



Interplay of Brand Authenticity and customer inspiration on Brand Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

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The current study is aimed at examining authenticity and inspiration within the context of consumer behavior. For this purpose, the researcher investigated the impact of brand authenticity on brand outcomes (brand advocacy and brand love). The objective is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the entire decision-making process through mediating mechanisms and customer inspiration based on the proposed linkages. A non-probability convenience sampling technique has been used for this study. The study first adopted the nominal group technique to establish the existence and understanding of the constructs in our context, followed by a cross-sectional research design to investigate how witnessing an authentic experience influences the consumption behavior of the consumers. Finally, the researcher collected the data through a questionnaire adopted and validated from past research. The deductive approach, survey strategy, and quantitative methodology are used for the current study. Employing a cross-sectional research design, the data has been collected through multi-stage and convenience sampling (N = 261). Analysis such as measurement model, structural model, mediation analysis, and moderation analysis were performed via means of structural equation modeling through Smart PLS4. Findings indicate that a) results reveal significant relationships for all direct path hypotheses, and b) customer inspiration found a significant mediator between brand authenticity and brand outcomes (brand advocacy and brand love).

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Introduction

Authenticity is a central theme in the modern world; many books now harp upon the benefits of authentic living (Kovács, 2019); the public likes to visit authentic restaurants (Xu et al., 2023); and leaders are criticized for how authentic they are in their claims (Kim et al., 2023). Scholars have been investigating authenticity since Aristotle (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022; Papadopoulou et al., 2023; Baumeister, 2019). While extensively discussed and explored in various marketing studies, it remains enveloped in nuances and challenges (Södergren, 2021). Prior research has asserted that brand authenticity not only enhances consumer experiences (Massi et al., 2023) but also contributes to heightened brand equity (Tran & Nguyen, 2022) and positively influences trust and loyalty (Kim et al., 2021). Researchers investigated the relationship between authenticity and a variety of concerns, including well-being (Borawski, 2021; Guevremont, 2021; Zhou et al., 2023), leadership (Shulga, 2021; Zhang et al., 2022), and the Big Five traits (Bu et al., 2023; Joshi et al., 2023). No one has looked into how authenticity affects inspiration.

The essence of marketing lies in eliciting inspiration among customers, and examining the state of customer inspiration has the potential to advance marketing theory. Existing research suggests that customers can derive benefits from brands that are both enriching and inspirational (Böttger et al., 2017) or from shopping experiences that evoke inspiration (Frasquet et al., 2024). Customers may potentially have transcendent experiences during the consumption process (He et al., 2023). Despite these realizations, there is still a lack of a theoretical framework and a widely accepted definition of the inspiration construct in the corpus of material currently available on inspiration in marketing. Marketers need to understand client motivation on a deeper level in order to influence how customers respond to their offers. Existing gaps in the literature suggest that some parts of this concept are unknown and warrant additional exploration. Many researchers have called for further investigation to describe the phenomenon of customer inspiration (Dai et al., 2022; Das et al., 2022; Grewal et al., 2023; Hernani-Merino et al., 2023). Therefore, this study is going to fill these gaps by investigating the antecedents (brand authenticity) and consequences (i.e., brand advocacy and brand love) of customer inspiration.

In the intensely competitive market environment, brands are increasingly promoting consumer-to-consumer recommendations, recognized for their authenticity and efficacy in fostering a robust consumer-brand relationship (Shimul & Phau, 2023; Parris & Guzmán, 2023). Contemporary business practices underscore the importance for companies to actively cultivate a cadre of enthusiastic customer advocates who willingly endorse their products to family, friends, and acquaintances (Shimul & Phau, 2023). From an academic perspective, marketing literature posits that contented consumers frequently share positive experiences, leading to voluntary recommendations of relevant products and brands (Bozkurt et al., 2023). This phenomenon, termed brand advocacy, has garnered significant scholarly attention in the past decade (Aljarah et al., 2023; Shimul & Phau, 2023; Wilk et al., 2021).

In past research, brand love has been operationalized in different capacities. Extant research examined brand love as independent (Junaid et al., 2022; Le, 2023), dependent (Paruthi et al., 2023; Robertson et al., 2022), or mediator (Quezado et al., 2022; Wallace et al., 2023).

Despite this abundance of research on brand love, research examining the antecedents of brand love is inconsistent and needs more elaborative frameworks (Aro et al., 2023). Moreover, all these above studies called for further investigation on brand love; specifically, brand love is needed to be examined as an outcome factor in different contexts (Robertson et al., 2022).

