingly, all constructs acquired high Cronbach's alpha (α)

and composite reliability values greater than 0.81, entailing adequate internal

consistency. Results of reliability and validity are displayed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1. Model Construct Reliability and Validity

Constructs	Loadings	CR	AVE
Restaurant heritage and environment (α=0.96)		0.97	0.77
E-2	0.84		
E-3	0.82		
E-4	0.86		
R-3	0.86		
R-4	0.88		
R-5	0.87		
R-6	0.88		
R-7	0.92		
R-8	0.87		
R-9	0.86		
Food and beverage (α=0.94)		0.95	0.70
F-1	0.74		

F-2	0.73		
F-3	0.88		
F-4	0.85		
F-5	0.84		
F-6	0.82		
F-8	0.84		
F-9	0.83		
Restaurant diners (α=0.81)		0.89	0.73
O-2	0.88		
O-3	0.91		
Satisfaction (α=0.93)		0.95	0.88
SAT-1	0.91		
SAT-2	0.94		
SAT-3	0.88		
Peak experience (α=0.95)		0.96	0.70
P-1	0.60		
P-2	0.79		
P-3	0.86		
P-4	0.91		
P-5	0.91		
P-6	0.89		
P-7	0.79		
P-8	0.78		
P-9	0.82		
P-10	0.79		
Lifestyle-congruence (α=0.95)		0.96	0.90
LC-1	0.91		
LC-2	0.96		
LC-3	0.92		
Restaurant loyalty (α=0.94)		0.95	0.82
L-1	0.75		
L-2	0.85		
L-3	0.94		
L-4	0.93		
L-5	0.94		
Place attachment (α=0.86)		0.90	0.71
PA-1	0.63		
PA-2	0.93		
PA-3	0.93		
PA-4	0.68		

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. As

previously noted, to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion, discriminant validity is

confirmed when the square roots of AVEs for each of the factors is higher than the

correlation of that factor with other factors in a scale. For the current study, the square

roots of AVEs for each of the factors was higher than the correlation of that factor with

other factors in a scale, which confirms discriminant validity. Results are displayed in

Table 5.2. Next, the second order measurement model was tested.

Table 5.2. Fornell and Larcker Discriminant Validity for the Model

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Food and beverage	**0.846**							
Heritage and environment	0.807	**0.886**						
Lifestyle-congruence	0.291	0.374	**0.953**					
Restaurant loyalty	0.508	0.511	0.515	**0.906**				
Restaurant diners	0.471	0.509	0.264	0.337	**0.948**			
Peak experience	0.414	0.499	0.645	0.569	0.325	**0.841**		
Place attachment	0.309	0.379	0.475	0.505	0.294	0.471	**0.845**	
Satisfaction	0.489	0.454	0.479	0.756	0.288	0.479	0.387	**0.94**

5.2.3 SECOND-ORDER MEASUREMENT MODEL FIT

In the second-order measurement model, a hierarchical CFA was tested with

restaurant authenticity, lifestyle-congruence, loyalty, peak experience, place attachment,

and satisfaction being modeled as correlated constructs. After covarying relevant error

terms, the model solution produced satisfactory fit indices for all values except for GFI

($\chi 2 = 2789.36$; df = 902; p < .001; $\chi 2/df = 3.0$; RMSEA = .05; GFI = .86; TLI = .947;

CFI = .961) (Hooper et al., 2008). The GFI value was slightly below the desired threshold

of .90, but the obtained value was deemed acceptable as GFI is often negatively

influenced by large sample sizes (Sharma et al., 2005).

As the construct validity and reliability of lifestyle-congruence, satisfaction, peak

experience, loyalty, and place attachment were assessed in the first-order CFA, this

analysis focused primarily on the evaluation of the second-order factor for restaurant authenticity. The standardized loadings of three dimensions of restaurant authenticity were all significant at the p = .05 level. Results are displayed in Table 5.3.

The large critical ratios indicate that these first-order factors were significant and strong indicators of their respective second-order constructs (p < .01). Furthermore, the AVE for restaurant authenticity exceeded .50 (Hair et al., 2010), supporting convergent validity. Discriminant validity was supported, as the square root of the AVE for each factor was greater than its correlations with other factors (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The following section will now test the current study's structural model.

Table 5.3. Second-Order Measurement Model for Restaurant Authenticity

Component	SL	CR	AVE
Restaurant authenticity			.617
Restaurant heritage and environment	.94	22.57	
Food and beverage	.92	N/A	
Restaurant diners	.60	14.91	

5.3 TESTING THE STRUCTURAL MODEL

The proposed model was tested using AMOS v. 21. Results revealed that all of the proposed relationships were significant. The strongest relationships were between restaurant authenticity and peak experience, satisfaction and restaurant loyalty, and restaurant loyalty and place attachment. Figure 5.1 displays the outcome of the structural model test. With regard to hypothesis testing, all hypotheses were supported. Specific hypothesis test results are displayed in Table 5.4.
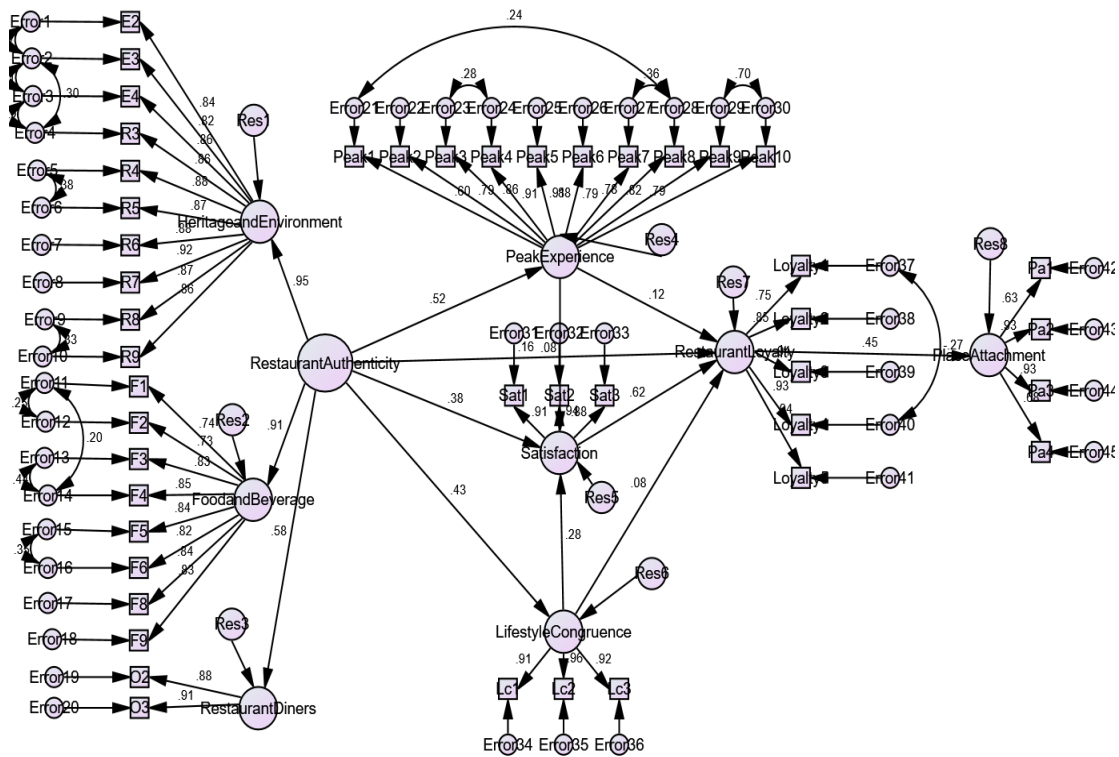
Figure 5.1. Results for the Proposed Model

Table 5.4. Results of Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses		Path Coefficient	p -Value	Supported?
H1	RA→L	0.16	$p <.001$	Yes
H2	RA→P	0.52	$p <.001$	Yes
H3	RA→SAT	0.38	$p <.001$	Yes
H4	RA→LC	0.43	$p <.001$	Yes
H5	P→SAT	0.12	$p <.001$	Yes
H6	LC→SAT	0.28	$p <.001$	Yes
H7	P→L	0.12	$p <.001$	Yes
H8	SAT→L	0.62	$p <.001$	Yes
H9	LC→L	0.08	$p <.001$	Yes
H10	L→PA	0.45	$p <.001$	Yes

RA= Restaurant Authenticity; P= Peak Experience; SAT= Satisfaction; LC= Lifestyle-congruence; L= Restaurant Loyalty; PA= Place Attachment

Next, a mediation analysis was conducted on the current study's mediating variables.

