# Tourism Sector Development Through Destination Brand Authenticity in Pakistan

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## Abstract

In this modern era, tourists focus more on famous destinations, not ordinary ones. It's time to develop famous destinations as an authentic brand in tourism. In Pakistan, the tourism sector's main problem is that the government doesn't pay attention to famous destinations, and no one has helped to highlight the famous destinations as a destination brand for tourists. The present study shows tourism destinations as a destination brand's authenticity. Current research focuses on developing a conceptual framework and highlighting Pakistan's famous destination as a brand for tourist managers, trip advisors, tourism websites, and the government. It is qualitative research, data collected through questionnaires from Pakistani tourists who visit different tourist destinations. For data collection total of 650 questionnaires were distributed through personal and online surveys. In the end, 410 valid questionnaires were collected. For data analysis, IBM SPSS statistics and AMOS software were used. Several hypotheses were established and tested through SEM (structural equation modeling). CFA (confirmatory factor analysis) is used for measures of construct that are consistent with the research. In the end, research revealed a positive relationship between destination brand authenticity and destination brand familiarity and revisit intention as well as destination brand self-congruence with destination brand familiarity and recommendation intention. The most visited destinations in Pakistan are Murree, Narran Khagan, and Hunza Valley. Research findings are essential for the Pakistani government because the government should work more on these destinations to secure them and to develop them more attractive to tourists.

**Keywords:** Destination Brand Authenticity, Destination Brand Familiarity, Destination Brand Self-Congruence, Revisit Intention, Recommendation Attention.

## Introduction:

Tourism is the largest industry in the world. The hospitality Industry and tourism business has been expanding in marketing over the last decade. From a marketing perspective, tourism managers create needs for visitors and communicate them to different attractive destinations. It is the industry that plays two types of roles one is for the country's economy and second for tourism business. In the Current scenario, Positive branding in the tourism industry makes a difference between competitors. In these busy life activities, tourism was the only thing that makes opportunities for tourists to feel relaxed and take an authentical experience of all tourism-related things(Wang, 1999). Different economists consider that the tourism industry is essential for economic growth and physical capital (Fayissa, Nsiah, & Tadesse, 2009). These days destination branding is a core concept that makes many changes in marketing management (Huertas, Miguez, & Lozano, 2017). A strong connection exists between destination branding

and tourist destinations (Huertas et al.,2017). Authenticity concepts gradually boost day by day due to quality elements in purchasing (Gilmore, 2007). Authenticity is a key factor for tourists that motivates tourists to visit different places (Jyotsna, HS, & Maurya, 2019). Destination authenticity is used as an online perceptive or off the line but (Jimenez & Barreto, 2019) used destination brand authenticity and checked its impact on behavior intention of users, and they argued that destination brand authenticity positively affects tourist behavior intentions. Chen et al. (2019) highlighted the positive relationship between destination brand authenticity and brand engagement in destination management. So destination brand authenticity is very valuable in near of researchers and tourists because of authenticity and destination attractive elements. Brand-related or product-related familiarity concepts explain consumer experience regarding a specific product or destination-related (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987), and it's a very valuable variable in the literature of marketing context. In a similar way, many tourism and travelers studied or use this concept and define destination familiarity as an operational context (Baloglu, 2001). Destination familiarity showed the difference between the behavior of travelers between a first-time and regular visiting pattern (Chi, Chung, Huanga, & Nguyena, 2018). Chen and Lin (2012) explained that destination familiarity gives more information about a person and how they perceive an image of a destination in his or her mind. So destination brand familiarity explains the behavior of travelers toward the destination and how a traveler perceives an image of the destination in his or her mind. In previous research, some scholars highlighted the importance of tourism in brand engagement and its role in the tourism industry regarding destination decision-making (So, King, Sparks, & Wang, 2016). Chen et al. (2019) discussed the relationship between destination brand authenticity and destination brand engagement. However no one explained the relationship of destination brand authenticity with destination brand familiarity, revisit intention, recommendation intention additionally destination brand self-congruence relation with its. The present research's main focus is on destination brand authenticity and destination brand familiarity, checking the relationship of destination brand authenticity and destination brand familiarity also with revisiting intention and recommendation intention. This research also highlights the relationship of destination brand self-congruence with destination brand familiarity and recommendation attention. This research's main aim is to check these all relationships from Pakistan's perspective as well as make famous Pakistani destinations a destination brand in Pakistan.

**Destination Brand Authenticity & Destination Brand Familiarity:**
Brand authenticity describes original, real, and truth-worthy values for brands (Rosado-Pinto et al.,2020). Different Authors explained brand authenticity from a marketing perspective (Cinelli & Leboeuf,2020, Rosado-Pinto, Louriero & Bilro,2020, Yang, Teran, Battocchio, Bertellotti, & Wrzesinski,2020). From a marketing point of view, brand authenticity is essential for consumers because consumers pay more attention to authentic brands (Safeer & Abrar,2020). Companies focused on brand authenticity because they recognized brand authenticity as a valuable attribute for consumers (Riefler,2020). Consumers pay more attention to brand authenticity due to its strong connection with quality (Safeer & Abrar,2020). Brand authenticity is also important for consumers because it generates a positive experience (Taheri, Farrington, Curran, & Gorman,2018). Brand authenticity research is limited in the tourism and hospitality industry (Schallehn, Burmann, & Riley, 2014). From the tourism point of view, (Chen et al.,2019) introduced authenticity as a destination brand authenticity because of its existential authenticity. Existential authenticity is an existential state of being that is related to the place (wang,1999). Existential authenticity explains more tourism activities and is widely used in marketing literature (Yi et al.,2017). So on on basis of existential authenticity and its widely used (Chen et al.,2019) explored authenticity as a destination brand authenticity. Destination brand authenticity is an evaluation of tourists in a subjective term as a perceptive of the credible, continuous, and honest form of reviews (Morhart et al.,2015, Chen et al.,2019). Destination brand authenticity is also debatable in the online platform of tourists, due to location value (Jimenez-Barreto, Rubio, & Campo,2020). Brand authenticity was used as a key trend for tourists and expressed a positive and negative effect on future intentions (Loureiro,2020). Destination brands' authenticity is also positively related to brand engagement (Chen et al.,2019). Algharabat, Rana, Alalwan,