This research makes a pioneering contribution to the understanding of brand dynamics by investigating the intricate relationships between brand authenticity, customer inspiration, and consequential brand outcomes such as advocacy and brand love. Notably, it marks the first comprehensive attempt in the literature to integrate these critical elements. Our primary goals are two-fold: first, to empirically establish the positive impact of brand authenticity on customer inspiration, providing empirical evidence for this crucial link. Secondly, we aim to scrutinize the influence of customer inspiration on brand outcomes, specifically brand love and advocacy. Additionally, we examine a factor that was neglected in earlier research by examining the mediating impact of consumer inspiration on the authenticity-brand results relationship. Our study closes a gap in the literature, adds to marketing theory, and offers useful guidance to marketers attempting to strengthen their brands in the competitive market of today.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1. Brand authenticity and brand advocacy

Cinelli and LeBoeuf (2020) define brand authenticity in marketing literature as a company's image that extends beyond impression management. For example, rather than being a natural component of objective reality, brand authenticity has been defined as an actively created feature that shapes an individual's subjective views (Bruhn et al., 2012). Rosado-Pinto et al. (2020) describes brand authenticity as consumers' ability to keep their identity in the face of social pressure. To positively affect customers' thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes towards brands, a true brand must be able to effectively communicate its identity while maintaining a consistent brand image. A brand's authenticity should be proven through evidence-based reality, such as ingredients, performance, and other critical criteria (Beverland et al., 2008; Grayson & Martinec, 2004).

Taking an active stance in favor of one brand over another within the same product category is known as brand advocacy (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2019). This interaction involves the customer's openness to experimenting with new brand offerings, desire to promote the brand positively through word-of-mouth, and resilience in the face of difficulties (Wong & Hung, 2023). Consumers must have a true and profound relationship with a brand before engaging in advocacy and marketing. Positive consumer brand endorsement is critical to increasing acceptance and adoption of novel products (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). Brand advocacy encompasses favorable actions such as speaking positively about a brand, recommending it to others, or defending it when criticized (Keller, 2007; Park & MacInnis, 2006). It has also been likened to positive WOM or recommendations from well-connected consumers (Wragg, 2004). For some, it represents relational behavior (Melancon et al., 2011) or even social advocacy (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Typically, it is given away for free by highly satisfied customers who evangelize a brand they've experienced (Fuggetta, 2012).

Authentic brands are well recognised for stimulating favourable behavioural and psychological responses from consumers. Numerous studies have highlighted the positive psychological effects of brand authenticity (BA) on a variety of factors, including brand engagement (Rosado-Pinto et al., 2020; Kumar & Kaushk, 2022), consumer-brand relationships (Fritz et al., 2017; Oh et al., 2019), psychological brand ownership (Kumar & Kaushik, 2022), and product quality (Moulard et al., 2016). From the standpoint of the behavioural consequences of perceived brand authenticity (PBA), studies on purchase intention (Napoli et al., 2014), brand loyalty (Lu et al., 2015), and willingness to recommend (Morhart et al., 2015) have been conducted across diverse settings. Prior research exploring the repercussions of brand authenticity has established the significance of consumers' perceptions of brand authenticity in shaping both psychological and behavioral responses. However, the correlation between brand authenticity and brand advocacy, a crucial aspect of marketing, has received limited attention in scholarly investigations.

From the perspective of SIP (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), individuals seek cues from their environment and develop attitudes and behaviors accordingly. This study proposes that brand authenticity serves as situational cues for customers, shaping their brand advocacy. In essence, informational cues related to brand authenticity form a robust connection between the brand and the customer, prompting the customer to become an advocate in response to the processed information derived from these environmental cues. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1a: Brand authenticity is positively related to brand advocacy.

2.1.2. Brand Authenticity and Brand Love

Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) have defined brand love as the intense emotional attachment between a satisfied consumer and a specific brand. This deep connection with a brand arises from various aspects, including exceptional qualities, intrinsic rewards, alignment with one's sense of natural compatibility, positive emotional resonance, frequent thoughts and emotional bonding (Batra et al., 2012). Furthermore, qualities such as a perception of moral virtue, integrity, unwavering commitment to quality, and serve as driving forces behind brand love (Beverland, 2006). Batra et al. (2012) contend that for a hotel brand, authenticity can be a pivotal experiential attribute, significantly influencing guest appreciation. Positive emotions toward a brand play a pivotal role in shaping emotional responses and overall brand evaluations (Batra et al., 2012). Additionally, other scholars propose a positive relationship between brand love, and brand authenticity (e.g., Manthiou et al., 2018; Shuv-Ami et al., 2018). One might argue that consumers perceiving brands as sincere and authentic are more likely to develop perceptions of authenticity, which is recognized as a distinctive trait of beloved brands (Napoli et al., 2014).