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5.4 MEDIATION ANALYSES

The current study had two proposed mediated relationships in its model: between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction and between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty. Thus, a mediation analysis was carried out to show that the mediators (peak experience and lifestyle-congruence for satisfaction and satisfaction, peak experience and lifestyle-congruence for restaurant loyalty) affect the relationships between the independent and dependent. These effects can be tested via bootstrapping analysis to determine if there are significant indirect effects between an independent and dependent variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

First, mediating effects between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction were tested in AMOS v. 21 using 2,000 bootstrap resamples. Results revealed that the indirect effect between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, through peak experience and lifestyle-congruence was significant ($p < .01$) suggesting that the relationship is partially mediated. Furthermore, when comparing partially mediated and unmediated path relationships between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, the path relationship value (β) decreased from β=.505 to β=.483 when mediators were added to the relationship. This is a further indicator that the relationship is partially mediated (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Next, mediation effects between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty were tested in AMOS v. 21 using 2,000 bootstrap resamples. Results revealed that the indirect effect between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty, through peak experience, satisfaction and lifestyle-congruence was significant ($p < .01$) suggesting that the relationship is partially mediated. Furthermore, when comparing partially mediated and unmediated path relationships between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty,

the path relationship value (β) decreased from β=.272 to β=.248 when mediators were added to the relationship. Again, this is a further indicator that the relationship is partially mediated (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Results of the mediation analysis are displayed in Table 5.5.

Following the testing of the proposed model, a multigroup moderation analysis was carried out to determine if relationships in the model differed between food tourists, general tourists, and locals.

Table 5.5. Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Direct without mediator	Direct with mediator	Bootstrapping significance
Restaurant authenticity to satisfaction	.505	.483	$p < .01$
Restaurant authenticity to restaurant loyalty	.272	.248	$p < .01$

5.5 MULTIGROUP MODERATION ANALYSIS

A multigroup moderation analysis was then conducted to assess differences in the two groups in a two-segment solution. The multigroup moderation analysis allowed for the identification of differences in path coefficients between segments. The results demonstrated that some significant differences existed between the three segments for any path coefficient. Tables 5.6, 5.7, and 5.8 report the results of the multigroup moderation analysis. These results suggest that hypothesis 11 was partially supported.

Table 5.6. Comparison Between Food Tourists and General Tourists

| Paths | Food Tourists vs. General Tourists | | | | |
	Food Tourist Path Coefficient	Sig.	General Tourist Path Coefficient	Sig.	Z-Score
RA→P	0.376	0.000	0.283	0.000	-1.234
RA→LC	0.507	0.000	0.458	0.000	-0.377
RA→SAT	0.341	0.000	0.397	0.000	0.566
P→SAT	0.105	0.142	0.108	0.282	0.024
LC→SAT	0.141	0.000	0.231	0.000	1.560
RA→L	0.243	0.000	0.193	0.008	-0.535
SAT→L	0.758	0.000	0.678	0.000	-0.781
P→L	0.196	0.005	0.203	0.023	0.064
LC→L	0.069	0.026	0.118	0.007	0.916
L→PA	0.274	0.000	0.183	0.000	-1.679

*$P<.05$; **$P<.01$; ***$P<.001$

RA= Restaurant Authenticity; P= Peak Experience; SAT= Satisfaction; LC= Lifestyle-congruence; L= Restaurant Loyalty; PA= Place Attachment

Table 5.7. Comparison Between Food Tourists and Locals

| Paths | Food Tourists vs. Locals | | | | |
	Food Tourist Path Coefficient	Sig.	Locals Path Coefficient	Sig.	Z-Score
RA→P	0.376	0.000	0.551	0.000	2.091*
RA→LC	0.507	0.000	0.810	0.000	2.5*
RA→SAT	0.341	0.000	0.312	0.000	-0.298
P→SAT	0.105	0.142	0.049	0.485	-0.563
LC→SAT	0.141	0.000	0.216	0.000	1.353
RA→L	0.243	0.000	0.135	0.100	-1.072
SAT→L	0.758	0.000	0.949	0.000	1.571
P→L	0.196	0.005	0.139	0.050	-0.573
LC→L	0.069	0.026	-0.033	0.499	-1.777
L→PA	0.274	0.000	0.318	0.000	0.675

*$P<.05$; **$P<.01$; ***$P<.001$

RA= Restaurant Authenticity; P= Peak Experience; SAT= Satisfaction; LC= Lifestyle-congruence; L= Restaurant Loyalty; PA= Place Attachment

Table 5.8. Comparison Between and General Tourists and Locals

Paths	General Tourist Path Coefficient	Sig.	Locals Path Coefficient	Sig.	Z-Score
RA→P	0.283	0.000	0.551	0.000	3.058**
RA→LC	0.458	0.000	0.810	0.000	2.639**
RA→SAT	0.397	0.000	0.312	0.000	-0.761
P→SAT	0.108	0.283	0.049	0.485	-0.484
LC→SAT	0.231	0.000	0.216	0.000	-0.217
RA→L	0.193	0.008	0.135	0.100	-0.533
SAT→L	0.678	0.000	0.949	0.000	2.19**
P→L	0.203	0.023	0.139	0.050	-0.561
LC→L	0.118	0.007	-0.033	0.499	-2.326*
L→PA	0.183	0.000	0.318	0.000	2.097*

General Tourists vs. Locals

$*P<.05; **P<.01; ***P<.001$

RA= Restaurant Authenticity; P= Peak Experience; SAT= Satisfaction; LC= Lifestyle-congruence; L= Restaurant Loyalty; PA= Place Attachment

Following the multigroup moderation analysis, the demographics of food tourists, general tourists, and locals were compared.

5.5.1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SEGMENTS

A demographic profile of each segment was identified using cross-tabulation analysis. A chi-square test for association was also conducted to determine if there were any significant differences between group association and gender, age, and annual income. It also contained 327 food tourists (40.1%), 248 general tourists (30.4%), and 231 locals (28.3%). Table 5.9 provides a profile of the three segments with respect to selected demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 5.9. Demographic Profile for Food Tourists, General Tourists, and Locals

Demographic Items	Locals	Food Tourists	General Tourists
Gender			
Male	108	128	107

Female	122	199	140
Age			
18-25	58	65	61
26-35	51	113	48
36-45	35	50	40
46-55	32	52	47
56-65	27	35	43
66-75	19	8	5
76 and Above	3	0	1
Total 2016 annual household income			
$25,000 or Less	26	21	27
$25,001 - $50,000	23	47	23
$50,001 - $75,000	28	42	32
$75,001 - $100,000	34	36	30
$100,001 - $125,000	25	40	22
$125,001 - $150,000	15	21	22
$150,001 - $175,000	8	17	15
$175,001 - $200,000	10	9	2
$200,001 or Above	20	41	25

The demographic variables of gender, age, and household income for the three groups were further compared using chi-square analysis. The chi-square analysis revealed that groups differed significantly with regard to age ($p < 0.05$). Most notably, there were a disproportionately large number of locals aged 66-75 and 76 and above. There was also a disproportionately large number of food tourists aged 26-35. A MANOVA test was also conducted to determine if there were differences between groups with regard to the mean values of constructs in the model.

5.5.2 MANOVA

A MANOVA with Tukey post-hoc tests were used to determine if there were statistically significant differences between the three clusters in terms of attitude and intention. The results show restaurant diners (F =13.98, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.023$), peak experience (F = 20.80, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.024$), lifestyle-congruence (F = 15.64, $p < 0.01$,

$R^2 = 0.016$), satisfaction (F = 7.14, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.16$), restaurant loyalty (F = 12.82, $p <$ 0.01, $R^2 = 0.021$), and place attachment (F = 46.73, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.070$) are significantly different between the three clusters. Detailed results are presented in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10. MANOVA Test Results

Dependent Variable	(I) Cluster	(J) Cluster	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Restaurant authenticity	Local	Food tourist	.3781[**]	.001
		General tourist	.4570[***]	.000
	Food tourist	Local	-.3781[**]	.001
		General tourist	.0789	.737
	General tourist	Local	-.4570[***]	.000
		Food tourist	-.0789	.737
Peak experience	Local	Food tourist	.0724	.838
		General tourist	.5390[***]	.000
	Food tourist	Local	-.0724	.838
		General tourist	.4666[**]	.001
	General tourist	Local	-.5390[***]	.000
		Food tourist	-.4666[**]	.001
Lifestyle-congruence	Local	Food tourist	.2652	.126
		General tourist	.5201[**]	.001
	Food tourist	Local	-.2652	.126
		General tourist	.2550	.137
	General tourist	Local	-.5201[**]	.001
		Food tourist	-.2550	.137
Satisfaction	Local	Food tourist	.1866	.115
		General tourist	.3514[**]	.001
	Food tourist	Local	-.1866	.115

		General tourist	.1648	.173
	General tourist	Local	-.3514**	.001
		Food tourist	-.1648	.173
Restaurant loyalty	Local	Food tourist	.3242**	.007
		General tourist	.4573***	.000
	Food tourist	Local	-.3242**	.007
		General tourist	.1331	.414
	General tourist	Local	-.4573***	.000
		Food tourist	-.1331	.414
Place attachment	Local	Food tourist	.6471***	.000
		General tourist	.8609***	.000
	Food tourist	Local	-.6471***	.000
		General tourist	.2138	.119
	General tourist	Local	-.8609***	.000
		Food tourist	-.2138	.119

*$P<.05$; **$P<.01$; ***$P<.001$

The following section will now conclude this chapter on model testing.