Baabdullah, and Gupta (2019) discussed brand engagement and highlighted its positive relationship with consumer-based brand equity. These brand equity dimensions, perceived quality, brand loyalty, and brand awareness positively moderate brand familiarity means brand equity is positively related to brand familiarity (Horng, Liu, Chou, & Tsai,2012). Hence, we can assume that destination brand authenticity is positively related to destination brand familiarity.

**H1**: Destination brand authenticity positively affects destination brand familiarity.

**Destination Brand Self Congruence & Destination Brand Familiarity:**
Scholars highlighted self-congruence in marketing literature for building new concepts like self-congruence have some value for consumers and their purchasing intention (Zogaj, Tscheulin, & Olk,2020). Different authors expressed self-congruence differently, basically, it is a match between customer self-image and brand image (Japutra, Ekinci, & Simkin,2019). Self-congruence is also discussed for enhancing green marketing product values and their authenticity in tourism sectors (Olk,2020). Consumers prefer those brands that fit with themself because through this they explain self-identity in front of others (Wijnands & Gill,2020). Self-congruence is divided into two dimensions one is the actual self, and the other is the ideal self, The actual self shows the consumer's image matches with brand image, and the ideal self highlights the ideal image of the consumer (Zogaj et al.,2020). Self-congruence is expressed as a destination brand self-congruence in tourism marketing that explains that tourists like those destination brands that fit with their self-images (Chen et al.,2019). Self-congruity also has a deep connection with brand loyalty due to some positive characteristics that attract other visitors to destinations (Liu, Huang, & Liang,2019). Sirgy (2018) explained in self-congruence theory about the brand and actual self-image and ideal self-image he discussed self-congruity as a destination brand self-congruence. So, we can say that when a customer is loyal to a brand it means they are familiar that is why they are loyal. So, this thing proved that,

**H2**: Destination brand Self Congruence positively affects destination brand familiarity.

**Destination Brand Familiarity & Revisit Intention:**
Destination familiarity expressed positive behavior and revisit intention toward destinations (Kuhzady et al.,2020). It's the ability of tourists that describe a place or location and share with others a positive experience or image of a particular place (Casali, Liu, Presenza, & Moyle,2020). Familiarity provides local experiences to travelers and share their experiences with others (Khuzadey, Cakaci, Olya, Mojaher, & Han,2020). The concept of destination familiarity was also very helpful in developing a positive destination image in the minds of tourists (Casali et al.,2020). Familiarity developed a positive role in destination image and again visiting people at the same destination (Kim, Lehto, & Kandampully,2019). Revisit intention is a post behavior of tourists, that also derives a pull motivation for destination (Bento,2014). Revisit interest in tourists increased due to destination familiarity and destination attachment (Jian, Lin, & Zhou,2020). Destination familiarity is also positively attached to destination image (Solman, 2019). Based on the argument tourists who are familiar with the destination have a positive image in their mind so due to this positive image they automatically visit the again destination. That is why we can say that

**H3**: Destination brand Familiarity positively impacts Revisit intention.

**Destination Brand Familiarity & Recommendation Intention:**
The familiarity concept is also used in other dimensions of the tourism and hospitality industry, through it many tourists booked again the same hotel and visited the same cafe due to its environment and other key elements (Ruiz-Equihua, Romero, &Csalo,2019). Destination familiarity affects tourists' stay duration and visiting agreements that play a key role in the tourism industry (Sanz-Blas, Buzova, & Carvajal-Trujillo,2019). Tourist managers always think about positive and negative reviews from tourists because these come from visitors after destination familiarity (Ruiz-Equihua et al.,2019). Destination brand familiarity is also positively attached to the destination image. Sharma and Nayak (2018) explained a positive relationship between a destination's overall image and recommendation intention. Recently in the hospitality industry recommendation intention was expressed based on hotel facilities (Furner, Drake,

Zinko, & Kisling, 2021). It's a concept of recommended behavior of an individual, that communicates good things related to any specific objects to others (Jones & Farquhar,2003). So, we can say that a tourist who visits a place has a positive image in their mind and based on this positive image he or she recommends this place to other visitors.

**H4**: Destination brand familiarity positively affects recommendation intention.
**Destination Brand Authenticity & Revisit Intention:**
Brand authenticity depends on the original values that a customer perceives (Rosado-Pinto et al.,2020). It expressed genuine and honest characteristics for customers (brand authenticity and brand love 1). Consumers pay more attention to brand authenticity due to its importance (Safeer & Abrar,2020). Brand authenticity expresses the uniqueness of brands in front of customers (Mody, & Hanks,2020). The brand authenticity concept is used in different fields of marketing like restaurant chains, and hotel customers (Lu, Gursoy & Lu,2015 & Schallehn, Burmann, & Riley,2014). Chen et al. (2019) introduced the brand authenticity concept for tourists and highlighted its importance for destination brands. Destination brand authenticity provides an attachment force to tourists emotionally and socially (Kim & Kim 2020). In tourism marketing destination brand authenticity is also used for online reviews (Jimenez- Breton et al.,2020). Revisit intention is again visiting the destination due to some positive experiences (Chen et al., 2019). City image with music events also derived a positive way toward revisiting intention (Li, Lien, Wang, wang, & Dong,2020). Brand authenticity is positively related to brand love it means high brand love due to high brand authenticity (Manthiou, Kang, Hyun, & Fu, 2018 & Mody & Hanks,2020). This brand love is positively attached to brand loyalty (Mody & Hanks,2020) which describes if a person loves the brand, he or she loyal to a brand, and due to this loyalty customers again visit brands that generate revisit intention. So, we can say that,