Positive emotional relations with the brand and brand love can be attained “by endowing the brand with a sense of authenticity from its origin and history, the vision of its founders, and its corporate culture, so that the brand buyer feels a sense of kinship about it” (Batra et al., 2012, p. 14). Safeer et al. (2021) demonstrated a noteworthy association between brand authenticity and brand love. In alignment with this theory, consumers evaluate a brand's behavior and attributes as genuine, perceiving that the brand consistently fulfills its promises to meet their needs.

Consequently, this fosters loyalty and engenders affection for the brand. Consequently, the following hypothesis is posited:

H1b: Brand authenticity is positively related to brand love.

2.2. Brand authenticity and customer inspiration

Inspiration functions as a potent motivational catalyst, propelling individuals into action. Researchers like Liang et al. (2016) and Thrash & Elliot (2004) have extensively studied this phenomenon. This experience of inspiration transcends the realm of mundane concerns, igniting a fervor for pursuing goals or actions (Thrash & Elliot, 2003, 2004). Thrash and Elliot (2003) provide a detailed definition of inspiration as the infusion of an idea or purpose into the mind, resulting in heightened emotions and impulses. Bottger et al. (2017) expanded on this idea by introducing the concept of consumer inspiration in marketing. Bottger et al. (2017) define it as a temporary motivational state that facilitates the transition from discovering a marketing-induced concept to intrinsically pursuing a consumption-related objective. Their research suggests that inspiration can stem from various elements, including in-store presentations, innovative product offerings, or advertisements that stimulate imagination and introduce creative ideas (Bottger et al., 2017). In essence, marketing communications possess the potential to enrich consumers' discovery of fresh possibilities, triggering those "aha!" moments accompanied by emotions of wonder and inspiration.

Winterich et al. (2019) observed an increase in recycling behavior linked to the inspiration consumers experience when contemplating the transformation involved in recycling. In a similar vein, we anticipate that a brand will inspire customers if it is true to the claims it makes in its advertising messages. Morhart et al. (2015) found that brand authenticity enhances word-of-mouth (WOM) communication and emotional brand attachment, ultimately facilitating brand choice through self-congruence. We think that a true brand's continuity, integrity, symbolism, and validity might serve as a source of inspiration for customers, according to research by Morhart et al. (2015). This point of view addresses concerns raised by scholars who hypothesize that inspiration could be a result of or correlate with a variety of other variables (Thrash & Elliot, 2004), emphasizing the importance of investigating the reasons behind inspiration (Khoi et al., 2019). This collection of evidence demonstrates that authentic brands can motivate customers.

As per Salancik and Pfeffer's (1978) Social Information Processing (SIP) theory, individuals look for signs from their environment to ascertain their intentions and attitudes. As a situational cue, brand authenticity influences buyers' internal cues, especially inspiration. Consumers interpret their internal cues based on the situational cues they encounter. Authentic brands that exhibit qualities like perseverance, honesty, moral principles, care for customers, meaning addition to their lives, and reflection of values tend to inspire customers. Furthermore, the call for research on the antecedents and drivers of inspiration by Bottger et al. (2017) guides the author toward this line of reasoning, suggesting the existence of numerous sources of customer inspiration that warrant further exploration (Sheng, Yang, & Feng, 2020; Frassetto et al., 2024; Fayyaz et al., 2023). In light of the above literature and the Social Information Processing theory, the current study posits that brand authenticity, functioning as an information cue, is likely to evoke feelings of customer

inspiration, an internal cue with emotional significance. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Brand authenticity is positively related to customer inspiration.