5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This section has reported on the results related to the testing of the current study's model. After asserting that the model had satisfactory fit, reliability, and construct validity, the path relationships for the structural model were tested using CB-SEM. Each of the paths in the global model was found to be significant. Thus, hypotheses 1-10 were confirmed. A multigroup moderation analysis determined that there were some significant differences between food tourists, general tourists, and locals with regard to path relationships in the structural model. Thus, hypothesis 11 was partially confirmed. Lastly, a MANOVA analysis was carried out to assess construct mean differences

between groups. Again some significant differences were observed between the three

consumer groups. The following section will discuss the current study's findings,

conclude this study, and discuss limitations and future research.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter first will summarize the results related to the current study's research

questions. Then, it will present a detailed discussion of the current study's findings for

each research question. After that, the theoretical and practical implications of the current

study will be discussed. Lastly, a conclusion for the current study is provided along with

a discussion of the study's limitations and future research suggestions. The following

section will summarize the current study's findings.

6.2 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

6.2.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

To answer research question one, which conceptualizations of authenticity and

which restaurant attributes comprise a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale

(RAS), the RAS was developed using the process put forward by Netemeyer et al.

(2003). Ultimately, through the scale development process, a 20-item, three factor

solution was uncovered. The first factor determined was r*estaurant heritage and*

environment which measures the perceived authenticity of the restaurant exterior, interior

and décor, as well as the perceived heritage and adherence to tradition by the restaurant.

The second factor was f*ood and beverage* which measures the perceived authenticity of

the ingredients, menu items, and beverages served by the restaurant. The last factor was

r*estaurant diners* which measures perceptions that the diners in the restaurant are associated with the region within which the restaurant is located. Twelve items in the scale were adapted from previous literature. Eight items developed via interviews.

The final RAS contained items relating to objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, staged authenticity, indexical authenticity, iconic authenticity, and expressive authenticity (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). This suggests restaurant customers use facts; assess whether they are being immersed into a destination's local heritage; use their personal history; assess the originality of certain goods and services; assess how well certain goods or services have been copied or recreated; and assess whether certain goods or services espouse the spirit of a destination when they assess the overall authenticity of a restaurant (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999).

Overall, the final RAS contained three factors and items related to objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, staged authenticity, indexical authenticity, iconic authenticity, and expressive authenticity. The following section will summarize the results related to research questions two and three.

6.2.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS TWO AND THREE

To answer research questions two and three, which focused on the extent to which restaurant authenticity influenced perceptions, satisfaction, restaurant loyalty and place attachment, a conceptual model was developed and hypotheses tested for significance between the relationships. This model was developed by using the frameworks of the

social cognitive theory, the Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory.

The proposed model was tested using AMOS v. 21. Results from testing the hypothesized relationships will now be briefly summarized: restaurant authenticity had a positive influence on restaurant loyalty, which supported H1 (β = .16, p < .001); restaurant authenticity had a positive influence on peak experience, which supported H2 (β = .52, p < .001); restaurant authenticity had a positive influence on satisfaction, which supported H3 (β = .38, p < .001); restaurant authenticity had a positive influence on lifestyle-congruence, which supported H4 (β = .43, p < .001); place attachment had a positive influence on satisfaction, which supported H5 (β = .12, p < .001); lifestyle-congruence had a positive influence on satisfaction, which supported H6 (β = .28, p < .001); place attachment had a positive influence on restaurant loyalty, which supported H7 (β = .12, p < .001); satisfaction had a positive influence on restaurant loyalty, which supported H8 (β = .62 , p < .001); lifestyle-congruence had a positive influence on restaurant loyalty, which supported H9 (β = .08, p < .001); and lastly, restaurant loyalty positively influenced place attachment, which supported H10 (β = .45, p < .001). Overall, each hypothesized relationship in the conceptual model (H1-H10) was tested and confirmed. Restaurant authenticity had the strongest direct influence on peak experience and the strongest relationship in the model was between satisfaction and restaurant loyalty.

Results also showed that partial-mediating effects existed on the relationships between both restaurant authenticity and satisfaction as well as restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty. For restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, this suggests that

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individuals with elevated levels of peak experience and lifestyle-congruence had higher levels of satisfaction. For restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty, it suggests that individuals with elevated levels of peak experience, lifestyle-congruence and satisfaction had higher levels of restaurant loyalty.

Overall, each of the hypothesized relationships in the model was tested and confirmed. Further, it was determined that the relationships between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction was partially mediated by lifestyle congruence and peak experience and restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty were partially mediated by lifestyle congruence, peak experience, and satisfaction. The following section will discuss results related to research question four.

6.2.3 RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR

To answer research question four, which assessed the extent to which perceptions and resultant behaviors relating to restaurant authenticity differ between general tourists, food tourists, and locals, a multigroup moderation analysis was carried out. Almost no significant differences were found between food tourists and general tourists or food tourists and locals. On the other hand, when comparing general tourists and locals, locals had significantly stronger relationships between restaurant authenticity and peak experience ($Z = 3.058$, $p < .01$), restaurant authenticity and lifestyle-congruence ($Z = 2.639$, $p < .01$), restaurant satisfaction and restaurant loyalty ($Z = 2.15$, $p < .01$), and restaurant loyalty and place attachment ($Z = 2.097$, $p < .05$). Overall, these findings partially support H11.

This section has summarized the results of this study relating to each research question. The following section will discuss the findings of the current study in more details looking at previous research.

6.3 DISCUSSION

This study has offered insights related to the conceptualization and measurement of the RAS. A five-dimension scale was proposed, but a three-dimension scale was validated through Netemeyer et al.'s (2003) multi-step scale development process. The fully developed RAS can now be used for measuring and understanding how restaurant authenticity influences perceptions and behavior at U.S. regional, local restaurants in the Southeastern U.S. Further, by testing the current study's conceptual model, restaurant authenticity was found to be a strong, direct predictor of lifestyle-congruence and peak experience. Results also suggest that the relationships between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction, as well as restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty, are partially mediated relationships, while the relationship between restaurant authenticity and place attachment is fully mediated. The following section will discuss the results presented in chapters four and five and compare them with extant findings. The discussion is organized according to each of the research questions in the sections below.

6.3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: DEVELOPING THE RAS

There has been an emerging recognition of the importance of restaurant authenticity in the foodservice literature. These studies have shown that different restaurant attributes positively influence overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Chi & Jackson, 2011; Costa & Besio, 2011; Cormack, 2008; Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang et al., 2011; A. C. C. Lu et al., 2015; Kovács et al.,

2013; Mkono, 2012; Muñoz et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Wood & Muñoz, 2007; Zeng et al., 2012). Since there is no existing measurement scale available to comprehensively assess restaurant authenticity, the development of the RAS offers a tool to empirically examine this concept now and in the future. In response to research question one and based on previous literature, the current study proposed that the RAS was conceptualized as containing five dimensions: food and beverage, restaurant environment, branding and marketing, others in the restaurant, and restaurant heritage. It was further proposed that six object-related conceptualizations of authenticity (objective, constructive, staged, iconic, indexical, and expressive authenticity) would be included among those dimensions. Ultimately though, the RAS was developed using 20 indicators representing three dimensions: the restaurant heritage and environment, the food and beverage, and the restaurant diners. The final scale did contain items related to each of the six relevant authenticity conceptualizations reviewed by the current study. Thus, the number of dimensions in the final RAS differed from the proposed number, but the number of authenticity conceptualizations included in the RAS remained the same.

With regard to the dimensionality of the RAS, it is noteworthy that each of the three dimensions included in the final scale contribute differently to the RAS, represented by the variance extracted by each. The restaurant heritage and environment dimension extracted greatest amount of variance; this was followed by the food and beverage dimension dimension; and lastly the restaurant diners dimension extracted the lowest amount of variance. It is also noteworthy that two proposed dimensions (restaurant environment and restaurant heritage) combined to form one single dimension and another

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proposed dimension (branding and marketing) was not included in the final RAS. Each retained dimension of the RAS is discussed in more detail below. Following this, a discussion will be carried out related to the branding and marketing dimension, which was ultimately eliminated from the RAS.

The restaurant heritage and environment dimension contained 10 items, of which eight were adapted from prior literature and two were developed via interviews. Also, based on the items retained in the RAS, this includes items related to objective authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region"), constructive authenticity (e.g. "The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region"), and expressive authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region"). To date, no prior study has included a restaurant heritage and environment dimension, as it is a combination of two factors observed in prior studies: restaurant environment and restaurant heritage (Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Lee et al., 2014; Muñoz et al., 2006). Yet, there is a set of studies which suggest that the two concepts may actually be more closely associated than originally assumed (Chhabra, Lee, Zhao, & Scott, 2013; Mkono, 2012; Molz, 2004). Thus, although no prior study has uncovered a single restaurant heritage and environment factor, there is some empirical and theoretical support for its existence. For example, Mkono's (2012) study of traditional restaurants in Zimbabwe, notes that the environment at the restaurant observed includes "traditional music and dance, sculptures and carving displays and demonstrations, hair-braiding demonstrations, ethnic architecture and decor, traditional dress, display and sale, traditional story-telling, traditional face painting, local ethnic cuisines, and local fortune telling, among others" (Mkono, 2012, p. 387). These

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traditional elements serve as a means of culturally immersing the diner in Zimbabwean heritage and culture. Similarly, Molz (2004) notes that the environment of Thai restaurants in the U.S. often contain very traditional Buddhist art and statues as a means of espousing traditional "Thainess". Chhabra et al.'s (2013) study of Indian restaurants in the U.S. determined that historic items including religious symbols, traditional music, traditional utensils, and mentions of historical events serve as authenticators of the restaurant environment. Lastly, from a conceptual standpoint, Robinson and Clifford's (2012) study of authenticity at festivals argued that provenance, or heritage and tradition, serves as a dimension to a dining location's servicescape, or its physical environs and artifacts. There also is some anecdotal evidence from previous research which supports the idea that a restaurant's heritage and environmental factors together serve a role in influencing restaurant customers' overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (DiPietro & Levitt, 2017). Most notably, DiPietro and Levitt's (2017) study of antecedents of restaurant authenticity at Southern-style restaurants determined that the restaurant servicescape positively influenced restaurant authenticity ($\beta = 0.201$).