**H5:** Destination Brand Authenticity positively impacts Revisit intention.
**Destination brand Self Congruence & Recommendation Intention:**
Self-congruence connection between self-identity and brand image (Wijnands & Gill,2020). Destination brand self-congruence explains the self-image's connection with the destination image (Chen et al.,2019). Consumers give more preference to those services that highlight their identity (Aaker,1996). Previously brand congruence had a connection with brand affection (Mazodier & Merunka, 2012) and brand Engagement (France, Merrilees, & Miller,2016). Destination brand Self Congruence also has a positive connection with brand engagement (Chen et al., 2019), and tourist loyalty, this loyalty is divided into recommendation intention (Zhang, Fu, Cai, & Lu,2014). Recommendation intention is a basic tourist loyal behavior with a destination, and on this basis, tourists recommend destinations to others (Chen et al., 2019).
So based on brand self-congruence connection with tourist loyalty, we can say that loyal customers recommended this destination to others. This means

**H6:** Destination brand Self Congruence positively influences Recommendation intention.
**Conceptual Framework: Figure 1:**
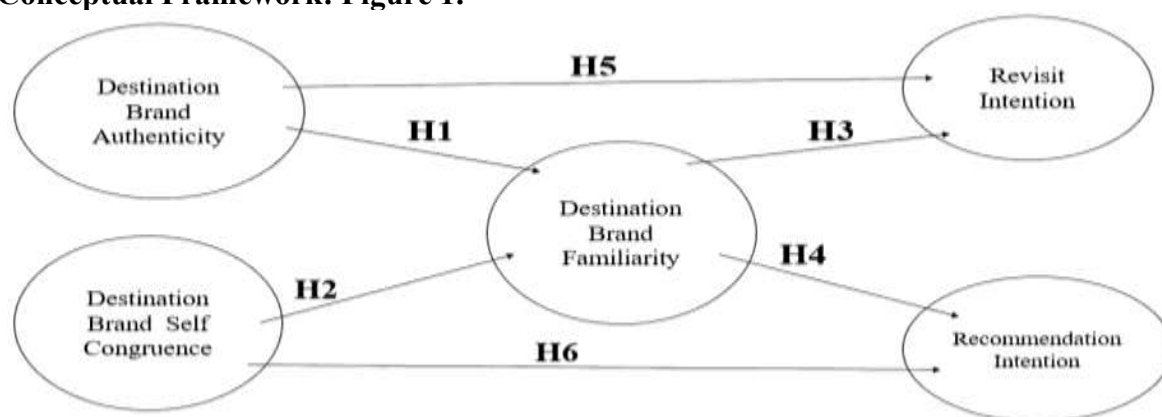
## Research Design:

The sample was collected from Pakistani tourists who visited different tourist destinations in Pakistan. To test the hypotheses, convenience sampling was used in which, online and offline questionnaires survey utilized. Online form questionnaires are distributed through Google Docs, Emails, and online sites like Facebook tourism groups, and WhatsApp groups tourists contact with the help of tourist managers and trip advisers. Some questionnaires were distributed through trip advisers and tourist managers who covered different trips for tourists. In offline form, data was collected through personal surveys. For data collection total of 650 questionnaires were distributed of which 150 were distributed through personal surveys and 500 forms were distributed through an online survey. A total of 410 valid questionnaires were collected of which 80 forms were collected through a personal survey 330 forms were obtained online form in which 200 were collected through Facebook groups and contacts, 100 forms were obtained through WhatsApp contracts from different tourists with the help of trip advisers, and 30 from collected through emails thus total 63% respondent rate. In which a total of 170 forms were not received, 40 forms were incomplete and 30 forms were blanked. So total data collected was 410.

## Sample:

As mentioned before target population of this study is the domestic tourists who visited different tourist destinations in Pakistan. In previous research, different authors took different sample sizes and it's a common practice usually researchers to use 10 times, or 5 times the total number of items in instruments i.e (Hair et ., al .,1998: Hassani & Moghavvemi, 2019), So according to the rule this research sample size is $30 \times 10 = 310$

## Measures:

Measures used in this model were adopted from different validated scales. The destination brand authenticity was measured with 15 items adopted (Chen et al.,2019; Morhart et al., 2015). Second variable Destination brand self Congruence constructs measured with 3 items adopted from (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Matzler, Strobl, Stokburger-Sauer, Bobovnicky, & Bauer, 2016; Morhart et al., 2015; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). The third variable used in this study was destination brand familiarity which has a total of 5 items and was adopted from (Gursoy & McCleary, 2004). The next variable used in this research model revisited intention measured with 3 items that were adopted (Wu, Li, & Li, 2018). The last variable in current research used is recommendation intention which has a total of 4 items and is adopted from (Gohary, Pourazizi, Madani, & Chan, 2018: Jones & Farquhar, 2003). Variables used in the present research model previously measured a 7-point Likert scale that is why in current research also used a 7-point Likert scale for measuring.