2.3 Customer Inspiration and Brand Outcomes

2.3.1. Customer Inspiration and Brand Advocacy

Brand advocacy is a profound expression of customer loyalty and connection, encompassing both the active promotion and defense of a brand to others (Walz & Celuch, 2010). This level of advocacy signifies the pinnacle of approval within the consumer-brand relationship. It embodies a holistic orientation towards the market, reflecting consumer knowledge, engagement, and a sense of partnership (Lawer & Knox, 2006). While word-of-mouth (WOM) involves informal communication between consumers, brand advocacy emerges as the ultimate measure of the strength of the bond between consumers and brands (Walz & Celuch, 2010, p. 96). Inspiration, on the other hand, is characterized by a surge of beliefs ignited by elements of truth, goodness, or beauty (Thrash and Elliot, 2003). The importance of inspiring customers has been underscored as a fundamental aspect of effective marketing strategies (Böttger et al., 2017).

Consumers often gravitate towards brands and products that provide enrichment and inspiration, seeking to elevate their shopping experiences (Park et al., 2013). In the realm of tourism research, it has been revealed that travel videos have the capacity to ignite the imagination of audiences, eliciting fantasies and daydreams (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). According to Kumar and Pansari (2016), customers who have a sense of belonging to a business are more likely to engage with it and recommend it to others. An interesting prospect is raised by this argument: customers who identify with a brand are more likely to support it, defend its reputation when they aren't there, and even take a challenge from those who have negative thoughts. The degree to which these loyal customers are tied to the brand affects their level of advocacy. According to this logic, if a brand truly moves a customer, they are more likely to participate in advocacy activities (Cao et al., 2022).

Social Information Processing (SIP) theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) states that people look for clues in their immediate surroundings and then create attitudes or behaviors depending on the knowledge they learn. Extending this premise, the present study proposes that after processing information, particularly in the form of customer inspiration, it leads to the shaping of attitudes or behaviors, specifically in the context of brand advocacy. Therefore, the hypothesis is as follows:

H3a: Customer inspiration is positively related to brand advocacy.

2.3.2. Customer Inspiration and Brand Love

Among the six brand relationship quality (BRQ) facets proposed by Fournier (1998), “brand love” is identified as a core component of all healthy relationships. To form healthy and long-lasting relationships, brand love should be considered an important aspect. Despite the relevance and importance of brand love, it is not clear in the first place which factors stimulate and develop brand love (Bagozzi et al., 2017; Bairrada et al., 2018). Also, research (Bıçakcıoğlu et al., 2018; Joshi & Garg, 2021; Paruthi et al., 2023) clearly articulates that the antecedents of brand love are still scarce and unclear and need further examination.

Based on SIP theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), individuals look to their surrounding

environment for cues and develop attitudes as a result of that information. The current study suggests that the processed information (in terms of customer inspiration) would be likely to develop a feeling of passion and intimacy towards the brand (in terms of brand love). Also, past research (Ahuvia et al., 2020; Bazi et al., 2023; Tran et al., 2024) recommended that future research should consider investigating inspired-to behaviors as outcomes of customer inspiration rather than usual attachment and positive word-of-mouth factors. The processed information (customer inspiration) will reflect on the attitudes and behaviors of the customer in the form of brand love. Hence, it is hypothesized that:

H3b: Customer inspiration is positively related to brand love.

2.4. Mediating the Role of Customer Inspiration

2.4.1. Mediating the role of customer inspiration in the relationship between brand authenticity and brand outcomes (brand advocacy and brand love)

Within the realm of tourism research, a significant revelation has emerged—travel videos possess the capacity to enkindle the imagination of viewers, eliciting fantasies and daydreams (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Such content possesses the potential to emotionally stir audiences, motivating them to engage more deeply in the viewing process. In fact, the scholarly community in marketing has demonstrated that customer inspiration can lead to substantial engagement behaviors, including discussions and recommendations shared with friends and family (Böttger et al., 2017). For instance, Kumar and Pansari (2016) aptly noted that customers drawn to a particular company are not only more likely to be actively involved but also more inclined to refer the company to others.

Drawing on the theoretical framework of Winterich et al. (2019), the study posits that inspiration can function as a mediator in the relationship between brand authenticity and brand outcomes, particularly brand advocacy and brand love. Customers become inspired by the authenticity of the brand, spurred by stimuli beyond their immediate selves. This inspiration fuels an approach-oriented mindset, propelling them to champion the brand and/or forge a profound emotional connection with it.

The current study draws on anecdotal evidence to link brand experience, customer inspiration, and pro-environmental intentions. According to various researchers' explanations (Cao et al., 2021; Kasamani et al., 2022; Sah & Mukherjee, 2022; Yang et al., 2024), this study suggests that customer inspiration serves as a crucial mediator within the intricate web of established marketing concepts. For instance, within the context of investigating the influence of augmented reality (AR) applications on brand perceptions through the lens of inspiration, Rauschnabel et. al. (2019) not only suggested the assessment of additional antecedents of these mechanisms that can shape brand perceptions but also highlighted the need for continuous exploration. As a result, the current study suggests that customer inspiration can mediate the effect of brand authenticity on crucial brand outcomes, such as brand advocacy and brand love.

According to SIP theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), people look for cues in their surroundings and form attitudes as a result of the information they gather. So, authenticity cues will translate into inspiration, which means that the customer will be inspired by these cues, and

after processing these information cues, he will be inspired to advocate for the brand and feel passion, intimacy, and love for the brand. Thus, it is hypothesized:

H4: Customer inspiration mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand advocacy.

H5: Customer inspiration mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand love.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Participants and procedures

The aim of the current study was to examine the association between brand authenticity, customer inspiration, and the resulting behavioral outcomes, which include variables such as brand advocacy and brand love. Data was collected from hospitality, apparel, and fashion industry customers, guided by suggestions from prior studies. These industries customers were selected. Because brand authenticity is especially significant in the hospitality, apparel, and fashion industries, where brand is a key factor in customer decision-making when purchasing products with numerous performance-related, aesthetic, and symbolic aspects.

The author conducts this study using a survey approach, which is deemed particularly suited for this sort of investigation. This survey technique is consistent with the research paradigm and objectives. Notably, as indicated by previous research efforts (Huang et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2021), The design of this study was correlational. In this study, the relationship between BA, CI BA and BL was being studied at the same time; therefore, the study was cross-sectional.

A total of 380 questionnaires were distributed, resulting in 307 returned surveys. Following the data processing and accounting for social desirability bias, 261 valid questionnaires were employed in the final data analysis. From the usable data, 177 people (68% of the sample) were identified as male, while 84 people (32% of the population) were identified as female. In terms of age demographics, the 31–40 age group made up a large fraction of the participants, accounting for 82 responses. According to the statistics, the customer has a high level of education, with a considerable proportion (41%) holding a Master's degree. Furthermore, 22% had a bachelor's degree or above, and 23% had an MPhil or higher. In terms of employment status, 36% of respondents were self-employed, 35% were unemployed, and the remaining 28% were employed, according to the statistics. These statistics include information on survey participants' gender distribution, age groups, educational backgrounds, and employment conditions.

3.2. Measures

Utilizing measuring scales created and approved by earlier researchers, this study evaluated the current collection of variables. Each of these variables was evaluated using a five-point Likert scale. To confirm the correctness of the constructs being assessed, three independent procedures for construct validity were used: first, by assessing the factor loading of each individual item; second, by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE); and finally, by conducting a reliability test. These efforts were taken to ensure the robustness and reproducibility of the measurements utilized in the study.

The following are details of these measures:

Brand Authenticity: Brand authenticity was measured by a 15-item scale, which was developed by Morhart et al. (2015). The questionnaire asks the respondents to first specify and select any brand to respond to the survey. Then respondents were asked to respond to the given statements. The sample questions are “Does this brand persist through trends” (continuity), “Does this brand keep its value promise” (credibility), “Does this brand give back to its consumers” (integrity), and “Does this brand connect people with what is really important” (symbolism). The Cronbach alpha reliability of this scale is 0.93 in the current study.

Customer Inspiration: Customer inspiration was measured by a 5-item scale developed by Bottger et al. (2017). The sample questions are “I was inspired to buy something from this brand” and “My interest in buying something from this brand was raised.” The Cronbach alpha reliability of the current study is 0.91.

Brand Advocacy: Price & Arnould (1999) used adapting products as a measure of brand advocacy. Sample items include: “When customers approach me for advice, I suggest this brand” and “This brand is the first brand I recommend to customers.” The Current study result shows Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.90.

Brand Love: Brand love was measured by using the four-item scale from Batra et al. (2012), Wallace et al. (2014), and Karjaluoto et al. (2016). The sample questions are “I give my whole passion to this brand” and “I think this brand makes me feel satisfied.” The Cronbach alpha reliability of current research for brand love is 0.91.

4.0 Results

4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviation values, along with the correlations among all the variables examined in the study. The study's findings revealed that the independent variable, i.e., brand authenticity, had a correlation with a number of other factors. Notably, it was positively correlated with the mediator variable, customer inspiration ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.01$), and the dependent variables, brand advocacy ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) and brand love ($r = 0.66$, $p < 0.01$). Customer inspiration displayed positive correlations with the dependent variables, brand advocacy ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$), and brand love ($r = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$). Certain variables showed noticeable high relationships in our correlation study. For example, we found strong connections between brand advocacy and brand love ($r = 0.77$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, a significant link was discovered between brand authenticity and customer inspiration ($r = 0.74$, $p < 0.01$), as well as between customer inspiration and brand advocacy ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 1. Correlation Analysis Result

Sr #		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Brand Authenticity	3.75	0.94	1			
2	Customer Inspiration	3.71	0.94	.74**	1		
3	Brand Advocacy	3.68	1.02	.65**	.72	1	
4	Brand Love	3.66	1.00	.66**	.67**	.77**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The results of the data analysis through Smart PLS confirm the reliability and validity of the study variables. Strong factor loadings were seen for all constructions, exceeding the suggested threshold. This indicates that the indicators were able to sufficiently capture the latent structures. In addition, the AVE values were higher than the cutoff, demonstrating the strong convergence of the indicators inside each construct. Finally, the alpha values demonstrated exceptional internal consistency, showing that the indicators accurately measured the constructs. Factor loadings assess the degree of correlation between each indicator and its associated latent variable. All factor loadings in this investigation were higher than the suggested cutoff point of 0.50, demonstrating a strong correlation between the indicators and the corresponding constructs. For example, BA1 (0.748), BA3 (0.765), and BA13 (0.863) showed high factor loadings in the brand advocacy construct, indicating that they have a significant role in measuring brand advocacy.

The acronym AVE stands for average variance that the indicators extracted with regard to their latent constructs. The AVE values for all research variables were higher than the suggested criterion of 0.50, demonstrating convergent validity. For instance, brand authenticity had an AVE value of 0.680, meaning that its indicators explained almost 68% of the variance in this construct. In line with this, brand advocacy (0.833) and brand love (0.79) both displayed high AVE values, demonstrating strong convergence of the corresponding metrics.

Cronbach's alpha assesses a construct's internal consistency and dependability by examining the correlations between its variables. All research constructs demonstrated strong internal consistency, with values greater than the alpha criteria of 0.70. Brand authenticity (0.916), consumer inspiration (0.93), brand love (0.94), and brand advocacy (0.90) all demonstrated reliable and consistent measuring models.

Constructs indicators	and	Convergent validity and internal consistency			
		factor loading	AVE	CR	Alpha
Brand authenticity			0.680	0.96	0.916
BA1		0.748			
BA2		0.562			
BA3		0.765			
BA4		0.829			
BA5		0.811			
BA6		0.887			
BA7		0.895			
BA8		0.88			
BA9		0.886			
BA10		0.892			
BA11		0.886			
BA12		0.826			
BA13		0.863			
BA14		0.827			
BA15		0.808			
Customer inspiration			0.737	0.93	0.91
CI1		0.859			
CI2		0.878			
CI3		0.868			
CI4		0.887			
CI5		0.799			
Brand advocacy			0.833	0.93	0.90
BAD1		0.901			
BAD2		0.91			
BAD3		0.926			
Brand love			0.790	0.94	0.91

BL1	0.867
BL2	0.9
BL3	0.907
BL4	0.882

Understanding the links between multiple conceptions is critical for marketers and researchers when studying consumer behavior and brand-related characteristics. This study investigates the relationship between brand authenticity, customer inspiration, brand advocacy, and brand love. The data analysis included an assessment of discriminant validity using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. The HTMT ratio contrasts the correlations between constructs (heterotraits) with the average correlations within constructs (monotraits). A HTMT ratio close to one suggests a lack of discriminant validity. To assess discriminant validity, HTMT ratios were compared to the acceptable threshold of 0.85. The HTMT ratios for the research variables were calculated to determine the discriminant validity between constructs. The results are provided below.

Table 3: Discriminant validity by Heterotrait-monotrait ration (HTMT)

	BA	BAD	BL
Brand authenticity			
Brand advocacy	0.7		
Brand love	0.677	0.849	
Cconsumers Inspiration	0.788	0.798	0.738

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

The data analysis involved examining the significance of the coefficients using t-values, p-values, and confidence intervals. The t-values assess the magnitude of the coefficients in relation to their standard errors, while the p-values indicate the statistical significance of the coefficients. Additionally, the confidence intervals provide a range within which the true population parameter is likely to fall. A coefficient is considered significant if its t-value exceeds the critical value, the p-value is below the significance threshold (usually 0.05), and the confidence interval does not include zero.

The table presents the effect sizes, standard errors, t-values, p-values, and confidence intervals for the coefficients. The following observations can be made based on the results: Brand authenticity has a significant positive effect on brand advocacy (effect size = 0.198, t-value = 2.983, p-value = 0.001). Brand authenticity also shows a significant positive influence on brand love (effect size = 0.215, t-value = 2.966, p-value = 0.002). Moreover, the effect of brand

authenticity on customer inspiration is also significant and positive (effect size = 0.693, t-value = 13.371, p-value < 0.001). Customer inspiration significantly impacts brand advocacy positively (effect size = 0.319, t-value = 3.815, p-value < 0.001). However, the effect of customer inspiration on brand love is also significant, but with a smaller effect size (effect size = 0.148, t-value = 1.712, p-value = 0.044).

The data analysis involved assessing the significance of coefficients using t-values, p-values, and confidence intervals. T-values indicate the magnitude of the coefficients relative to their standard errors, while p-values determine the statistical significance of the coefficients. Additionally, confidence intervals provide a range within which the true population parameter is likely to fall. Coefficients are considered significant if their t-values exceed the critical value, their p-values are below the significance threshold (usually 0.05), and their confidence intervals do not include zero. The table presents the effect sizes, standard errors (SE), t-values, p-values, and confidence intervals for the coefficients. The following observations can be made based on the results: The relationship between brand authenticity and customer inspiration has a significant impact on brand love (effect size = 0.103, t-value = 1.688, p-value = 0.046). Additionally, brand authenticity influences customer inspiration, which subsequently impacts brand advocacy (effect size = 0.221, t-value = 3.7, p-value < 0.001).

Table 4: Direct effect results

	Effect size	Standard error	T values	P values	5.00%	95.00%
Brand authenticity ->						
Brand advocacy	0.198	0.066	2.983	0.001	0.096	0.315
Brand authenticity ->						
Brand love	0.215	0.072	2.966	0.002	0.104	0.342
Brand authenticity ->						
Customer inspiration	0.693	0.052	13.371	0	0.6	0.77
Customer inspiration ->						
Brand advocacy	0.319	0.084	3.815	0	0.185	0.458
Customer inspiration ->						
Brand love	0.148	0.086	1.712	0.044	0.009	0.288

Table 1: Indirect effect

	Effect size	SE	T value	P values	5%	95%
Brand authenticity -> Customer inspiration -> Brand love	0.103	0.061	1.688	0.046	0.006	0.204
Brand authenticity -> Customer inspiration -> Brand advocacy	0.221	0.06	3.7	0.000	0.126	0.323

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary aim of our study was to investigate the impact of brand authenticity on brand outcomes, specifically brand advocacy and brand love, mediated by customer inspiration. The study, with a particular emphasis on the association between brand authenticity and brand advocacy, produced notable and confirmatory results. The findings revealed a significant and positive influence of brand authenticity on brand advocacy. This suggests that when consumers perceive a brand as more authentic, they are more likely to become advocates for that brand. Furthermore, as indicated by earlier studies (Safeer et al., 2021), the positive and noticeable connection between brand authenticity and brand love matches quietly with the larger landscape of research. This relationship lends credence to the notion that real brands elicit powerful emotions and attachment in consumers, earning them a particular place in their hearts. Brand authenticity indicates a good and robust engagement with customer inspiration, further emphasizing its significance. This discovery supports previous empirical discoveries and adds to the body of knowledge (Das et al., 2022). This alignment emphasizes the need for brands to be honest in order to inspire and motivate people in a meaningful and long-lasting way.

Research shows that customer motivation has a significant and beneficial impact on brand advocacy. According to Kumar and Pansari (2016), inspired customers are more likely to actively support and promote the company. This emotional connection drives people to advocate for, protect, and confront adversaries. Inspiration motivates people to act, building loyalty and a connection to the brand (Kasamani et al., 2022). Further research shows that consumer inspiration is closely related to the intention to advocate. In essence, inspired customers actively promote the brand, underscoring the substantial impact of inspiration on brand advocacy. Customers who believe they are affiliated with a prominent brand feel better about themselves and their social position. A brand's inspiring component can also lead to sentiments of love. The finding that status and inspiration may lead to brand love supports earlier studies. According to Huang and Liu's (2021) research, humanized inspiration can lead to brand love. Humanized inspiration comes when a brand is perceived to be both relevant and aspirational. The influential indirect effect between brand authenticity and brand advocacy, mediated through customer inspiration, is strikingly significant. Significantly strong indirect relationships between brand authenticity and brand love

emerge, mediated via customer inspiration.

Managerial Implications

The study highlights the importance of brand authenticity in shaping consumer outcomes and cultivating enduring relationships with customers. It emphasizes the strategic importance of integrating authenticity into branding initiatives, focusing on creating and communicating authentic brand narratives. Authenticity influences consumer perceptions and contributes to long-term customer loyalty. The study emphasizes the role of consumer inspiration in marketing dynamics, urging managers to understand and leverage elements that inspire and resonate with their target audience. This allows for campaigns that go beyond traditional marketing approaches and tap into emotional and inspirational aspects that drive consumer engagement. The positive correlation between consumer inspiration and enhanced customer engagement and loyalty underscores the practical implications for marketing strategies. Authenticity should be viewed as a tangible and influential component that elevates consumer experiences and contributes to the success of marketing initiatives.

The study emphasizes the importance of understanding the complex relationship between customer inspiration and brand outcomes. It suggests that while authentic brands can motivate consumers, it doesn't always lead to positive brand outcomes. It calls for a more tailored approach, acknowledging that consumer motivation and inspiration are multifaceted and influenced by various factors. Marketing executives should focus on understanding the diverse interests and triggers of their target audience to craft more effective marketing plans. This may involve conducting market research or leveraging data analytics to understand individual preferences. The study also emphasizes that authenticity alone may not guarantee positive brand outcomes. Other factors, such as aligning brand values with consumer values, effective communication strategies, and the overall customer experience, also play crucial roles in shaping brand perceptions.

The study emphasizes the importance of brand authenticity in driving long-term brand success. It warns against a one-size-fits-all approach and highlights the complexity of consumer responses. The research also highlights the relationship between inspiration, brand pride, and future brand implications. Effective marketing goes beyond immediate customer motivation and cultivates a sense of pride in the brand, leading to increased customer loyalty and advocacy. This holistic approach allows marketing managers to create inclusive campaigns that appeal to diverse consumer preferences, fostering enduring relationships and sustained brand growth.

Limitations and Future Directions of the Study

The study explores the potential of emerging economies to develop brand authenticity to enhance consumer loyalty. However, it acknowledges its limitations and suggests areas for further investigation. The study should identify unknown elements contributing to brand authenticity perception, particularly in emerging markets. This knowledge could be crucial for marketers to establish and maintain authentic brand connections. The study should also explore the relationship between brand authenticity and critical brand management components like brand loyalty, brand equity, and engagement. Understanding how these elements interact can provide a competitive edge in the market and aid in devising effective brand management strategies. The study should

also examine the connection between brand authenticity and customer advocacy, love, and evangelism. Additionally, the study should explore organizational factors like advertising strategies and market size, which can guide marketers in adapting promotional efforts to resonate with their target audience.

One significant downside of this study is its limited data collection scope, which concentrated primarily on Pakistan, limiting its generalizability. A future study should broaden the geographical reach of the proposed model by testing it in various countries. Notably, our analysis was limited to mobile brands. Future study into additional service areas, such as grooming and reflexology, is encouraged. These sectors have various product attributes and include physical interactions, which might lead to new findings that our investigation missed. Furthermore, our study did not evaluate the influence of technological advancements. Future studies might focus on the role of technology in the market. Understanding customer behavior may be aided by digital personal reputation and feedback systems, online consumer interaction, machine learning, social media, and the sharing economy. As a consequence, these data may help marketers better plan for customer consumption behaviors and build long-term loyalty.

Conclusion

The current study offers useful insights into the extremely demanding literature on consumer brand relationships. In the light of social information-processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), this research demonstrates the power of each determinant towards brand authenticity, as well as the strength of each towards behavioral consequences. When consumers interact with authentic brands, they typically experience inspiration, which leads to greater brand advocacy and a greater feeling of love. These findings have important implications for marketers that want to use authenticity to promote customer engagement. They argue that companies should prioritize authenticity in order to cultivate loyal and engaged customers.

Abdul Aleem Bhatti: Problem Identification and Model Development,

Fauzia Syed: Supervision and Drafting

Asif Iqbal: Literature search, Methodology,

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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