Ultimately, restaurant heritage and environment is a construct which has not been observed in prior studies. Yet, some prior research, both empirical and conceptual, suggests that there may be a close relationship between the concepts of heritage and environment. Further related research supports the finding of this study that it has a positive influence on overall restaurant authenticity. The following will discuss the food and beverage dimension which extracted the second-most variance of the three dimensions.

The food and beverage dimension extracted the second-most variance of the three dimensions in the RAS. It contains eight items, of which four were adapted from prior literature and four were developed via interviews. Also, based on the items retained in the RAS, this includes items related to objective authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region"), constructive authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region"), iconic authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes"), and indexical authenticity (e.g. "This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region"). Its importance is consistent with some previous studies (DiPietro & Levitt, 2017; Tsai & Lu, 2012). Most notably, in Tsai and Lu's (2012) study, which developed an importance-performance matrix of restaurant authenticity attributes, food and beverage was the strongest performer. Further, DiPietro and Levitt's (2017) study of antecedents of restaurant authenticity at Southern-style restaurants determined that food and beverage had the strongest positive influence on restaurant authenticity ($\beta= 0.347$). Overall, food and beverage had the second strongest influence on restaurant authenticity. The following will discuss the restaurant diner dimension, which extracted the smallest amount of variance of the three RAS dimensions.

The restaurant diner dimension contained two items, of which both were developed via interviews. Further, based on the items retained in the RAS, this includes items related to staged authenticity (e.g. "Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region"). As was the case with the restaurant heritage and environment dimension, no prior hospitality study has included a restaurant diner dimension. There is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that it serves a role in influencing restaurant

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customers' overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Sudhagar & Rajendran, 2017). Notably, Sudhagar and Rajendran's (2017) study assessed the importance of 40 key restaurant authenticity attributes on dining at Chinese restaurants. Of note, they assessed "Restaurant crowd and profile of the customers", and determined that it had a strong mean importance score (5.71 out of 7).

It is important to reiterate that although some research reviewed for the current study showed that others in the restaurant, in the form of both employees, as well as diners, have influenced customers' perceptions of restaurant authenticity, the current study's factor omitted restaurant employees based on the analysis (Costa & Besio, 2011; Gaytán, 2008; Muñoz, et al., 2006; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Tiu Wright et al., 2001; Tsai & Lu, 2012; Zeng et al., 2012). The reason these individuals were not included may be found in the current study's item generation interviews as several interviewees noted that restaurant employees and restaurant owners were unseen during their dining experiences. Next, the proposed marketing and branding dimension will be discussed. This dimension was dropped and excluded from the final version of the RAS.

Some prior studies have suggested that marketing and branding positively influence restaurant authenticity. Research into international ethnic restaurants has shown that marketing has been used to associate an establishment with their culture's perceived traditions (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Mkono, 2012). With regard to branding, these studies have also shown that restaurants often use key buzzwords on their menus and signage as a means of positively influencing customer perceptions of restaurant authenticity (Albrecht, 2011; Chadwell, 2002; Mkono, 2012). Yet, marketing and branding was not included as a final dimension in the RAS. The reason that it was not

included via data analysis may be found in the current study's item generation interviews. Several interviewees noted that the independent Southern restaurant they visited did not have any branding or marketing at all. Most notably, Speaker #1 noted that the Southern restaurant that she visited did not have a printed menu or any signage. Similarly, Speaker #4 noted that his restaurant had no printed menus available.

Overall, the final RAS contained three dimensions relating to the restaurant attributes of the restaurant heritage and environment, food and beverage, and restaurant diners. This was less than the five dimensions initially proposed in the current study's methodology, but the final RAS did contain items relating to each relevant conceptualization of authenticity discussed in the current study. These authenticity conceptualizations will now be discussed in further detail.

Each proposed conceptualization of authenticity was retained in the RAS. The food and beverage dimension contained items related to objective, constructive, iconic, and indexical authenticity; the restaurant heritage and environment dimension contained items related to objective, constructive, and expressive authenticity; and the restaurant diner dimension contained items related to staged authenticity (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). An example of each conceptualization can be seen here: "This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region" is an example where diners use facts to asses authenticity (objective authenticity); "The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region" is an example where diners use their personal history to asses authenticity (constructive authenticity); "Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region" is an example where diners assess whether they are being immersed into a destination's

local heritage (staged authenticity); "This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes" is an example where diners assess how well certain goods or services have been copied or recreated (iconic authenticity); "This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region" is an example where diners assess the originality of certain goods and services (indexical authenticity), and "This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region" is an example where diners assess whether certain goods or services espouse the spirit of a destination when they assess the overall authenticity of a restaurant (expressive authenticity) (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). The finding that restaurant customers use facts; assess whether they are being immersed into a destination's local heritage; use their personal history; assess the originality of certain goods and services; assess how well certain goods or services have been copied or recreated; and assess whether certain goods or services espouse the spirit of a destination when they assess the overall authenticity of a restaurant is a unique finding of the current study (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999).

Overall, findings related to the conceptualizations used in the RAS are a unique theoretical contribution of the current study as prior research has only determined that restaurant customers use their personal history (constructive authenticity) and facts (objective authenticity) to assess overall restaurant authenticity (Ebster & Guist, 2005). The following section will discuss the findings related to research questions two and three.

6.3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS TWO AND THREE: TESTING THE PROPOSED

MODEL

The current study found that a relationship between restaurant authenticity and

restaurant loyalty was partially mediated by satisfaction, lifestyle-congruence, and peak

experience. This is a finding which is supported by several key theories including social

cognitive theory, the Mehrabian-Russell model, the consumer-based model of

authenticity, and congruence theory (Bandura, 1986; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Mehrabian

& Russell, 1974; Sirgy, 1982). Furthermore, the relationship between restaurant

authenticity and place attachment was fully mediated by restaurant loyalty. Again, this is

a finding which is consistent with extant theory, most notably, associative network theory

(Anderson, 1983). It is important to note, though, that of the specific relationships in the

current study's conceptual model have observed very limited attention in the foodservice

or restaurant authenticity literature. Thus, the following will discuss the relationships

observed between restaurant authenticity and the model's mediating variables; the

relationship between the model's mediating variables and outcome variables; and the

relationship between restaurant authenticity and the conceptual model's outcome

variables.

Firstly, the current study determined that restaurant authenticity can influence

relevant affective variables, such as satisfaction, peak experience, and lifestyle-

congruence. These were the mediating variables in the current study's model. These

results are supported by a limited amount of research which has assessed these

relationships. The relationship between restaurant authenticity and peak experience has

not been previously tested in the foodservice and food tourism context, but prior tourism

studies support the presence of a positive relationship between object-related authenticity and peak experience (Almeida & Garrod, 2017; Belhassen et al., 2008; Laing et al., 2014; Mkono et al., 2013; Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017). The positive relationship observed between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction is supported by two prior foodservice studies. Kovács et al.'s (2013) big data assessment of online consumer reviews of restaurants in three large American cities determined that satisfaction was positively influenced by the perceived authenticity of a restaurant. Also, Lehman et al. (2014) used big data to examine approximately 400,000 online restaurant reviews, and determined that a positive relationship exists between perceived restaurant authenticity and customer satisfaction. Lastly, the relationship between restaurant authenticity and lifestyle-congruence has been supported by A. C. C. Lu et al. (2015) who investigated customer perceptions in ethnic restaurants and confirmed a positive relationship between authenticity and brand association, a variable closely related to lifestyle-congruence.

The fact that each of the aforesaid relationships was positive and significant is an important unique finding as prior studies have suggested that these mediating variables have the potential to further positively important behavioral variables (i.e. Bilgihan et al., 2014; Ha & Stoel, 2014; Hyun, 2010). And indeed, the current study determined that peak experience, satisfaction, and lifestyle congruence each positively influenced restaurant loyalty at independent full-service Southern restaurants. Thus, those relationships correspond with findings in some related prior studies.

Findings from the current study's conceptual model further imply that restaurant authenticity plays an important role in directly forging consumers' restaurant loyalty and indirectly forging consumers' place attachment. This is a notable finding for researchers

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and practitioners in the restaurant industry. In the past, some studies have suggested that restaurant authenticity may influence certain customer behaviors such as return intentions (Ebster & Guist, 2005; Jang et al., 2011; Jiang et al., 2016; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Shen et al., 2014). Yet, empirical findings of the current study make it clear that increasing levels of authenticity, specifically relating to the food and beverage, environment and heritage, and diners in the restaurant can positively influence not only return intentions, but other important behavioral variables. Based on the items comprising restaurant loyalty and place attachment, this means that restaurant authenticity not only increases an individual's intentions to return, but also increases their word-of-mouth intentions, emotional connections to a restaurant, and emotional connections to a destination.