**Table 1: Constructs and their measurement items.**

| Variables | Author | No. of Items | Scale Likert |
|---|---|---|---|
| Destination brand authenticity | Chen et al., 2019 : Morharat et al.,2015 | 15 | 7-point |
| Destination brand self-congruence | Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Matzler, Strobl, Stokburger-Sauer, Bobovnicky, & Bauer, 2016; Morhart et al., 2015; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011 | 3 | 7-point |
| Destination brand familiarity | Gursoy & McCleary, 2004 | 5 | 7-point |
| Revisit intention | Wu, Li, & Li, 2018 | 3 | 7-point |
| Recommendation intention | Gohary, Pourazizi, Madani, & Chan, 2018: Jones & Farquhar, 2003 | 4 | 7-point |

**Table 2: Demographic Variables:**

| 1 | What is your gender? | Male            Female |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|
| 11 | What is your highest educational level? | Intermediate, Graduation Master, MPhil, PhD |
| 111 | To which of the following age groups do you belong? | Under 20, 20-30, 31-40, 41- 50, above 51 |
| 1V | What is your income level? | Under 20 thousand, 20 -40 Thousand, 40 – 70 thousand, Above 70 Thousand, |
| V | Frequency of destination Visit? | 1, 2,3-5, 5-8 above 8 |
| VI | Which destination did you visit last time? | Murree, Narran Khagan, Hunza Valley, Kalash Chitral, Others |
| VII | What is your travel frequency? | 1,2,3-5, 5-8, above 8 |

Table 2 shows the demographic variables used in this study. This table consists of Gender, respondents' highest education level, tourist ages, income level, their frequency of destination visit ratio, the main destination that tourists visited, and lastly, tourists' travel frequency in one year.

**Table 3: Demographic Characteristics:**

| Demographic variable | | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|---|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 269 | 65 % |
|  | Female | 141 | 34.39 % |
| Education | Intermediate | 56 | 13.7% |
|  | Graduation | 124 | 30.2% |
|  | Master | 155 | 37.8% |
|  | MPhil | 73 | 17.8% |
|  | Others | 2 | .5% |
| Age | 16-20 | 77 | 18.8% |
|  | 21-30 | 256 | 62.4% |
|  | 31-40 | 64 | 15.6% |
|  | 41-50 | 12 | 2.9% |
|  | Above 50 | 1 | .2% |
| Income | 10-20 thousand | 53 | 12.9% |
|  | 21-40 thousand | 192 | 46.8% |
|  | 41- 70 thousand | 112 | 27.3% |
|  | Above 70 thousand | 40 | 9.8% |
|  | Others | 13 | 3.2% |
| Frequency of visits | 1 | 45 | 11.0% |
|  | 2 | 162 | 39.5% |
|  | 3-5 | 146 | 35.6% |
|  | 6-8 | 30 | 7.3% |
|  | Above 8 | 27 | 6.3% |
| Travel frequency | 1 | 80 | 19.55% |
|  | 2 | 136 | 33.2% |
|  | 3-5 | 135 | 32.9% |
|  | 6-8 | 29 | 7.1% |
|  | Above 8 | 30 | 7.3% |
| I visited the last destination | Murree | 180 | 43.9% |
|  | Narran Khagan | 115 | 28.0% |
|  | Hunza Valley | 69 | 16.8% |
|  | Kalash Chitral | 27 | 6.6% |
|  | Others | 19 | 4.6% |

Table 3 present the demographic ratios of the sample. Total 410 valid questionnaires collected, 369 (90%) were men and 41 (10%) were women. Most respondents were aged between 21 to 30 years (62.4%), as well as a majority of the respondent, was master and graduation degree holders that consist of (37 %) and (30%). Income vise respondent in between 21 to 40 thousand. The highest frequency of destination visited 2 times in a year that consists of (39.5 %) with 2 times of travel frequency that were (33.2%). Lastly, the most visited destination from tourists was Murree and Narran Khagan.

**Data Analysis Strategy**

SPSS statistics and AMOS are used for data analysis. A normality test was used to ensure that the data was normally distributed to the respondent, this normality test was conducted in SPSS through Skewness and Kurtosis. Hair et al. (1998) discussed that only normal data can be used for further analysis. The reliability test shows the consistency of measures done through the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Composite reliability acceptable range between 0.7-0.9 (Hair et al.,2011). Cronbach s alpha acceptable range is higher than 0.7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Validity tests describe the accuracy of measures that are done through (CFA) confirmatory factor analysis (Hair et al.,2010). Validity has two types, convergent validity and discriminant validity recommended by scholars (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010). Finally, in current research, structural equation modelling (SEM) is used to test the relationship of the hypothesis (Ng et al., 2013).

**Normality & Reliability Analysis:**
**Table 4.0: Normality & Reliability of Destination Brand Authenticity:**

| Destination Brand Authenticity | Items | Skewness | Kurtosis | Composite Reliability C.R | Cronbach s Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DBA1 | This place did not waste your time? | -1.456 | 1.611 | 0.968 | .977 |
| DBA2 | The place was persisted through time. | -1.374 | 1.725 | | |
| DBA3 | The place persisted through trends | -1.314 | 1.480 | | |
| DBA4 | The place has a good history | -1.488 | 2.096 | | |
| DBA5 | The place did not betray you | -1.450 | 1.624 | | |
| DBA6 | The place keeps its value and promise | -1.561 | 2.058 | | |
| DBA7 | Place was a nice destination | -1.862 | 3.00 | | |
| DBA 8 | The place gave back to its tourists | -1.641 | 2.340 | | |
| DBA9 | Place has moral principles | -1.521 | 1.947 | | |
| DBA10 | The place was a true set of moral values | -1.620 | 2.320 | | |
| DBA11 | Place cares about tourists | -1.543 | 1.915 | | |
| DBA12 | The place adds meaning to tourists' lives. | -1.614 | 2.309 | | |
| DBA13 | Place reflects important value and care about tourists | -1.632 | 2.490 | | |
| DBA14 | Place connects tourists with their real selves | -1.482 | 1.858 | | |
| DBA15 | Place connects tourists with what is important. | -1.701 | 2.551 | | |

DBA stands for "Destination brand authenticity."

**Table 4.1 Normality & Reliability of Destination Brand Self-Congruence:**

| Destination Brand Self-Congruence | Items | Skewness | Kurtosis | Composite Reliability C.R | Cronbach s Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DBSC1 | The personality of the place is consistent with how I see myself. | -1.496 | 1.522 | 0.926 | .924 |
| DBSC2 | The place was consistent with my personality, and how I see myself. | -1.613 | 2.087 | | |
| DBSC3 | The place was close to my personality. | -1.428 | 1.392 | | |

❖ DBSC stand for "Destination Brand Self-Congruence"

## Table 4.2 Normality & Reliability of Destination Brand Familiarity:

| Destination brand Familiarity | Items | Skewness | Kurtosis | Composite Reliability C.R | Reliability / Cronbachs Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DBF1 | Compared to an average person, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations. | -1.404 | 1.253 | 0.910 | .929 |
| DBF2 | Compared to my friends, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations | -1.449 | 1.274 | | |
| DBF3 | Compared to people who travel a lot, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations | -1.300 | .664 | | |
| DBF4 | I often spend time gathering information about the destination | -1.431 | 1.145 | | |
| DBF5 | I am very familiar with the information on the destination. | -1.415 | 1.207 | | |

❖ DBF stand for "Destination Brand Familiarity."

## Table 4.3 Normality & Reliability of Revisit Intention:

| Revisit Intention | Items | Skewness | Kurtosis | Composite Reliability C.R | Cronbachs Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| RI1 | If I could, I would come to this destination again | -1.677 | 2.088 | 0.908 | .939 |
| RI2 | I always consider this destination as my first choice. | -1.527 | 1.599 | | |
| RI3 | I have a strong intention to visit this destination again. | -1.536 | 1.640 | | |

❖ RI stand for "Revisit Intention."

## Table 4.4 Normality & Reliability of Recommendation Intention:

| Recommendation Intention | Items | Skewness | Kurtosis | Composite Reliability C.R | Cronbachs Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| RC1 | I will recommend that others visit the destination in online forums. | -1.529 | 1.621 | 0.921 | .919 |
| RC2 | I will talk about the destination with others online. | -1.464 | 1.397 | | |
| RC3 | My visits to this destination are a natural topic of conversation online for me. | -1.379 | 1.260 | | |
| RC4 | I will not recommend that others visit the destination in online forums. | -.870 | .062 | | |

❖ RC stand for "Recommendation Intention."

As discussed before, the Normality test is used to ensure the normal distribution of data done through Skewness & Kurtosis. Reliability tests describe the consistency of measures that are done through composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Tables 4.0, 4.1,4.2,4.3 and 4.4 describe the normality and reliability analysis of all variables used in the current research. Normality tests show the skewness and kurtosis and their normal values arrange between +1,-1 to +3,-3 ( Hair et al .,2011). In all the above tables the Skewness and Kurtosis values in between +1,-1, and +3,-3 for all variables that represent the normal distribution of data. The reliability test shows the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Composite reliability acceptable range between 0.7-0.9 (Hair et al.,2011). Cronbach s alpha acceptable range is higher than 0.7 (Nunnally and

Bernstein, 1994). So in the above-mentioned table, all Cronbach alpha and composite reliability values are according to normal arrangement.

**Table 5.0 Validity Analysis (Convergent Validity of Variables):**

| Destination Brand Authenticity | Items No | F.L Factor Loading | AVE Average Variance Extracted | C.R Composite Reliability |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | DBA1 | .83 | 0.749 | 0.968 |
| | DBA2 | Deleted | | |
| | DBA3 | Deleted | | |
| | DBA4 | Deleted | | |
| | DBA5 | .83 | | |
| | DBA6 | Deleted | | |
| | DBA7 | .86 | | |
| | DBA8 | .88 | | |
| | DBA9 | .86 | | |
| | DBA10 | .88 | | |
| | DBA11 | .88 | | |
| | DBA12 | .90 | | |
| | DBA13 | Deleted | | |
| | DBA14 | .86 | | |
| | DBA15 | .88 | | |
| **Destination Brand, Self-Congruence** | **Items No** | **F. L** | **AVE** | **C.R** |
| | DBSC1 | .90 | 0.807 | 0.926 |
| | DBSC2 | .90 | | |
| | DBSC3 | .89 | | |
| **Destination Brand Familiarity** | **Items No** | **F. L** | **AVE** | **C.R** |
| | DBF1 | .91 | 0.771 | 0.910 |
| | DBF2 | .85 | | |
| | DBF3 | .87 | | |
| | DBF4 | Deleted | | |
| | DBF5 | Deleted | | |
| **Revisit Intention** | **Item No** | **F. L** | **AVE** | **C.R** |
| | R1 | .90 | 0.831 | 0.908 |
| | R2 | Deleted | | |
| | R3 | .92 | | |
| **Recommendation Intention** | **Item No** | **F.L** | **AVE** | **C.R** |
| | RC1 | .90 | 0.746 | 0.921 |
| | RC2 | .91 | | |
| | RC3 | .90 | | |
| | RC4 | .74 | | |

**Table 6.0 Validity Analysis (Discriminant Validity):**

|      | AVE   | RI    | DBA   | DBSC  | DBF   | RC    |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| **RI**   | 0.831 | **0.912** |       |       |       |       |
| **DBA**  | 0.749 | 0.824 | **0.866** |       |       |       |
| **DBSC** | 0.807 | 0.811 | 0.838 | **0.898** |       |       |
| **DBF**  | 0.771 | 0.800 | 0.808 | 0.809 | **0.878** |       |
| **RD**   | 0.746 | 0.849 | 0.820 | 0.776 | 0.790 | **0.864** |