It is also important to note how the relationships observed in thus study behaved in comparison to the theories which underpinned the current study's conceptual model. The current study's conceptual model was developed based on social cognitive theory, the Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory (Bandura, 1986; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Sirgy, 1982). Since each of the relationships in the current study's conceptual model was empirically tested and confirmed, it would suggest that the findings are congruent with these theories. These findings may also confirm the efficacy of these theories in the restaurant and food tourism contexts.

Overall, findings from testing the current study's conceptual model support the theoretical relationships proposed by the social cognitive theory, Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory (Bandura, 1986; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974;

Sirgy, 1982). Results also tend to correspond with the limited research which has tested the hypothesized relationships or similar relationships. The following section will discuss research question four.

6.3.3 RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: COMPARISON OF FOOD TOURISTS, GENERAL TOURISTS, AND LOCALS

This study examined the influence of restaurant authenticity on key mediating and outcome variables at independent full service Southern restaurants. Further, one of the primary objectives of the current study was to determine whether the relationships in the theoretical model differed between food tourists, general tourists, and locals. Based on prior literature it was hypothesized (H11) that the influence of restaurant authenticity on the current study's conceptual model would differ between food tourists, general tourists, and locals. The general premise from these articles was that food tourists would be heavily influenced by restaurant authenticity, general tourists would notably ambivalent towards it, leaving locals to fall somewhere in the middle (Almeida & Garrod, 2017; Erkuş-Öztürk & Terhorst, 2016; Chang et al., 2010; Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

In the current study's multigroup moderation analysis, there were almost no significant differences in the path relationships between food tourists and general tourists or food tourists and locals. But, restaurant authenticity had a stronger influence on peak experience and lifestyle-congruence for locals in comparison to general tourists. Further, satisfaction had a stronger influence on restaurant loyalty and restaurant loyalty had a stronger influence on place attachment for locals in comparison to general tourists. Beyond this, results from the current study's MANOVA test, which compared mean values of restaurant authenticity, peak experience, satisfaction, lifestyle-congruence,

restaurant loyalty, and place attachment between food tourists, general tourists, and locals tended to support the findings made by the current study's multigroup moderation analysis as locals had the largest mean value for each factor.

In general, findings from the multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA test suggest that the influence of restaurant authenticity did differ significantly between some consumer groups, specifically locals and general tourists, but not all. Furthermore, restaurant authenticity had the strongest influence on locals. These findings correspond with some prior studies, but also differ from some others. Firstly, it appears that the current study's finding that restaurant authenticity's influence differs between locals and general tourists tends to correspond to Erkuş-Öztürk and Terhorst's (2016) study of diners in Antalya, Turkey which determined that restaurant expectations and desires for locals and general tourists tend to differ. On the other hand, several studies have noted that food tourists are exceptionally influenced by restaurant authenticity (Almeida & Garrod, 2017; Boyne et al., 2003; Chang et al., 2010). For example, Boyne et al. (2003) noted that committed food tourists actively attempt to learn about a destination's gastronomic heritage by dining at traditional local restaurants. Chang et al.'s (2010) study of Chinese tourists' dining habits in China notes that the consumption of authentic, traditional, local cuisine is considered a memorable experience for food tourists, but not for general tourists. Similar findings were also made at Almeida and Garrod's (2017) study of tourists in Spain. Yet, the current study observed locals to be the most influenced by restaurant authenticity. Thus, this finding differs from previous literature.

It should be mentioned that the current study used definitions for food tourist, general tourist, and local that were developed in prior studies (National Tourism

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Resources Review Commission, 1973; Robinson & Getz, 2014). Yet, there are other more narrow definitions of food tourists and general tourists in the literature (Mandala Research, 2013; Yu, Kim, Chen, & Schwartz, 2012). For example, some experts suggest that true food tourists spend more on food than general tourists when traveling (Mandala Research, 2013). Yet, the current study did not collect comprehensive spend data. Also, some definitions of general tourist require that individuals not only travel 50 miles, but also carry out an overnight stay while traveling (Yu et al., 2012). Yet, the current study did not assess whether general tourists were staying overnight. It is possible that if narrower definitions for food tourist and general tourist had been used for the current study that the results for the current study's multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA may have differed to some extent.

After reflecting on findings related to each of the current study's research questions, it is clear that certain findings are new to the literature; some matched with prior literature; and some findings differed from prior literature. It is also clear that several important theoretical and practical findings have been made by the current study. Thus, the following section will discuss the key theoretical implications of the current study. Following this, practical implications will be discussed.

6.4 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

For the current study, theoretical implications can be seen with regard to the development of the RAS; testing of the current study's conceptual model; and comparison between food tourists, general tourists, and locals. First, the development of the RAS will be discussed.

The current study constructed a comprehensive scale to measure restaurant authenticity (RAS). Based on the theoretical background and the empirical support of the current study, this study determined that the RAS contains three dimensions: restaurant heritage and environment, food and beverage, and restaurant diners. Within these three dimensions, eight items were developed via interviews. For the restaurant heritage and environment factor, two items, E-2 and R-6, were developed via interviews; for the food and beverage factor, four items, F-3, F-4, F-5, and F-6, were developed via interviews; and for the restaurant diners factor, two items, O-2 and O-3, were developed via interviews. Thus, new items were developed, via the interview process, for each dimension in the RAS. This is to say that these items have not been seen or used in other studies.

It was further determined that six object-related conceptualizations of authenticity (objective, constructive, staged, iconic, indexical, and expressive authenticity) were present in the items comprising the RAS. This suggests that restaurant customers use facts; assess whether they are being immersed into a destination's local heritage; use their personal history; assess the originality of certain goods and services; assess how well certain goods or services have been copied or recreated; and assess whether certain goods or services espouse the spirit of a destination when they assess the overall authenticity of a restaurant (Belk & Costa, 1998; Dutton, 2003; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999). Since no prior study has developed a comprehensive restaurant authenticity scale, this extends the theoretical understanding of restaurant authenticity and advances hospitality researchers' knowledge for future research.

Results from testing the current study's conceptual model also have several important theoretical implications. Notably, the utilization of a model based on social cognitive theory, Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory enhances researchers understanding of intricate relationships that exist between restaurant authenticity and important outcome variables such as restaurant loyalty and place attachment in a foodservice and food tourism context. Furthermore, the significant relationships between the current study's antecedent, mediators, and outcome variables indicate that restaurant authenticity positively influences lifestyle congruence and peak experience; the relationship between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction is partially mediated by lifestyle congruence and peak experience; restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty is partially mediated lifestyle congruence, satisfaction, and peak experience; and the relationship between restaurant authenticity and place attachment is fully mediated by restaurant loyalty.

It is important to mention that several of the relationships observed in the current study's conceptual model are new contributions to the literature. Most notably, prior to the current study, there was a paucity of foodservice research assessing the relationships between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty, restaurant authenticity and peak experience, peak experience and satisfaction, peak experience and restaurant loyalty, and restaurant loyalty and place attachment. Each of these relationships was found to be significant and positive. Testing and confirming these relationships is a significant theoretical contribution of the current study.

Lastly, results from the multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA offer key theoretical implications for researchers. These tests determined that there are some differences between the consumer groups (food tourists, general tourists, and locals) assessed in this study with regard to authenticity. More specifically, while prior literature indicates that many food tourists are seeking out local and authentic dining experiences when traveling, it is locals who are most influenced by restaurant authenticity (Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). Conversely, this may suggest that the some prior studies may have overstated the influence that authenticity has on food tourists (Sims, 2009).

Overall, the developing of the RAS; testing of the current study's conceptual model; and comparison of food tourists, general tourists, and locals each had clear theoretical implications. There are also several key practical implications to take away from the current study, which will be discussed in the following section.

6.5 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Besides significant theoretical contributions, findings from the current study suggest that there are several practical implications for restaurant and tourism practices. First implications for foodservice practitioners will be discussed. Then, practical implications for tourism practitioners will be discussed.

For restaurant practitioners, the three-dimensional structure of the RAS should call attention to certain key restaurant attributes with regards to authenticity. Firstly, special attention should be paid to a restaurant's restaurant heritage and environment given the high level of variance it explained in the RAS. Yet, the other two dimensions, food and beverage (second highest level of variance explained) and restaurant diners (third highest level of variance explained), are still significant contributors to perceptions

of restaurant authenticity. To this end, restaurant practitioners can improve the level of perceived restaurant authenticity by addressing these two factors as well. The practical implications of these three dimensions for restaurant practitioners will now be discussed in some more detail.

First, making adjustments to a restaurant's heritage and environment should have the strongest influence on increasing customers' overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. More specifically, based on the items retained in the RAS, this includes restaurant imagery, interior décor, a region's history, a region's principles, a region's values, and a region's way of life. With regards to environment at an American Southern cuisine restaurant, this could involve developing an interior with a "small town, family feel" (Kuhn, 2012, p. 121). Also, based on the items retained in this dimension of the RAS, managers should consider the objective authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region"), constructive authenticity (e.g. "The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region"), and expressive authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region") of a restaurant's heritage and environment.

Next, making adjustments to food and beverage offerings can also have a strong influence on increasing customers' overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. More specifically, based on the items retained in the RAS, this includes the dishes being served, dish flavors, dish recipes, and cooking techniques. And, in the context of traditional American Southern restaurants, this implies that there should be dishes that include slow cooked vegetables such as collard greens and black-eyed peas; several pork products; several rich desserts; dishes that contain robust sauces; several dishes which

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have smokiness; and several dishes that are fried (Duarte Alonso & O'Neill, 2012; Edge, 2014; Latshaw, 2009). Also, based on the items retained in this dimension of the RAS, managers should consider their food and beverage's objective authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region"), constructive authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region"), iconic authenticity (e.g. "This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes"), and indexical authenticity (e.g. "The dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region") (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Wang, 1999).

Lastly, making adjustments to the diners in a restaurant can have the third strongest influence on increasing customers' overall perceptions of restaurant authenticity. Based on the items retained in the RAS, this means getting diners who live in the region and diners who are native to the region to come into your restaurant. In addition, based on the items retained in this dimension of the RAS, managers should consider the staged authenticity (e.g. "Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region") of their diners.

The development of the RAS also offers an opportunity for some restaurant practitioners to save or conserve money. Prior studies have proposed that several restaurant attributes which are expensive to curate influence restaurant authenticity. This includes attributes such as the restaurant exterior, wait staff uniforms, restaurant furnishings, paintings, and restaurant branding (Jang et al., 2011; Sukalakamala & Boyce, 2007; Zeng et al., 2012). Yet, these attributes were not included in the final RAS. Thus, they are not likely to have strong influences on customer perceptions of restaurant

authenticity. Therefore, restaurant practitioners do not need to heavily invest in these expensive attributes to positively influence restaurant authenticity.

The construction and validation of the RAS also offers a useful market research tool for restaurant practitioners to measure how authenticity is perceived at their restaurant. The 20-item scale has a clear, user-friendly structure comprised of three dimensions, which can be easily implemented and interpreted by restaurants. For example, following meals restaurant managers can provide restaurant customers with comment cards, a tool which has been found in previous literature to be an effective tool to assess customer perceptions, to assess restaurant authenticity (Keith & Simmers, 2011). The items included in the RAS can provide guidance as to which attributes should be assessed and which authenticity conceptualizations should be included on the card. After distributing and assessing comment cards, restaurant managers should have a clearer view of how authentic their restaurant is perceived overall, which attributes are perceived as authentic, and which need to be addressed.

Relatedly, following restaurant customer dining experiences, restaurant managers can send them an online survey via email and ask them to reflect on their dining experiences. Consumers' feedback on their dining experiences can allow practitioners to know how to strengthen the perceived authenticity of their restaurant. In turn, based on the findings of the current study's conceptual model, these strategies have the potential to strengthen customer relationships and differentiate the restaurant business from others. More specifically, consumers who have higher levels of perceived restaurant authenticity can have higher levels of lifestyle congruence, peak experience, satisfaction, restaurant loyalty, and place attachment.

Next, there are a couple of ways in which they restaurant practitioners can take advantage of the relationships confirmed in the current study's conceptual model. Since restaurant authenticity appears to positively influence one's emotional connections to a restaurant (via a positive relationship between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty), it may be beneficial to develop a loyalty program which can allow individuals to stay connected with a restaurant on an ongoing basis (Mattila, 2001). Further, since restaurant authenticity can influence one's word-of-mouth intentions, traditional, local restaurants need to ensure that they maintain a robust and active social media presence which entices customers to easily share their positive dining experiences (Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011).

Results of the multigroup analyses and MANOVA also have marketing implications for restaurant practitioners. Most notably, since the current study's findings determined that authenticity had the strongest impact on locals, local restaurants need to actively reach out to this consumer group. Thus, owners and managers of restaurants serving local cuisine should find ways to coax locals to give their restaurants a try. This could be done by advertising in local media outlets such as local newspapers or local radio stations (Bowers, 2017). These outlets may be notably useful for local diners as they are seen or heard by a large proportion of older individuals and the current study's chi-square test determined that locals were disproportionally older than general and food tourists (American Press Institute, 2014). Beyond marketing, these restaurants should also be present in the local community at local events to ingratiate themselves to these local customers (He, Wang, & Zha, 2014).

In sum, the results of the current study's scale, model and multigroup analyses and MANOVA have implications for practice for restaurant practitioners. Next practical implications for tourism practitioners will be discussed.

Findings from the current study's conceptual model have marketing implications for tourism practitioners. In particular, they should take note of the finding that restaurant authenticity positively influences place attachment (via restaurant loyalty) as place attachment can sometimes be a proxy for destination loyalty or revisit intentions (Prayag & Ryan, 2012). Thus, authentic local restaurants may serve as effective venues for tourist practitioners to engage tourists with certain travel promotions. More specifically, while tourists have elevated levels of place attachment at the restaurant they are visiting, they could provide discounts for other restaurants in the area; other attractions in the area; or future destination visits (Campo & Yagüe, 2008).

Findings from the current study's multigroup analyses and MANOVA test also have marketing implications for tourism practitioners. Most notably, to date several destinations have been actively reaching out to food tourists by promoting their authentic local cuisine (UNWTO, 2012). Yet, findings from the current study suggest that there is no significant different in the influence of restaurant authenticity between food tourists and general tourists. Thus, these destinations may want to consider developing marketing campaigns which appeal to both food tourists and general tourists.

Overall, the current study offers several practical benefits for restaurant and tourism practitioners. The following section will conclude the current study.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the current study developed the RAS; developed a scale to test the influence of restaurant authenticity; and examined how restaurant authenticity influenced perceptions and behaviors for different consumer groups. The data was analyzed with a measurement model and structural model using CB SEM. The results supported a three-dimension structure of the RAS. Of those dimensions, the food and beverage dimension explained the greatest amount of variance of restaurant authenticity. Developing this scale helps researchers and practitioners understand the key restaurant attributes and conceptualizations which influence restaurant authenticity.

With regard to the current study's conceptual model, the hypothesized relationships were confirmed, which indicates that the relationship between restaurant authenticity and satisfaction was partially mediated by lifestyle-congruence and peak experience; the relationship between restaurant authenticity and restaurant loyalty was partially mediated by satisfaction, lifestyle-congruence, and peak experience; and the relationship between restaurant authenticity and place attachment was fully mediated by restaurant loyalty. These findings are compatible with limited research which has been previously conducted. Findings from testing the current study's conceptual model also support the theoretical relationships put forth by the social cognitive theory, Mehrabian-Russell model, congruence theory, the consumer-based model of authenticity, and associative network theory in a foodservice and food tourism context (Bandura, 1986; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Sirgy, 1982). Overall, testing this model helps researchers understand how restaurant authenticity influences key mediating and outcome variables. It also provides guidance to restaurant practitioners on how

restaurant loyalty can be increased and to tourism practitioners on how destination place attachment can be increased.

Lastly, the current study's comparison of food tourists, general tourists, and locals determined that restaurant authenticity had the strongest influence on locals. This was somewhat surprising as prior research suggested that restaurant authenticity had an exceptionally strong influence on food tourists (Sims, 2009; UNWTO, 2012). From a theoretical standpoint, it was interesting to find that there were some differences between the consumer groups tested. From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that local restaurants at food tourism destinations need to ensure that they are actively engaging with and marketing to their local diners.

Overall, the current study made several unique findings. It also had several implications for theory and practice. The following section will discuss the current study's limitations and potential future research avenues.

6.7 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.7.1 LIMITATIONS

This study is not free from limitations. One key limitation relates to locals surveyed. The local diners surveyed at the restaurants in this study were self-selecting. Thus, locals who are more ambivalent towards their local cuisine may have not have been included in the current study's sample (Bailey & Russell, 2012).

With regard to demographics, almost two-thirds of respondents in the full data collection were below the age of 45. This suggests that the baby boomer generation, which is the largest age group in the U.S. based on restaurant expenditures, may have

been somewhat under represented (Creating Results Strategic Marketing, 2009). This could have been caused by using a convenience sampling technique.

Another limitation relates to generalizing the findings of study's model to other cuisines. This study only examined perceptions of authenticity at restaurants serving local, regional American Southern cuisine at food tourism destinations in the Southeastern U.S. Prior research suggests that customer perceptions may differ between a region's local cuisine, domestic cuisines originating from other regions, and international ethnic cuisine, indicating that the findings from the present study might be different if they were obtained from the same destination's international ethnic restaurants or restaurants serving domestic cuisines from other regions (Camarena et al., 2011). Similarly, a potential limitation relates to the service settings tested in the current study. More specifically, the current study only tested the RAS and conceptual model at full-service restaurant settings; other types of service settings, such as quick-service restaurants, were excluded from the study.

The current study also collected data over multiple meal periods and over several days as a means of controlling for confounding variables. Yet, since the current study collected data at multiple live, functioning businesses, certain factors within the data-collection sites may be difficult to control for. For example, there could have been fluctuations in the availability of certain menu items or certain key ingredients, which could have potentially influenced respondents' perceptions of the restaurants' authentic food and beverage. Some variables relating to the restaurant environment, such as the music being played, and restaurant lighting (which varied throughout the days that data

was collected) were also difficult to control for. Moreover, respondent attributes such as mood might also have factored into their perceptions of restaurant authenticity.

One final major limitation for the current study relates to the potential for response bias, and particularly social desirability bias. Social desirability bias is the tendency of individuals to respond to questions in a way that is perceived to be acceptable and favorable by others (King & Bruner, 2000). Social desirability bias can arise for several reasons including, participant motives for carrying out a survey or the nature of a survey site (King & Bruner, 2000).

The current study had some limitations that future studies should be consider when assessing the current study's results. These limitations were due to the fact that the current study focused on regional American cuisine; only collected from full service restaurants; collected live data at restaurants where there may be fluctuations in the availability of certain menu items or certain key ingredients; and may have collected data from respondents who had a tendency respond to questions in a way that was perceived to be acceptable and favorable by others. Future studies could attempt to address these limitations. Thus, the following section will discuss future research in further detail.

6.7.2 FUTURE RESEARCH

There are several future studies which could be carried out to follow up on the current study. In particular, many future studies could address limitations which have been brought up in this chapter.

Firstly, since the locals that were surveyed in the current study were self-selecting, it was be beneficial to test the current study's conceptual model with a data set that accounts for this shortcoming. This could include collecting data via mailed surveys

or telephone surveys sent to individuals who live in the Southeastern U.S. This data could also be compared against data from the current study to determine if there are any significant differences in the path relationships of the model.

Another key limitation to the current study was that it focused on one specific cuisine: regional American Southern cuisine. Thus, future studies could test both the RAS and the current study's conceptual model in different locals as well as with different types of cuisine. This would be especially useful for the RAS as it could serve as a means of testing and confirming cross-cultural validity.

Similarly, as previously noted, restaurant diners are not monolithic. They can be segmented demographically, psychographically, or contextually (Harrington, et al., 2011; Ignatov & Smith, 2006; D. Y. Kim et al., 2010; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2003). Thus, it is possible that restaurant authenticity has different levels of influence on different restaurant consumer groups. In future studies, data which focuses on other demographic, psychographic, or contextual groups could be collected. Multigroup moderation analyses could then be carried out to determine if the influence of restaurant authenticity differs significantly between them.

Another potential limitation which is noted above and is related to demographics is that baby boomers may have been underrepresented in the full data collection sample. This could have been caused by the current study's convenience sampling techniques. Thus, future research using the RAS or the current study's conceptual model could use a more rigorous form of probability sampling, such as stratified sampling, which ensures that each referent group relevant to a study is proportionally represented in a sample. In

turn, using this technique would make it easier for researchers to generalize the obtained findings for an entire population.

It was noted in the current study's discussion that there are more narrow definitions of food tourists and general tourists in the literature (Mandala Research, 2013; Yu et al., 2012). Some experts suggest that true food tourists must spend more on food than general tourists when traveling (Mandala Research, 2013). Furthermore, some definitions of general tourist require that individuals not only travel 50 miles, but also carry out an overnight stay while traveling (Yu et al., 2012). It is possible that if these narrower definitions for food tourist and general tourist had been used for the current study that the results for the current study's multigroup moderation analysis and MANOVA may have differed. Thus, it may be beneficial to carry out a future study which compares food tourists, general tourists, and locals using these narrower definitions as a means of greater insight into the different perceptions and behaviors of food tourists, general tourists, and locals.

Researchers in the statistics of structural equation modeling field have also developed new statistical tools to uncover unobserved heterogeneous consumer groups (Hair et al., 2011). These new segmentation tools include Finite Mixture Partial Least Squares Segmentation (FIMIX-PLS) or Partial Least Squares Prediction Oriented Segmentation (PLS-POS). Future studies using the RAS and the current study's conceptual model could carry out FIMIX-PLS or PLS-POS segmentation to uncover different unobserved consumer groups. After this, multigroup moderation analyses could then be carried out to determine if the influence of restaurant authenticity differs between them.

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The current study also only collected data in a single service setting: full-service restaurants. Future studies could investigate the RAS and the current study's conceptual model in other dining contexts, such as quick-service restaurants to determine if the influence of restaurant authenticity on perceptions and behaviors differs from full-service restaurants.

Further, this study generally focused on consumers' perspectives as it related to restaurant authenticity, and left substantial room for research that takes an operational approach. There is still much work and research which can be done on how to effectively integrate authentic attributes into restaurant operations. Furthermore, it is also imperative to have a better understanding of restaurant managers' perceptions regarding restaurant authenticity, ways to develop authentic restaurant attributes, and potential operational barriers to doing so.

Lastly, findings from the current study could be advanced by assessing the relationship between authenticity and food tourist perceptions and behaviors in other contexts outside of restaurants. This could include, but is not limited to food production facilities, food festivals, or food tasting rooms (Hall & Mitchell, 2001). At these locations, researchers could examine which tangible and intangible attributes are most likely to influence overall perceptions of authenticity, as well as the extent to which authenticity influences important outcome variables such as satisfaction and loyalty.

Overall, these are several potential studies which could follow up on the research carried out in this study. The following section will summarize this chapter.

6.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter offered a discussion of the findings of the study as well as a conclusion of the current study. The discussion was illustrated based on the research findings in Chapters 4 and 5. Theoretical and practical implications were discussed to advance the understanding of the current literature and the hospitality and tourism industry. Then, the conclusion of the current study was presented and limitations were highlighted so that future studies should take caution. Lastly, directions for future studies were provided to advance the understanding of restaurant authenticity; its influence in food tourism; and its influence between other consumer groups.

Overall, the current study showed that the RAS contained six authenticity conceptualizations, 20 items and three dimensions; the all of the hypothesized relationships in the conceptual model were confirmed; and that restaurant authenticity had the strongest influence on locals.

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INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Semi-Structured Interviews

Introduction

- Hello, my name is Jamie Levitt and I am a doctoral candidate in hospitality management at the University of South Carolina. Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. I truly appreciate your time and help!

- Before we start, I would like to remind you a little bit about my dissertation topic and my goal by talking with you today. My dissertation focuses on restaurant authenticity which is the perception that a restaurant is truly representative of a given tradition or culture. Dining at restaurants has become a cornerstone of daily life in the United States. For the first time in recorded history, the average American eats out at least once per week and spends approximately half of their food budget dining out. At the same time, many diners are becoming more discerning. One trend is that many restaurant customers desire to dine at restaurants serving authentic, traditional, local cuisine.

- The goal of this project is to develop a way of measuring restaurant authenticity and then to determine its influence on different restaurant customers. The study will be contextualized on restaurants serving Southern cuisine. Thus, I am going to ask you several questions about how you assessed restaurant authenticity during your more recent experience dining at an authentic Southern restaurant.

Confidentiality and Consent Statements

- <u>I assure you that your identity and all information you provide are strictly confidential.</u> I will not report your name or any person's name mentioned in the interview to anyone. I will not attach your name to any comments you make. The information collected is solely used for my dissertation and academic research.

- <u>This interview will take about 15 to 20 minutes</u>, is that okay with you?

- <u>Tape recording</u>: I will be recording the interview for data analysis. Is that okay with you?
- <u>Do you have any questions about the project</u>, or about what I've told you so far? (Answer interviewees' questions if there is any).

1. **Tell me about the most recent meal in which you in which you dined at an authentic Southern restaurant.**

   <u>Probe</u>
   - When was the meal?
   - Where was the restaurant located?
   - Who did you dine with?
   - What is the purpose of the meal? (Did you dine for leisure or business?)
   - What did you and the others in your party order?

2. **Do you think that the food and drink that you had were authentic to the South and why?**

   <u>Probe</u>
   - What aspects of the food and drink did you think about when determining if it was authentic?
     - How did you did you assess those aspects? Via verification? Personal experience? Because this food and drink made you feel like you were dining like a southerner? Because the food and drink were unique? Because the food and drink matched the food and drink at other traditional Southern restaurants? Other ways?
   - Did eating this food make you feel that the restaurant was more authentic overall?
   - Can you use three words/phrases to summarize your perceptions of the food and drink with regard to authenticity?

3. **Do you think that the restaurant environment was authentic to the South and why?**

   <u>Probe</u>
   What aspects of the environment did you think about when determining if it was authentic?
     - How did you did you assess those aspects? Via verification? Personal experience? Because this environment made you feel like you were dining like a southerner? Because the environment was unique? Because the environment matched other traditional Southern restaurants? Other ways?

- Did dining in this environment make you feel that the restaurant was more authentic overall?
- Can you use three words/phrases to summarize your perceptions of the environment with regard to authenticity?

4. **Do you think that the other people in the restaurant were authentic to the South and why?**

   Probe
   - What specific people did you think about when determining if they were authentic?
     - How did you did you assess those aspects? Via verification? Personal experience? Because dining among the others in the restaurant made you feel like you were dining like a southerner? Because the others in the restaurant were unique? Because the others in the restaurant matched what you would find in other traditional Southern restaurants? Other ways?
   - Did eating among the others in the restaurant make you feel that the restaurant was more authentic overall?
   - Can you use three words/phrases to summarize your perceptions of others in the restaurant with regard to authenticity?

5. **Do you think that the branding/ marketing were authentic to the South and why?**

   Probe
   - What specific aspects of the branding/ marketing did you think about when determining if it was authentic?
     - How did you did you assess those aspects? Via verification? Personal experience? Because the restaurant's branding/ marketing made you feel like you were dining like a southerner? Because restaurant's branding/ marketing were unique? Because the branding/ marketing match what you would find in other traditional Southern restaurants? Other ways?
   - Did the branding/ marketing at the restaurant make you feel that the restaurant was more authentic overall?
   - Can you use three words/phrases to summarize your perceptions of the branding/ marketing with regard to authenticity?

6. **Overall do you think that the restaurant was authentic to the South and why?**

   Probe

- What aspects of the restaurant did you consider when assessing the overall authenticity of the restaurant?
  - Which had the strongest influence?
  - Were there any that we did not discuss?
- Can you use three words/phrases to summarize your perceptions of the restaurant with regard to authenticity?

APPENDIX B

PILOT SURVEY

Dear Participant, My name is Jamie Levitt and I am a Ph.D. student in the School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina. I am currently carrying out a study on restaurant authenticity and seeking your honest responses to this survey. The process should take approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Participation is anonymous and taking part is your decision. You may quit this study at any time or decide not to answer any question you are not comfortable answering. I am happy to address any questions or concerns you have about this study and can be reached at 314-537-4130 or JLevitt@email.sc.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Robin DiPietro (803-777-2600 and rdipietr@mailbox.sc.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at 803-777-7095. By completing and submitting this survey, you affirm that you give your consent for your answers to be used for research purposes. Thank you for your responses.

_____

Section A

At which restaurant were you requested to complete this survey?

During which meal were you requested to complete this survey?	
Lunch / Brunch (11:00-4:00)	**Dinner (5:00-8:00)**

Are you a tourist or are you a resident (A person who lives within 50 miles of this city)?	
Tourist	**Resident**

Section B

Please rate how much you personally agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The recipes at this restaurant are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverages are presented in ways which are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverages produced are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverages served at this restaurant are unique to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverage ingredients are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is using ingredients produced in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverage really represented this region's cuisine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant serves meals which are traditional to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's menu consists of more dishes that are traditional to this region, than non-traditional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This restaurant's interior has a layout authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The environment in areas surrounding this restaurant is authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's environment is representative of the history of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has interior décor authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The music played in the restaurant was authentic to the region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant uses tableware authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has furnishings authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The artwork in this restaurant appears to have been made in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has table settings authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The personality of the diners of this restaurant is seems to be consistent with this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I perceive the language and accent of the other diners in this restaurant to be authentic to this	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The diction used by customers at this restaurant is representative of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The diners at this restaurant know some things about this region's cuisine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The diners at this restaurant live in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The personality of the diners at this restaurant is representative of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's brand matches this region's personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's brand includes imagery that makes me think of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's brand includes logos that are reminiscent of the region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's marketing focuses on their use of local ingredients from this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant markets special promotions which are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's brand exemplifies that of other traditional restaurants from this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's slogan matches this region's personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's branding efforts include the use of a menu that has an authentic appearance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's brand name matches this destination's personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The branding of this restaurant is traditional to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's branding includes menus that have authentic phrasing for this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This restaurant represents the values of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is representative of a restaurant from this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant appears to connect with what I know about this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant seems to embody the essence of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This is an authentic restaurant for this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant sticks to the principles of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is true to this region's history	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant represents the values of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am very satisfied with my overall experience at this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall, this restaurant puts me in a good mood	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have really enjoyed myself at this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am satisfied with my decision to dine here	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I plan to make repeat purchases at this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will recommend this restaurant to others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will speak positively of this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section C

What is your gender?
☐ Male (1)
☐ Female (2)

How old are you?
☐ 18-25 (1)
☐ 26-35 (2)
☐ 36-45 (3)
☐ 46-55 (4)
☐ 56-65 (5)
☐ 66-75 (6)
☐ 76 and Above (7)
☐ Prefer not to say (8)

What was your household annual income in 2016 (before tax)?
☐ $25,000 or Less (1)
☐ $25,001 - $50,000 (2)
☐ $50,001 - $75,000 (3)
☐ $75,001 - $100,000 (4)
☐ $100,001 - $125,000 (5)
☐ $125,001 - $150,000 (6)
☐ $150,001 - $175,000 (7)
☐ $175,001 - $200,000 (8)
☐ $200,001 or Above (9)
☐ Prefer not to say (10)

What was the cost of your meal (only your meal, not your whole party)?

_____

Please respond only if you are a tourist.
Approximately, how much are you spending per person on a daily basis for this trip?

_____

APPENDIX C

FULL SURVEY

Dear Participant, My name is Jamie Levitt and I am a Ph.D. student in the School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management at the University of South Carolina. I am currently carrying out a study on restaurant authenticity and food tourism and seeking your honest responses to this survey. The process should take approximately 5 to 10 minutes. Participation is anonymous and taking part is your decision. You may quit this study at any time or decide not to answer any question you are not comfortable answering. I am happy to address any questions or concerns you have about this study and can be reached at 314-537-4130 or JLevitt@email.sc.edu. You may also contact my faculty advisor Dr. Robin DiPietro (803-777-2600 and rdipietr@mailbox.sc.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Office of Research Compliance at the University of South Carolina at 803-777-7095. By completing and submitting this survey, you affirm that you give your consent for your answers to be used for research purposes. Thank you for your responses.

Section A

At which restaurant were you requested to complete this survey?

During which meal were you requested to complete this survey?	
Lunch / Brunch (11:00-4:00)	**Dinner (5:00-8:00)**

Please check one box below	
I live more than 50 miles away from this city.	
I live within 50 miles of this city.	

If you live more than 50 miles from this city, how many days are you visiting here?

Think about your travels in the past where you participated in a food-related activity (Such as a food tour, cooking class, local dining experience, etc.). Which of the following statements best describes you? **(Please check one box)**	
For most of those trips, the availability of food-related activities **was a factor** in choosing between potential destinations	
For most of those trips, I researched food-related activities prior to travel, but they **were not a factor** in choosing between destinations	
For most of those trips, I did not research food-related activities prior to travel, but participated after arriving **simply because they were available**	
I have **rarely or never participated** in any food-related activities	

Please only respond to this question if you live more than 50 miles away from this city				
Approximately, how much (in US Dollars) are you spending per person on a daily basis for this trip in the following categories?				
Food and Beverage	Activities	Lodging	Shopping	Transportation

Section B

Please circle one number for each statement:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This restaurant's dishes have flavors traditional to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is true to this region's history	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This dishes at this restaurant use cooking techniques unique to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The personality of the diners at this restaurant is representative of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's interior has a layout authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverages produced are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant serves meals which are traditional to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant serves several dishes which have a deep history in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant serves this region's famous dishes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverages are presented in ways which are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is representative of a restaurant from this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The diners at this restaurant live in this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Most of the diners at this restaurant appear to be native to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The recipes at this restaurant are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's menu consists of more dishes that are traditional to this region, than non-traditional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant's environment is representative of the history of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has interior décor authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant appears to connect with what I know about this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The imagery in this restaurant is authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant sticks to the principles of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant represents the values of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant has a strong connection to the history of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverage really represented this region's cuisine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant seems to embody the essence of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is representative of the way of life of this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

This is an authentic restaurant for this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The food and beverage ingredients are authentic to this region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Visiting this restaurant was a highly valued moment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting this restaurant made me reflect on who I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I felt a sense of ecstasy by visiting this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I felt a sense of completeness by visiting this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Words are not enough to describe the experience of visiting this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I felt more like myself by visiting this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The experience of visiting this restaurant is unlike normal work or life experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting this restaurant is an experience that stands out in my mind	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Visiting this restaurant made me feel differently about myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
By visiting this restaurant I discovered new things about myself	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This restaurant reflects my personal lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
This restaurant is totally in line with my lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Eating at this restaurant supports my lifestyle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, I am satisfied with this restaurant.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have really enjoyed myself at this restaurant.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall, this restaurant puts me in a good mood.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I will consider this restaurant as my first choice restaurant when I am visiting this city	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will visit this restaurant in the future	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would recommend this restaurant to someone who seeks my advice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will say positive things about this restaurant to other people	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will encourage friends and relatives to eat at this restaurant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
This region is a place for the types of leisure experiences that I like to have.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am very attached to this region.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being in this region means a lot to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
No other region can provide the same experiences as those found in this region.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section C

What is your gender?
☐ Male (1)
☐ Female (2)

How old are you?
☐ 18-25 (1)
☐ 26-35 (2)
☐ 36-45 (3)
☐ 46-55 (4)
☐ 56-65 (5)
☐ 66-75 (6)
☐ 76 and Above (7)
☐ Prefer not to say (8)

What was your household annual income in 2016 (before tax)?
☐ $25,000 or Less (1)
☐ $25,001 - $50,000 (2)
☐ $50,001 - $75,000 (3)
☐ $75,001 - $100,000 (4)
☐ $100,001 - $125,000 (5)
☐ $125,001 - $150,000 (6)
☐ $150,001 - $175,000 (7)
☐ $175,001 - $200,000 (8)
☐ $200,001 or Above (9)
☐ Prefer not to say (10)

What was the cost of your meal and beverage(s) (only your meal, not your whole party) today at this current restaurant?

_____