**Validity Analysis, Convergent & Discriminant Validity:**

This research previously discussed the validity that represents the accuracy of measures done through (CFA) confirmatory factor analysis. Validity has two types, one is convergent validity and the second is discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker,1981). For measuring the convergent validity researchers described two standards. The first standard is factor loading of all items should be greater than 0.5 and secondly (AVE) Average variance extracted should also be higher than 0.5 (Yap and Khong,2006). These two findings fulfil the convergent validity requirements. Table 5.0 represents the validity analysis, convergent validity that depends upon factor loading, and Average variance extracted. Table 5.0 describes all variable's F.L and AVE values that are higher than 0.5 which means all variable's F.L and A.V values according to the range of convergent validity. The destination brand authenticity (AVE) value is 0.749, the destination brand self-congruence (AVE) value is 0.807, and the destination brand familiarity is 0.771. Similarly, revisit intention, and recommendation intention (AVE) values are 0.831 and 0.749.

**Validity Analysis (Discriminant Validity):**

The second type of validity is discriminant validity Fornell and Larcker's (1981), test is used to represent discriminant validity. According to this test correlation between constructs should not be higher than the square root of the AVE of each construct. Another condition is that diagonal values must be higher than other values (Butt, Rose, Wilkins, & Haq,2017). Above table 6.0 represents the discriminant validity that expressed the diagonal values and all diagonal bold values are the square root of AVE, as well as all bold values, are higher than other values which means it fulfills both conditions of discriminant validity.

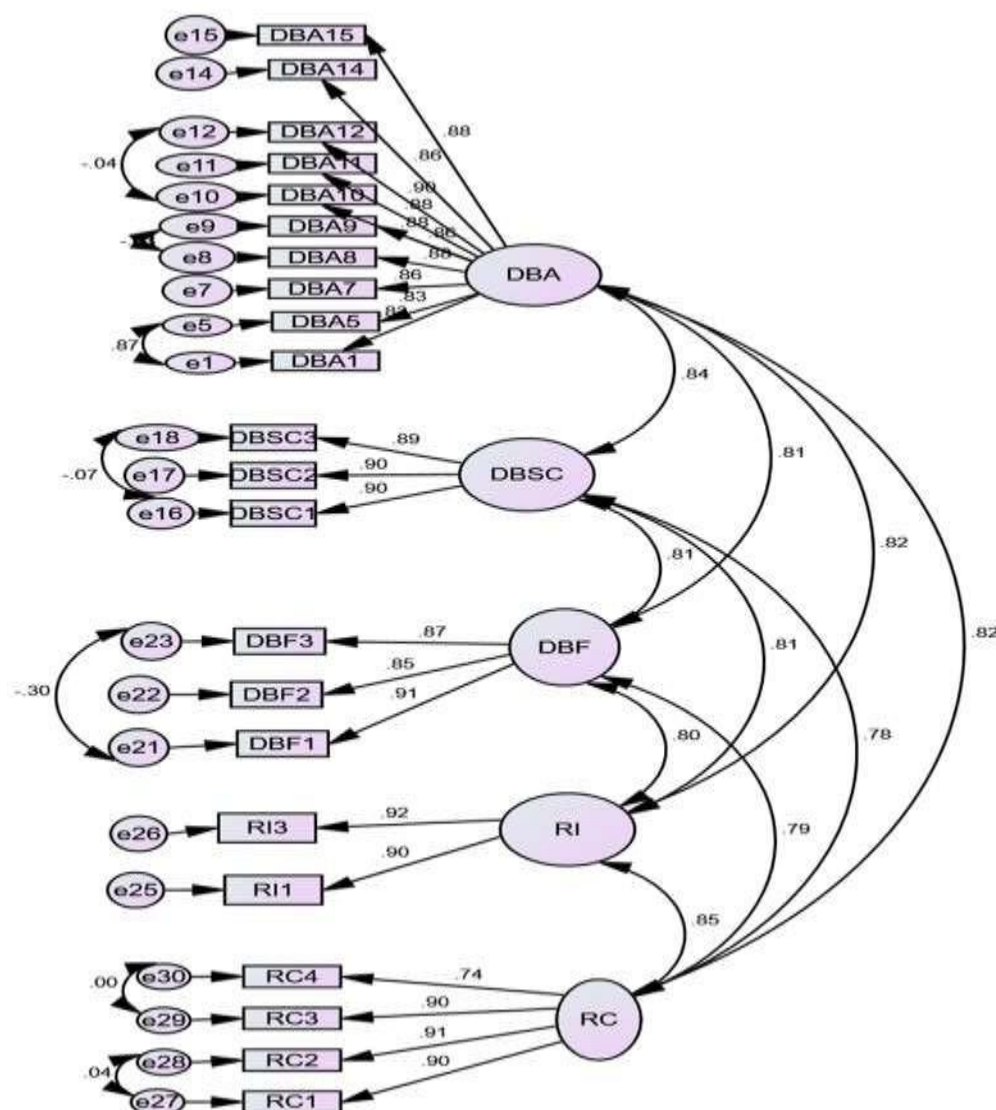**CFA (Confirmatory Factor Analysis):**
**Figure 2:**



Figure 2 represents the Confirmatory factor analysis that draws according to all variables in AMOS software. In CFA some variables items were disturbed others that's why they were all deleted for accurate results. The items that were deleted were DBA2, DBA3, DBA4, DBA6, and DBA13 from the first variable that was destination brand authenticity. The next items were deleted from the destination brand familiarity variable and those were DBF19 and DBF20. After revisiting the intention variable just only one item was deleted and that was RI24. So, a total of 8 items were deleted into 30 items for an accurate result from the CFA model. After that, the output result was good and fit for this study. The CFA model was evaluated by model fit indexes and this suggestion was given by some researchers (Hu & Bentler,1999; Teo et al., 2009). In the current study following indexes are included for model fit evaluation i.e CMIN/dF 1.808, GFI .929, AGFI .906, NFI .967, IFI .985, CFI .985, and RMESA .044. The threshold value of CMIN/DF is < 3, and GFI, AGFI, NFI, IFI, and CFI threshold values are> 0.9 lastly RMESA threshold value is < 0.06 (Hu, & Bentler,1999). These all values highlighted in Table 7.0 model fit the index according to their threshold ranges. All values highlighted according to their threshold values that show the present research CFA model is fit.

**Table 7.0 CFA (Model fit values)**:

| Index | Model fit values | Threshold values |
|---|---|---|
| CMIN/DF | 1.808 | < 3 |
| GFI | .929 | >0.9 |
| AGFI | .906 | |
| NFI | .967 | |
| IF | .985 | |
| CFI | .985 | |
| RMESA | .044 | <0.06 |

**Hypotheses testing:**

**Figure 3: SEM (Structure Equation Modelling)**
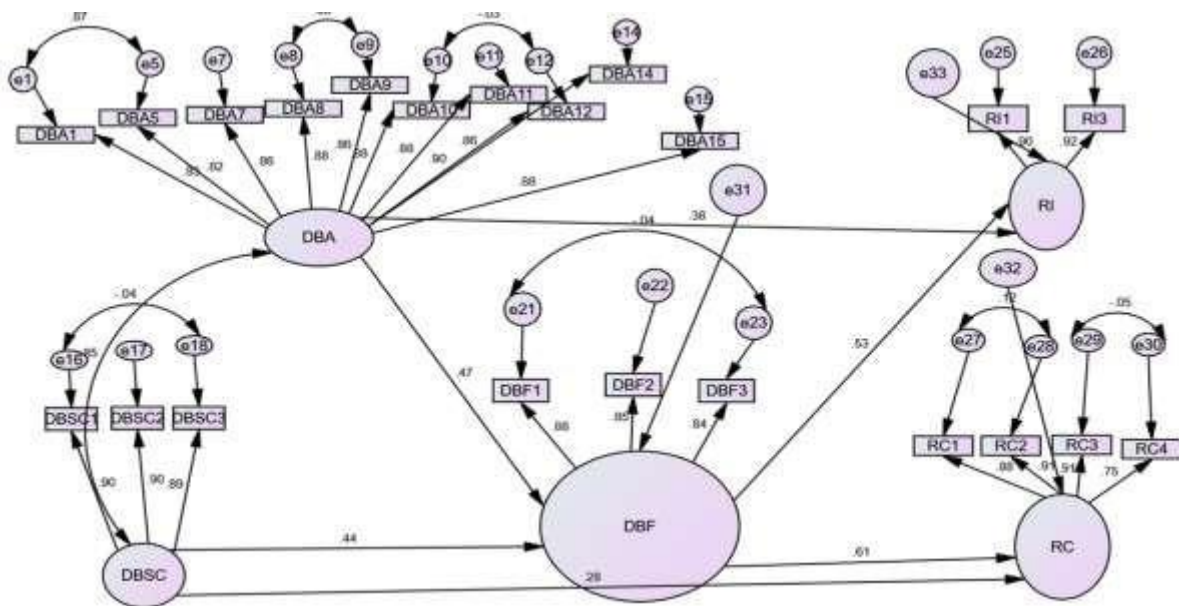


**Table 8.0 SEM (Model fit values):**

| Index | Model fit values | Threshold values |
|---|---|---|
| CMIN/DF | 2.244 | < 3 |
| GFI | .911 | >0.9 |
| AGFI | .910 | |
| NFI | .958 | |
| IF | .976 | |
| CFI | .976 | |
| RMESA | .055 | <0.06 |

**Table 9.0 Hypotheses Test Results:**

| | Hypotheses | Standardized estimates | Supported/Not supported |
|---|---|---|---|
| **H1** | DBA → DBF | 0.79* | Supported |
| **H2** | DBSC → DBF | 0.66* | Supported |
| **H3** | DBF→ RI | 0.71* | Supported |
| **H4** | DBF → RC | 0.76* | Supported |
| **H5** | DBA→ RI | 0.80* | Supported |
| **H6** | DBSC→RC | 0.69* | Supported |

Finally, structural equation modelling is used to test the hypotheses (Ng et al., 2013). Structural equation modelling runs through AMOS software for testing the hypotheses that which one will be accepted or rejected. The structural model also indicated model fit indexes, i.e. CMIN/df 2.244, GFI .911, AGFI .910, NFI .958, IFI .976, CFI .976, and RMESA .055. This model fit values threshold ratio was for CMIN/DF < 3, and GFI, AGFI, NFI, IFI, and CFI threshold value was > 0.9 lastly RMESA threshold value was < 0.06 (Hu and Bentler,1999). These all values discussed in Table 8.0 model fit indexes of Structural equation modelling. Table 9.0 describes the hypotheses relationship, the first hypothesis is H1 which shows a relationship between destination brand authenticity with destination brand familiarity and its standardized estimate value is 0.79, and a p-value less than 0.001 that accepted. The second hypothesis H2 describes the relationship between destination brand self-congruence with destination brand familiarity its standardized estimate value is 0.66 and the p-value is also less than 0.001 which means it's accepted. All the hypotheses in the table were accepted according to rules and all p values less than 0.001 with one*. If p values are less than 0.001 it's accepted (ul Haq & Bonn,2018).

**Discussion and Conclusion:**
The primary goal of this research was to highlight Pakistan's famous destination as a destination brand for government and tourist managers and trip advisers. So, according to the results most visited destinations in Pakistan are Murree, Narran Khagan, and Hunza Valley. So it's the brand destination in Pakistan. The government should work on it for their development. The tourism-related websites in Pakistan and trip advisers and tourist managers should highlight these destinations in front of tourists as a destination brand. The second main goal of this research is to develop a conceptual framework between destination brand authenticity and destination brand self-congruence with destination brand familiarity and revisit intention and recommendation intention. Firstly, the findings suggest that destination brand authenticity is positively related to destination brand familiarity as well as destination brand self-congruence is also positively related to destination brand familiarity. Secondly, destination brand familiarity plays a positive role in revisiting intention and recommendation intention. Lastly, destination brand authenticity is positively attached to revisit intention as well as destination brand self-congruence is positively attached to recommendation intention. This study indicates the importance of destination brand authenticity with other study variables. This study discovers a new framework in tourism study as a destination branding.

**Implications for theory:** Firstly, the present study is among the first to highlight destination brand authenticity and destination brand self-congruence with destination brand familiarity and revisit intention and recommendation intention. The current study introduced new concepts like destination branding in the tourism field, where in the future, researchers can find destinations as destination brands and can work on them. Existing studies just explore the tourism field in other terms but have not used branding concepts in the tourism sector. When branding is a core concept in marketing so why is this concept still underrated in the tourism field? Lastly, this study explored the unique conceptual framework related to destination branding in the tourism sector, so in the future scholars can use this type of framework in destination-related studies.

**Practical Implications:** This research demonstrated positive outcomes of destination brand authenticity and destination brand familiarity in terms of revisit intention and recommendation intention. Both destination brand authenticity and destination brand familiarity positively related to revisiting intention and recommendation intention. Current research findings are essential for the Pakistani government because the government should work more on these branding destinations to secure them and to develop them more attractive to tourists. The present research result is valuable for Pakistani trip advisors and tourist managers because through this they can highlight these destinations as destination brands and more tourists can come and visit these destinations. In Pakistan, tourism-related sites can show Murree, Narran Khagan, and Hunza Valley destinations as destination brands on their web pages not only for domestic tourists but also for foreign visitors.

**Limitations:** The current research has many limitations. Firstly, the respondents of this research were Pakistani tourists who visited different destinations in Pakistan, so other foreign tourists were missed in this research. Secondly, this research also missed those Pakistani tourists who live in other foreign countries and visit Pakistani destinations. Thirdly, in this research, data was collected from 410 respondents due to time limitations.

**Future Recommendations:** In the present research, many recommendations are available firstly, this research measured Pakistani destinations, so for future research, this framework uses other countries and other cultures. Secondly, in this study, data was collected only from Pakistan domestic tourists, so this model can check both domestic and foreign tourists' responses in data collection time. Lastly, future researchers can use these variables as mediation or for checking the moderating effect in destination-related studies.

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## Demographic Information

Please place a tick for each of the following questions.

1: what is your Gender?
   (a) Male                    (b) Female

2: What is your highest education level?
   ( a) Intermediate        (b) Graduation              (c) Master           (d) MPhil (e) others...

3: To which of the following age groups do you belong?
   (a)  16-20            (b)  21-30               (c) 31-40           (d)  41-50     (e)   above 51

4: What is your Income level?
   (a)  10- 20 thousand      (b) 21-40 thousand        (c) 41-70thousand      (d) above 70 thousand
   (e) Others……

5: what is your frequency of destination visits?
   (a)   1              (b)  2                 (c)  3-5               (d)  6-8     ( e ) above 8

6: What is your travel frequency?
   (a)  1               (b)  2                 (c)  3-5               (d)  6-8    ( e )  above 8

7: Which destination did you visit last time?
   (a)   Murree         (b)  Naran Kaghan      (c)   Hunza Valley    (d)    Kalash Chitral
   (e) others………

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with these given statements? Please answer each question by using a tick and given option range 1 to 7 about the above-mentioned destination**

 1- Strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-Somewhat disagree,4-Neutral,
 5-Somewhat agree,  6- Agree, 7-Strongly agree

| Destination Brand Authenticity | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | This place did not waste your time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | The place persisted through time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| 3 | The place persists through trends | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | The place has a good tourism-related history | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | The place did not betray you. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | The place keeps its value and promise | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | The place was a nice destination | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | The place gave back to its tourists | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | The place has moral principles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | The place was a true set of moral values | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | Place cares about tourists | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12 | The place adds meaning to tourists' lives. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13 | The place reflects important values and cares about tourists | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14 | Place connects tourists with their real selves | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15 | Place connects tourists with what is really important. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| **Destination brand self-congruence** | | | | | | | | |
| 16 | The personality of the place is consistent with how I see myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17 | The place was consistent with my personality, and how I see myself. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18 | The place was close to my own personality. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | | | | | |
| **Destination Brand Familiarity** | | | | | | | | |
| 19 | Compared to an average person, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20 | Compared to my friends, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 21 | Compared to people who travel a lot, I am very familiar with a wide variety of vacation destinations | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 22 | I often spend time gathering information about the destination | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 23 | I am very familiar with the information on the destination. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| **Revisit Intention** | | | | | | | | |
| 24 | If I could, I would come to this destination again | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 25 | I always consider this destination as my first choice. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 26 | I have a strong intention to visit this destination again. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| **Recommendation Intention** | | | | | | | | |
| 27 | I will recommend that others visit the destination in online forums. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 28 | I will talk about the destination with others online. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 29 | My visits to this destination are a natural topic of conversation online for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 30 | I will not recommend that others visit the destination in online forums. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |