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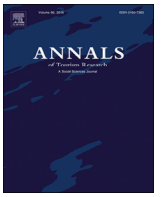

A review of authenticity research in tourism: Launching the Annals of Tourism Research Curated Collection on authenticity

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ABSTRACT

Authenticity is one of the oldest and most debated concepts in tourism studies. The last major review of authenticity was published in 1999 in this journal. This review aims to contextualize the developments since that review within the broader trends of 42 years of authenticity research (1979–2020). Working with a sample of 458 research articles, multiple methods of systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis (including descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and keyword co-frequency analysis) are applied. From the findings produced, a number of challenges and opportunities are identified that speak to the viability of future authenticity research in the field. More broadly, this review also serves to launch the Annals of Tourism Research Curated Collection on authenticity.

Introduction

Authenticity is one of the oldest and most debated concepts in tourism research. Like many of our conceptual foundations, the earliest authenticity research was informed by theories and perspectives that came from outside the field, most notably, history (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]), sociology (Cohen, 1988; MacCannell, 1973), and anthropology (Bruner, 1994). How much has our understanding of authenticity changed in the intervening decades? The last systematic literature review was published in this journal over 20 years ago (Wang, 1999). Not only does Wang (1999) offer a comprehensive review of the authenticity research to that point in time, he also conceptualizes the various approaches to its study and proposes an addition to the canon: existential authenticity. This opened a floodgate of research, followed by more recent developments in performative, phenomenological, and psychoanalytic approaches, as well as attention to authentication processes and alienation. Thus, we sit at an important time to reflect on the field and to contextualize the most recent years of scholarship within its first decades.

The overarching aim of this review is to identify research trajectories in authenticity research within tourism studies over the past 42 years. While authenticity is a concept stretching across disciplines, this review focuses on tourism scholarship and begins with the first research article published on this concept in a tourism-focused journal, which occurred in 1979. This review identifies and examines the major topics of authenticity research, specifically how these emerged and evolved over time. To do this, techniques of systematic literature review and bibliometric analysis are applied.

According to Linnenluecke, Marrone, and Singh (2020), it becomes increasing difficult for academics to "keep track of new developments [in their field] due to the sheer amount of information and associated time requirements for assessing and evaluating," and a systematic literature review can help overcome these challenges by identifying trends and gaps in knowledge (p. 177). Thus, the PRISMA method (Page et al., 2021) for a transparent and repeatable publication collection process was employed to collect a representative sample of the research articles on authenticity published in tourism journals. The sample

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($N = 458$) was then analyzed using a mixed method approach of descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and keyword analysis. These methods offer insights about the evolution of the field, which are followed by a discussion of challenges and opportunities for future authenticity research.

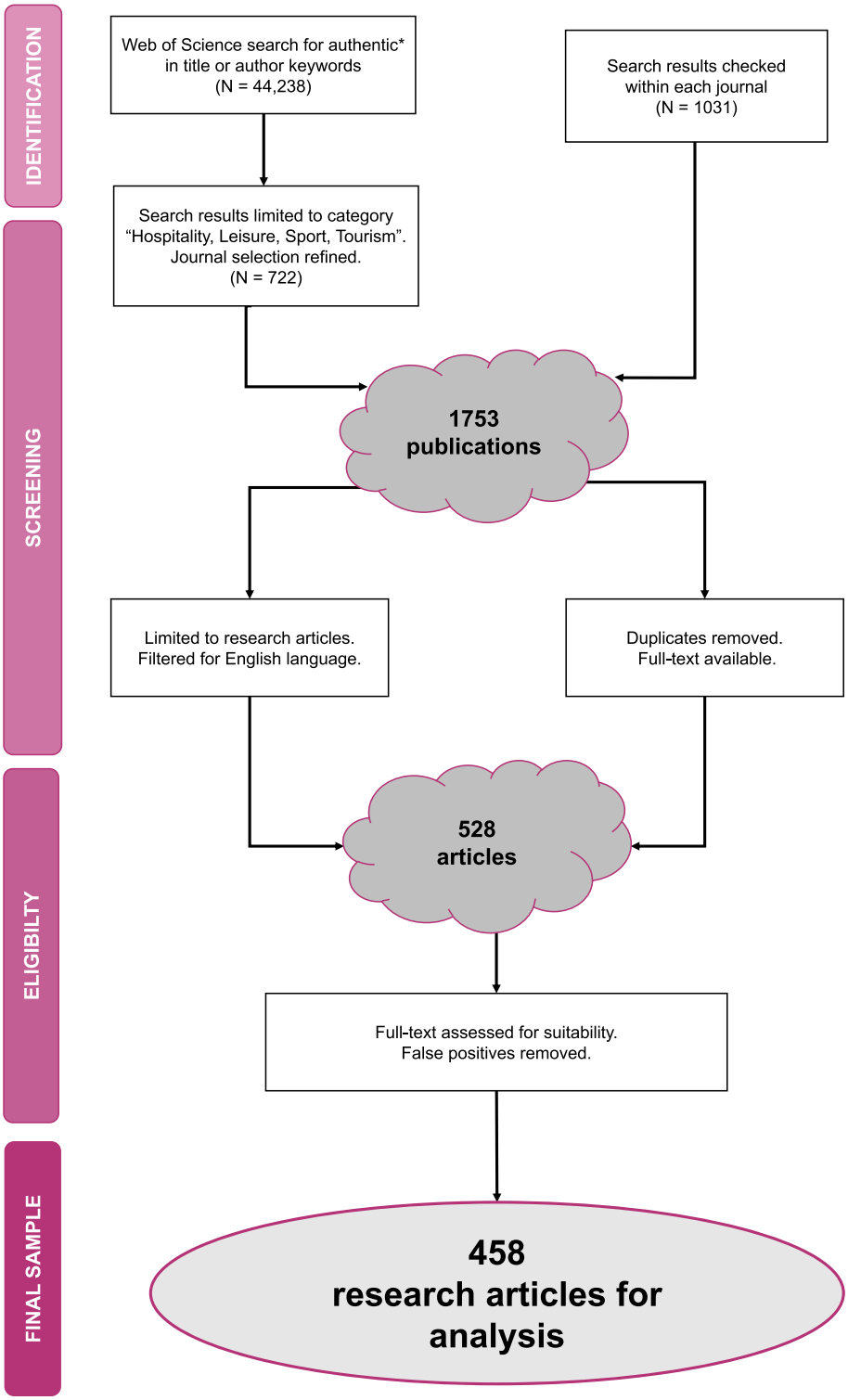

Fig. 1. Adapted PRISMA sampling process.

Methodology and results

A systematic literature review aims to collect academic publication data using a carefully designed, transparent, repeatable process and to evaluate that sample against predetermined criteria (Jiang, Ritchie, & Benckendorff, 2019; Linnenluecke et al., 2020). As a result, many employ the PRISMA technique (Page et al., 2021), which is a stepwise process of collecting and refining publication data for (meta-)analysis. While this technique was developed within the medical and health sciences, it has been increasingly adapted to social sciences and tourism studies reviews, specifically (see Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, & Arcodia, 2017).

Bibliometric analysis is comprised of a diverse set of tools developed to analyze how academic literature evolves over a specific period of time (Jiang et al., 2019; Zupic & Čater, 2015). Bibliometric techniques can be evaluative or relational. Evaluative techniques are used to measure impact of specific publications, and relational techniques assess relationships and trends within a field (Jiang et al., 2019). Despite the long history of bibliometric analyses (see Kessler, 1963), it has been the development of online databases and software packages that have stretched their analytical capabilities and complementarity to systematic literature review methods (see Jiang et al., 2019; Linnenluecke et al., 2020; Zupic & Čater, 2015).

For this review, Web of Science (2021) was chosen due to its extensive resources and pervasive usage as a research tool. It is an online resource that maintains multiple academic databases, providing comprehensive reference data. Working from data obtained from Web of Science, this review employed a mixed method approach in which the qualitative technique of thematic analysis was combined with descriptive statistics and bibliometric keyword co-frequency analysis. Thematic analysis was used to understand overall trends in the theoretical approaches to authenticity, as well as the methods by which it has been investigated. Thematic analysis was also integrated into keyword co-frequency analysis. This was conducted for the entire data set, as well as specific time series, in order to observe major research trends across the full sample and how topics emerged and evolved over time.

Sample collection

In January 2021, a Web of Science search was conducted using the Boolean operators: TITLE = AUTHENTIC* OR AUTHOR KEYWORDS = AUTHENTIC*. Accordingly, a version of authentic* was required to appear in either the publication title or the author keywords only. "Authentic*" was chosen to capture any iteration of the terms (in)authentic, authenticity, authentication, and so on. Due to the common usage of authentic*, the term often appears colloquially throughout research papers, thus requiring that the search criteria be limited to the title or the keywords in order to identify publications for which authenticity is a central concept.

Following a PRISMA approach, (Fig. 1), the first step of the Web of Science search generated 44,238 results demonstrating the wide usage of the term across disciplines. Because this review is specifically focused on the field of tourism, the results category of "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, Tourism" was selected. Additionally, the journal selection was refined to those with an emphasis on tourism content, rather than leisure, sport, and recreation. This was further limited to journals containing five or more publications that met the search criteria, as journals with fewer than five publications were also less tourism focused.

This produced 722 results within the following journals: *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, *Current Issues in Tourism*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Travel Research*, *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, *Tourist Studies*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *Tourism Geographies*, *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *Tourism Recreation Research*, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, *Tourism Culture & Communication*, *European Journal of Tourism Research*, *International Journal of Tourism Cities*.

However, upon browsing the sample, it was discovered that some journals' full catalogue had not been searched due to the availability of only recent volumes on Web of Science. For example, *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, for which authenticity is a popular topic, only generated results from 2015 onward, despite the journal dating to 2006. To confirm the representativeness of the sample, the search criteria were also deployed on each of the selected journals' webpages. This generated 309 additional publications.

Next, the sample was screened for duplicates and for research articles only, in English, with full-text availability. This resulted in 528 articles, which were then assessed for suitability. The sample was further reduced to 458 papers when some false positives were discovered, and research notes, commentaries, and introductions to special issues had not been excluded by previous filters. It is important to note that the quality of the articles was not part of the assessment for inclusion.

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
• Boolean operators: Title (TI) = authentic* OR Author Keywords (AK) = authentic*	• Non-English language
• Web of Science Category: Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism	• Papers published in non-tourism journals
• Published before 2021	• Research notes, commentaries, special issue introductions, books, etc…
• English language	• False positives: authenticity not a central concept or major variable of the study
• Full-text availability	

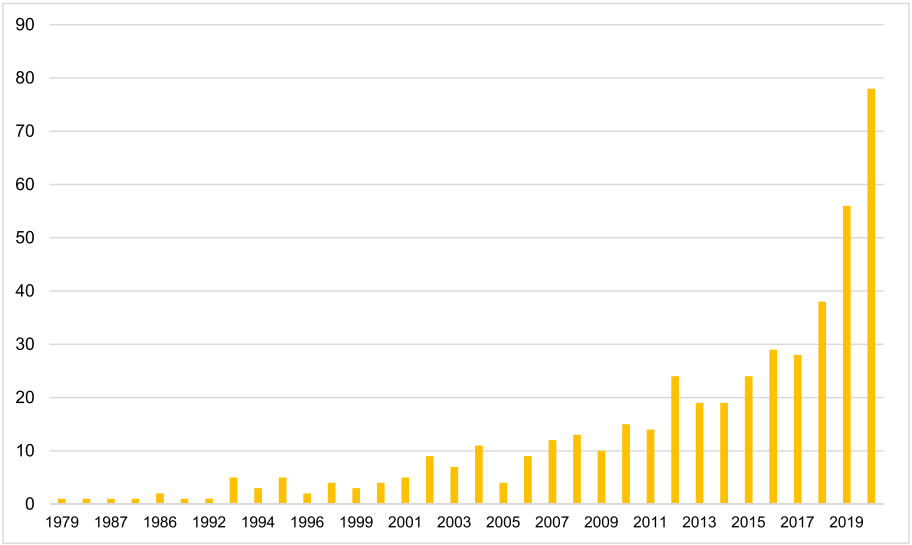

Fig. 2. Authenticity research articles published in tourism journals (1979–2020).

Sample characteristics

When examining the full sample of 458 papers, some overall characteristics can be observed. The earliest publication dates from 1979, with the first two decades of research representing relatively slower growth compared to the most recent years (Fig. 2). In the first 22 years, 1979–2000, only 7.4% of research articles were published ($n = 34$). In the following 10 years, 2001–2010, 20.7% were published ($n = 95$), and a similar percentage of 21.8% were published in the five-year period of 2011–2015 ($n = 100$). Notably, 50% of the sample derives from the most recent five-year period of 2016–2020 ($n = 229$). The largest number of papers have been published in *Annals of Tourism Research* (20.3%, $n = 93$), followed by *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* (9.2%, $n = 42$), *Tourism Management* (9%, $n = 41$), and *Journal of Heritage Tourism* (6.7%, $n = 39$) (Fig. 3).

While these insights provide a snapshot of the growth in interest in authenticity and concentration of publications, further analysis was required to understand the conceptual development over time. Indeed, the objectives of this review are to examine the conceptual development of authenticity in the field with specific interests in highlighting the various trajectories of its evolution. As a result, thematic analysis and bibliometric analysis were employed.

Coding and analysis

To begin the thematic analysis, information for the 458 research articles were imported to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, including reference details, keywords, abstract, and link to full-text. There they were coded according to the rationale for using the concept of authenticity, the theoretical approach to authenticity, and the study's methodology (Fig. 4). The majority (60.7%) are less focused on developing the concept of authenticity and more so on understanding its relationship to other variables under investigation. These articles were coded as "X." The minority of articles (39.3%) indicate that building conceptual understanding of authenticity is a primary goal, and these were coded as either CB-E to denote empirical studies or CB-C to indicate conceptual papers.

Next, the theoretical approaches to authenticity were coded: objective (Ob), constructive (Con), postmodern (Pomo), existential (Ex), performative (Per), phenomenological (Phen), and psychoanalytic (Psy). The theoretical approach codes were derived from open and axial coding. Using open coding, the theoretical approaches to authenticity were coded based on the information available in the articles. It is worth noting that most articles engaged more than one approach to authenticity. While an effort was made to capture all approaches to authenticity, in some cases an approach was not explicitly stated and had to be inferred from the context. For example, several papers spoke of an interest in tourists' perceptions of authenticity but did not specifically refer to a theoretical approach that was being used to investigate authenticity. As a result, most of these articles were coded as "constructive." Further, some singular approaches were subsumed under more prominent approaches to which they were related. For instance, modernist and essentialist approaches to authenticity were each mentioned one time and so were incorporated into the broader objectivist approach. This latter step applied axial coding, which involves drawing together sub-categories.

Finally, the empirical articles (CB-E and X) were coded for methodology: qualitative (Ql), quantitative (Qn), mixed method (M). Purely conceptual papers (C) were excluded from this step. Coding was verified by two volunteers: academic researchers

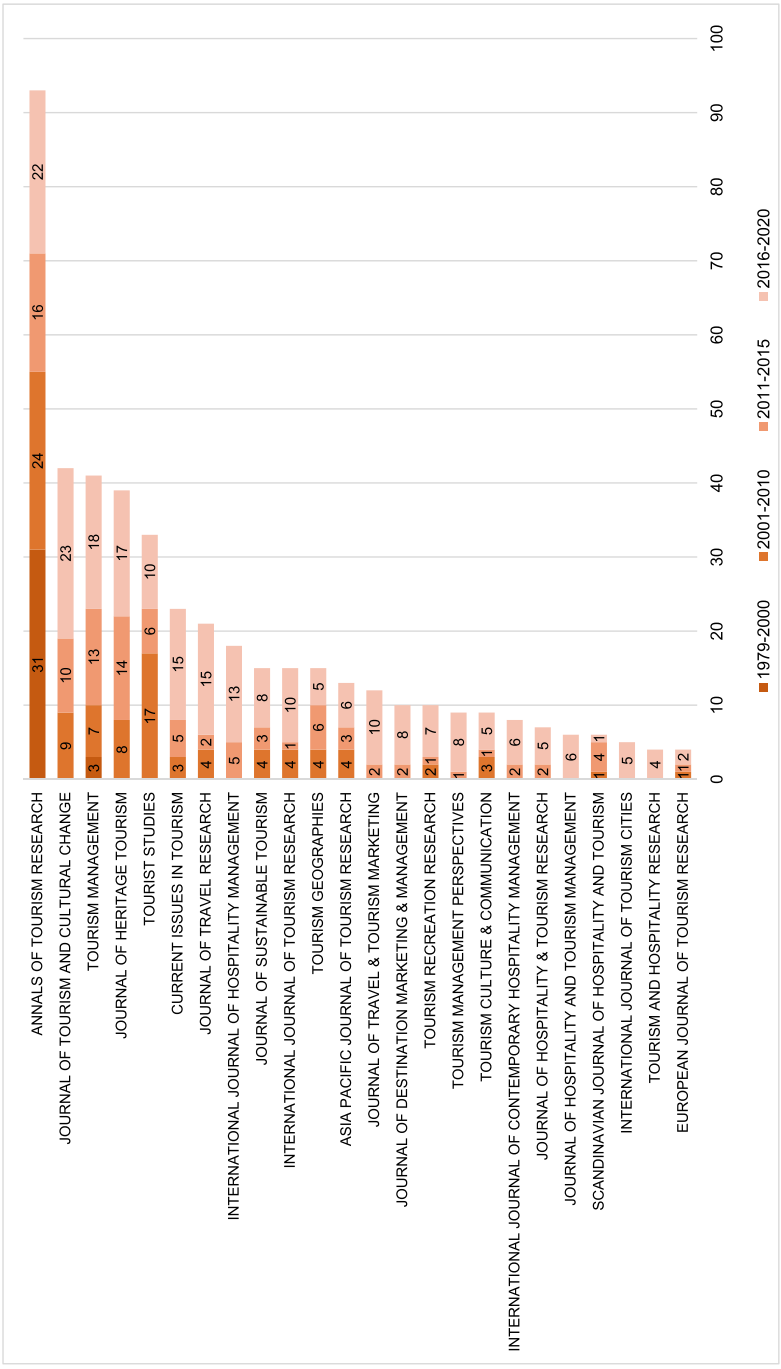

Fig. 3. Authenticity research articles published within each journal over time.

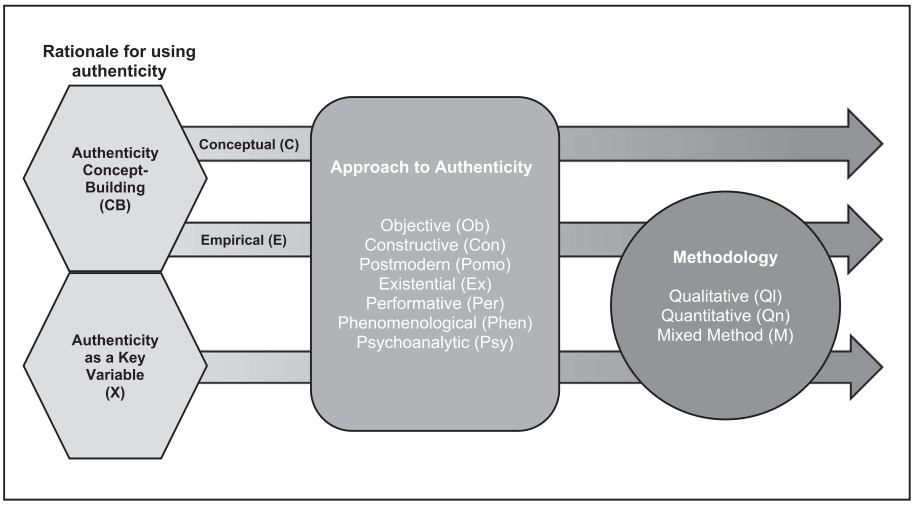

Fig. 4. Theoretical and methodological coding process.

with an interest in authenticity who each coded 15 randomly selected papers. To offer an illustration, coding resulted in the following types of constructions:

CB-C: Ex, Per =	Authenticity concept-building paper, conceptually developed using existential and performative approaches
CB-E: Pomo (Ql) =	Authenticity concept-building paper, empirically developed using a postmodern approach and investigated through qualitative methods
X: Ob, Con (Qn) =	Authenticity as a key variable in another relationship, using objective and constructive approaches and investigated using quantitative methods

The majority of the sample (60.7%) uses authenticity as a key variable in another relationship under study, so that 39.3% of the sample engages with authenticity in an explicit attempt to build understanding of the concept. While this review could have focused exclusively on the concept-building papers, this would have overlooked the many insights that can be gleaned from the relationship of authenticity to other factors. Importantly, all included articles met the criteria of listing authentic* in either the title or author keywords. Further, there has been considerable research in recent years arguing that authenticity is a relational

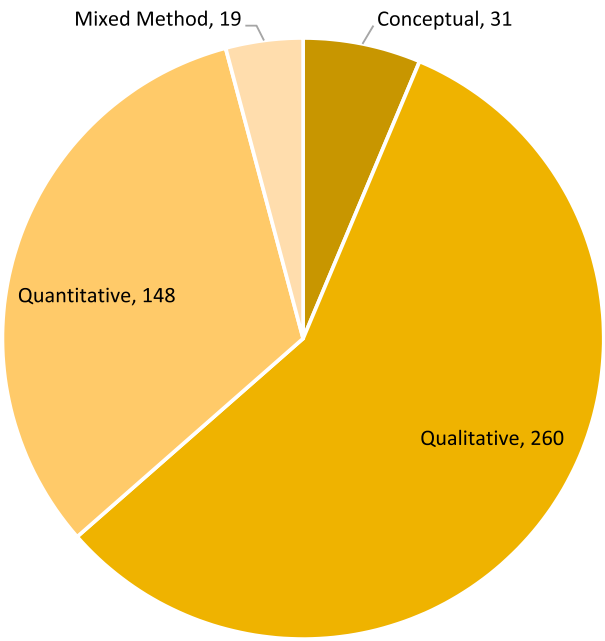

Fig. 5. Methodologies employed in authenticity research ($N = 458$).

Table 1
Methodologies used in authenticity research over time.

Methodology	1979–2000		2001–2010		2011–2015		2016–2020	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Conceptual	6	*17.6*	9	*9.5*	8	*8*	8	*3.5*
Qualitative	21	*61.8*	70	*73.7*	63	*63*	106	*46.3*
Quantitative	6	*17.6*	13	*13.7*	25	*25*	104	*45.4*
Mixed method	1	*2.9*	3	*3.2*	4	*4*	11	*4.8*
Total *(% of full sample, N = 458)*	34	*7.4*	95	*20.7*	100	*21.8*	229	*50*

concept (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012a; Zhang and Yin, 2020). As such, it was decided to examine both the concept-building and authenticity as a key variable research articles together.

Methodologically, qualitative approaches are most prominent and used in 56.8% of articles (Fig. 5). It is particularly interesting to trace how this changed over time (Table 1). Quantitative methodologies are a fairly small portion of the authenticity research until 2011, when it grows to 25% of the 2011–2015 time series and 45.4% of the 2016–2020 time series. The proportion of mixed method papers are quite small across the sample over time, while conceptual papers appear to be declining.

The most prominent approach to authenticity is constructive, which is not surprising as it represents the most flexible usage (Fig. 6). It is used in 85% of the articles ($n = 390$). It is important to note that it is common for articles to use more than one approach, and this is illustrated in Fig. 7, which shows both the frequency of each approach used in the sample as well as the combinations of approaches. These are also delineated in Tables 2 and 3, with bold font used to highlight the approach combinations that appear more frequently. It is particularly noteworthy that the papers using authenticity as a key variable in the study of another relationship are especially reliant on constructive approach (Table 3), while the papers more interested in concept building exhibit a much greater diversity of approach combinations (Table 2). The development of each of the theoretical approaches over time is discussed in more depth in the findings section (see Theoretical approaches).

While this coding and analysis yielded considerable insights in terms of theoretical engagement with authenticity and how it has been investigated in tourism studies, further analysis was required to isolate the themes through which authenticity has been studied and how this has changed over time. To do this, keyword analysis was employed.

Keyword co-frequency analysis

This review used relational techniques of bibliometric analysis to uncover relationships, patterns, and trends in the field (see Cobo, López-Herrera, Herrera-Viedma, & Herrera, 2011). Specifically, keyword co-frequency analysis is a type of content analysis performed to gain insight into the structure of the field and how it has changed over time. This was performed with Textometrica

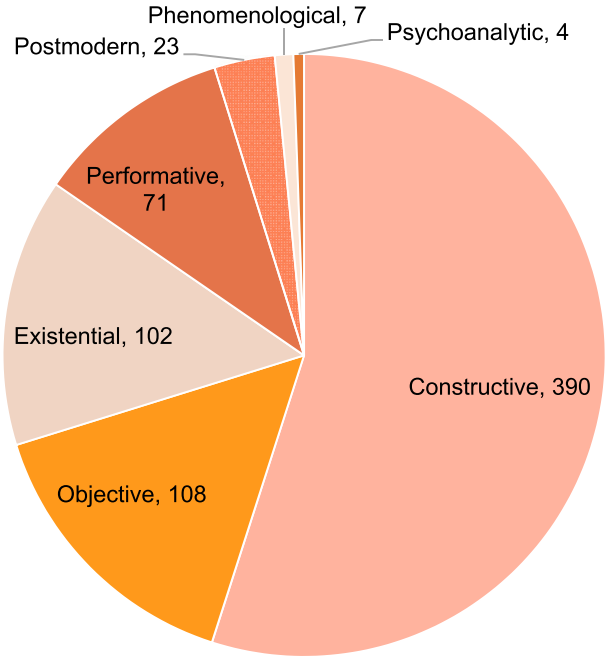

Fig. 6. Frequency of theoretical approaches to authenticity in the sample (N = 458). *(Note: Many articles use more than one approach.)*

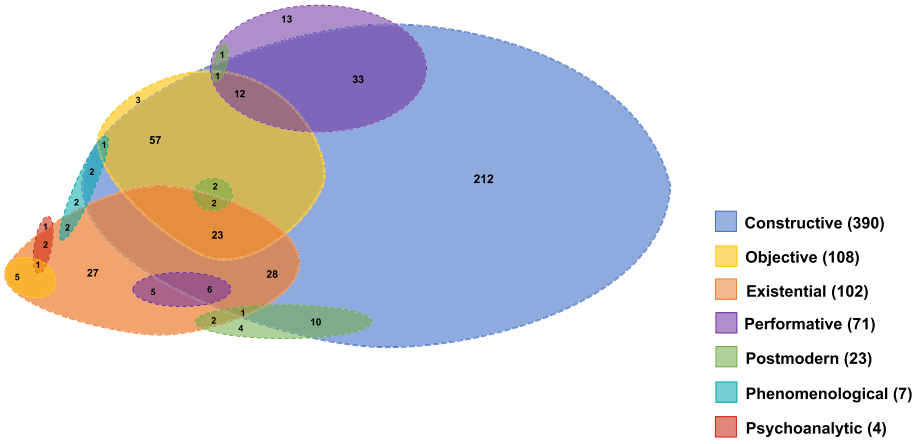

Fig. 7. Relationality of approaches to authenticity used in sample.

Table 2
Theoretical and methodological coding results for authenticity concept-building (CB) articles ($n = 180$).

Authenticity concept-building (CB)	*Conceptual (C)*	Con	2
		Con, Ex	**5**
		Con, Per	3
		Con, Pomo	1
		Ex	**7**
		Ex, Phen	1
		Ex, Psy	2
		Ob	1
		Ob, Con	3
		Ob, Con, Ex	1
		Ob, Con, Ex, Pomo	1
		Ob, Con, Per	2
		Per	1
		Pomo	1
	Empirical (E)	Con (M)	3
		Con (Ql)	**22**
		Con (Qn)	**8**
		Con, Ex (Ql)	**6**
		Con, Ex (Qn)	4
		Con, Ex, Per (Ql)	3
		Con, Ex, Pomo (Qn)	1
		Con, Per (M)	1
		Con, Per (Ql)	**9**
		Con, Per (Qn)	1
		Con, Pomo (Ql)	3
		Con, Pomo (Qn)	1
		Ex (Ql)	**11**
		Ex (Qn)	4
		Ex, Per (Ql)	2
		Ex, Phen (Ql)	1
		Ex, Pomo (Ql)	2
		Ob, Con (M)	2
		Ob, Con (Ql)	**19**
		Ob, Con (Qn)	**13**
		Ob, Con, Ex (Ql)	**8**
		Ob, Con, Ex (Qn)	**5**
		Ob, Con, Ex, Pomo (Qn)	1
		Ob, Con, Per (Ql)	3
		Ob, Con, Per (Qn)	1
		Ob, Con, Phen (Ql)	1
		Ob, Con, Pomo (Ql)	1
		Ob, Ex (Ql)	1
		Ob, Ex (Qn)	3
		Ob, Ex, Psy (Ql)	1
		Per (Ql)	3
		Per (Qn)	2
		Per, Pomo (Ql)	1
		Pomo (Ql)	1
		Psy (Ql)	1

Table 3
Theoretical and methodological coding results for authenticity as a key variable (X) articles ($n = 278$).

Authenticity as a key variable (X)	**Con (M)**	**12**
	Con (Ql)	**83**
	Con (Qn)	**82**
	Con, Ex (M)	1
	Con, Ex (Ql)	**6**
	Con, Ex (Qn)	**6**
	Con, Ex, Per (Ql)	3
	Con, Per (Ql)	**17**
	Con, Per (Qn)	2
	Con, Phen (Ql)	2
	Con, Pomo (Ql)	**5**
	Ex (Ql)	3
	Ex (Qn)	2
	Ex, Per (Ql)	3
	Ob (Ql)	1
	Ob (Qn)	1
	Ob, Con (Ql)	**16**
	Ob, Con (Qn)	4
	Ob, Con, Ex (Ql)	4
	Ob, Con, Ex (Qn)	**5**
	Ob, Con, Per (Ql)	**5**
	Ob, Con, Per (Qn)	1
	Ob, Con, Pomo (Ql)	1
	Ob, Con, Pomo, Per (Ql)	1
	Ob, Ex (Qn)	1
	Per (Ql)	**7**
	Per, Ex (Ql)	1
	Phen (Ql)	2
	Pomo (Ql)	2

online software, which is an open access online tool that analyzes co-occurrences of words within discrete textblocks using connected concept analysis (Lindgren & Palm, 2011). Textometrica employs min-max normalization techniques to create network maps of a textual corpus (see Shalabi, Shaaban, & Kasasbeh, 2006).

As a form of content analysis, Textometrica enhances qualitative approaches to large textual corpuses by acting as a compass pointing the researcher back to the text for subsequent review and analysis. In this way, it is a part of an iterative process of reviewing the textual corpus, analyzing, returning to the text for concept formation, re-analysis, further review, and so on (see Fig. 8). In comparison to content analysis based on word co-occurrence frequency alone, Textometica's reiterative process encourages qualitative engagement with the text towards concept building and mapping of concept relationships (Fellenor et al., 2018). Each co-occurrence in the Textometrica map "represents qualitative concepts that the researcher has arrived at via their interpretive coding of textual elements" (Fellenor et al., 2018, p. 343). This enables an interpretivist approach, actively situating the researcher as the driver of the analysis and concept-building.

Analysis began by collecting the keywords for each of the 458 research articles of the sample and reading through them for familiarity. This was followed by a process of cleaning keywords for uniformity of spelling, consistency of usage, and the removal of common denominator terms, such as authentic, authenticity, and authentication, as this was a key search criteria and necessary

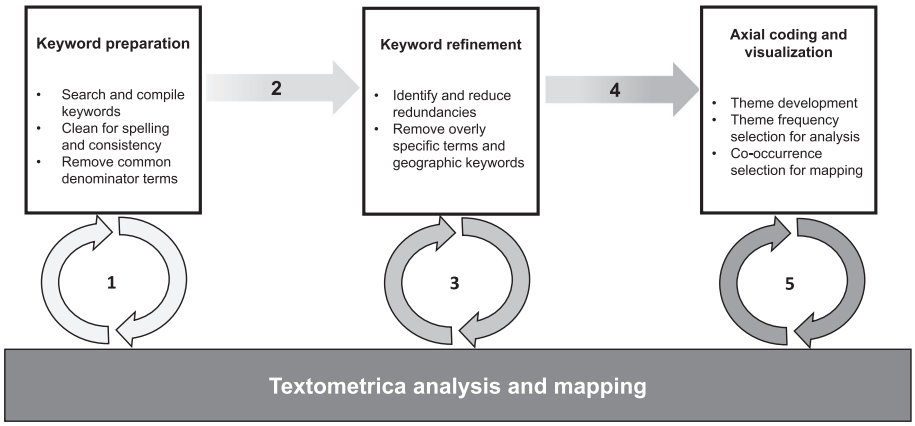

Fig. 8. Keyword analysis process.

commonality. Similarly, tourism, tourist, travel, visitor, and so on, were removed as all articles came from tourism journals (Step 1 in Fig. 8). There was also effort to make terms consistent. For example, memory, memories, and memory-making became *Memorable*. Relatedly, terms that appear together denoting a single concept were edited to reduce obvious co-occurrences, such as social media (*SocialMedia*) and sharing economy (*SharingEconomy*).

Textometrica supported an iterative process of assessing the co-occurrences, returning to the textual corpus to develop concepts, and (re-)running the analysis. In this process, efforts were made to further focus the concepts and draw out the strongest co-occurrences (Step 3, Fig. 8). This included removing redundancies. For example, when dining was listed with restaurant or local food it was removed as it did not add insight to the terms. Further, tangential information was removed, such as keyword references to the specific geographic locations of the research (e.g., Thailand, Arctic) or cultural group (e.g., Hmong, Maasai).

Next, principles of axial coding were employed (Step 5, Fig. 8). When terms had considerable overlap and were often found together, they were combined into one theme to reduce exaggeration of their co-frequency, which can overshadow the prevalence of other themes. As such, culture and heritage became *CulturalHeritage*. Further, themes were developed to capture rather specific terms that were related but dispersed through the corpus. For example, *MoralEthics* was developed to capture morality, ethics, justice, rights, responsible, and others, which each separately appeared a few times, but when combined appeared 21 times in the sample of 458 articles. Other examples include *EventFestival* developed from events, festivals, concerts, fairs, markets and *SocialInteraction* developed from communitas, family, companions, and intersubjectivity (see Table 5 for more examples).

Co-occurrence visualization

Textometrica allows the researcher to adjust the frequency range included in the analysis (Step 5 of Fig. 8). When analyzing the entire corpus of keywords from 458 articles, the frequency range was limited to 6–138 (min.-max.) across 102 themes. However, the corpus was also divided into four distinct time series to investigate the change of research themes and emerging trends over time. Notably, authenticity research has demonstrated a clear acceleration from the year 2000. Due to the variable size of each time series, the frequency ranges were adjusted to reflect this exponential growth (Table 4).

The maps Textometrica produces use nodes and edges to represent co-frequency relationships. The size of the node indicates frequency of occurrence in the textual corpus, with larger diameters representing higher frequency, and the thickness of the edge connecting two nodes denotes the strength of their co-occurrence. These visual cues were used as a compass for returning to, refining the themes, and then navigating the sample for the discussion of the findings. Exploring the time series maps was useful for observing when concepts appear as nodes, suggesting emergence, and as they grow in size or rhizomatically over time, or even disappear. It is important to note that the maps do not visualize every connection, but only the strongest connections have been chosen for visualization. The specific patterns and trends are further discussed in the Findings and discussion section. Nevertheless, some broader trends can be observed.

The entire sample was analyzed for theme co-occurrence, with Fig. 9 illustrating the most frequent co-occurrences, specifically *CulturalHeritage, Existential*, and *StructuralEquationModelling* (*SEM* in the visualizations). However, time series analyses reveal the evolution of research trends over time.

The first time series represents 1979–2000 (Fig. 10), which comprises 34 articles over 21 years, including the first to use authentic* in the title or keywords for a tourism-focused journal. As a relatively smaller sample, we can observe a tighter pattern of themes in which the highest frequency theme appeared 14 times. In particular, *CulturalHeritage*, *ArtCrafts*, *Photography*, *TouristBubble*, and *DestinationImage* are central nodes.

In the next series, 2001–2010 (Fig. 11), the sample increases to 95 articles published over a period of 10 years, while the themes analyzed grows to 51. Many of the same themes from the previous time series still appear, but there is a considerable growth and stretching of the concepts being brought into relation with authenticity. Notably, *SocialInteraction* and *Identity* move from peripheral nodes in the previous series to more connected areas of research. Further, we can observe the appearance of *Stakeholders*, *Simulacra*, and *PopularMedia* nodes.

Table 4
Keyword co-occurrence mapping by time series.

Time series	Articles represented	Number of themes analyzed	Theme frequency range analyzed (min.-max.)	Co-occurrence frequency range mapped (min.-max.)	Total co-occurrences mapped
FULL SAMPLE 1979–2020 (Fig. 9)	458	102	6–138	3–23	68
1979–2000 (Fig. 10)	34	37	2–14	2–3	27
2001–2010 (Fig. 11)	95	51	3–30	2–8	42
2011–2015 (Fig. 12)	100	90	3–29	2–6	62
2016–2020 (Fig. 13)	229	97	4–70	3–16	53

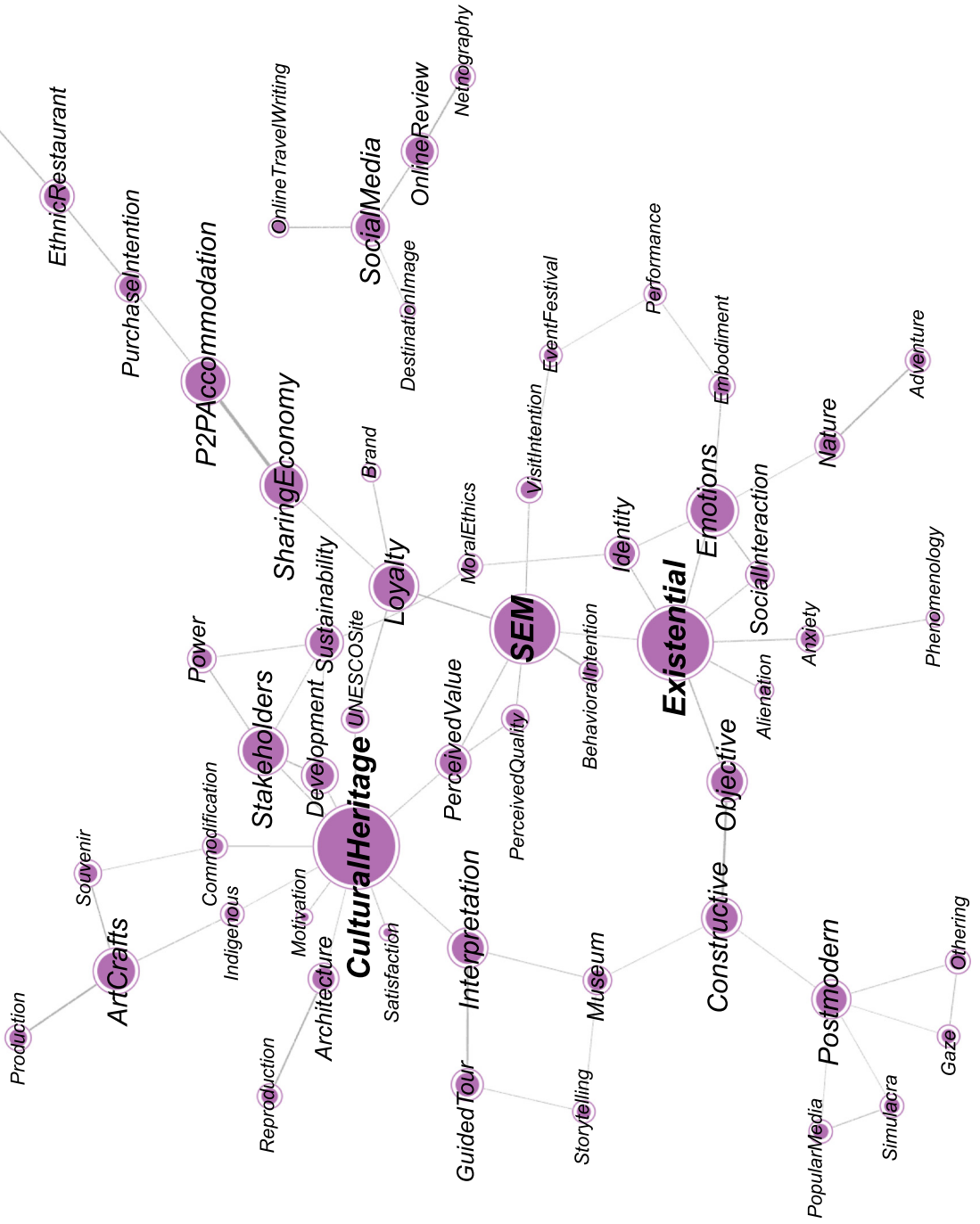

Fig. 9. Co-frequency of research themes 1979–2020.

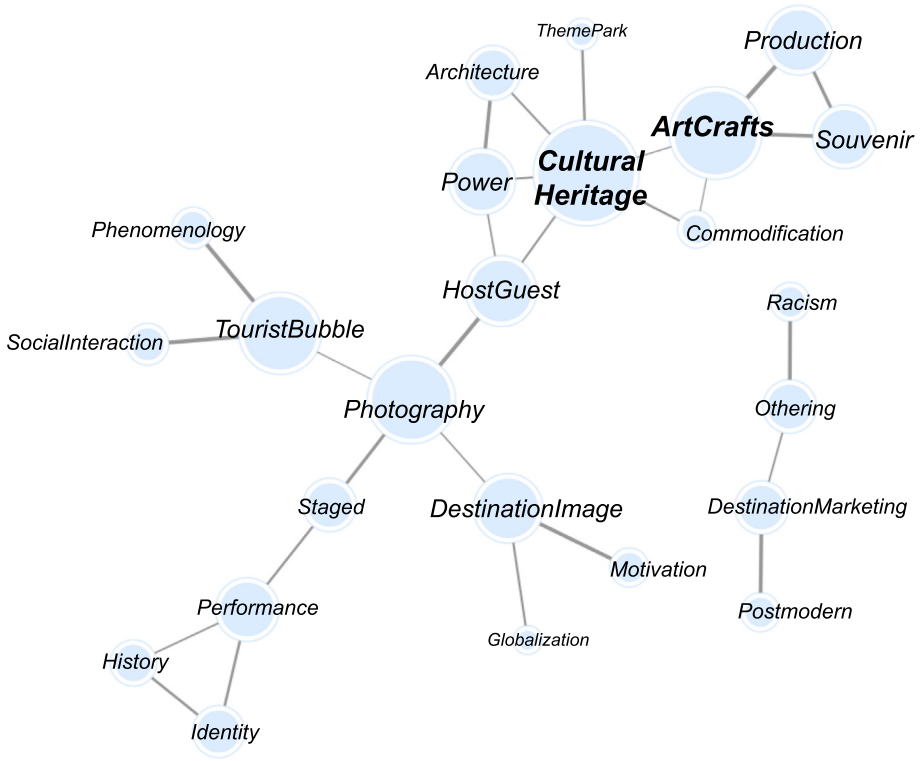

Fig. 10. Co-frequency of research themes 1979–2000.

Interestingly, a similar sample size of 100 papers is analyzed in Fig. 12, but this represents just a five-year period of 2011–2015. Further, the number of themes nearly doubles from the previous time series to 90 and this is reflected in the visualization with many small nodes suggesting considerable diversification of authenticity research, as well as some cross-conceptual studies. For example, *StructuralEquationModeling* appears in this series as a popular method for investigating the moderating effects of many variables related to authenticity. Similarly, *Existential*, *Interpretation*, *Development*, and *Stakeholders* are situated in the center of clusters of activity.

Finally, the five-year period of 2016–2020 (Fig. 13) represents tremendous growth in authenticity research with 229 papers analyzed. Due to this larger sample, the number of themes for co-frequency analysis had to be reduced to 97 based on co-frequency range of 4–70 (min.-max.). This time series suggests an enfolding of research around key themes of *Existential*, *StructuralEquationModeling*, and *CulturalHeritage*, as these themes give rise to large concentrations of research, as well as new clusters of research appearing, including *SharingEconomy*, *PeerToPeerAccommodation* (*P2PAccommodation* in visualization), *SocialMedia*, and *Nature*.

Meta-themes

To determine an organizational structure for the findings, a series of meta-themes were developed. Working with the themes developed from the keywords, 19 broader categories were created. Table 5 details these meta-themes, a sample of the themes that were subsumed within them, and a sampling of the keywords that comprised the themes. These meta-themes were applied to the textual corpus and analyzed for co-occurrence frequency. Fig. 14 offers a visualization of the meta-themes and the strength of their co-occurrence in the sample. In particular, **CulturalHeritage** was the most prominent meta-theme. While all meta-themes had some co-occurrence in the sample, only the strongest co-occurrences were mapped. Focusing on the strength of the co-occurrence frequencies, which is represented by the thickness of the edge connecting the nodes, facilitated an organizational structure for the discussion that follows. In particular, the section Culture, heritage, and commodification is comprised of a discussion of the research trends within the co-occurrences of the meta-themes **CulturalHeritage**, **Commodification**, **Staged**, **Marketing**, **TouristPractices** and **Performance**, while the section Experiential dimensions considers the overlaps of **EmbodimentEmotions**, **SocialInteraction**, **Identity**, and **HostGuest**. The section Consumer behavior takes up the co-occurrences of **ConsumerBehavior**, **CulturalHeritage**, **Marketing**, and **EmbodimentEmotions**. Power, stakeholders, and sustainability incorporates the co-occurrences of **CulturalHeritage**, **Sustainability**, **Development**, **Stakeholders**, **Power**, **HostGuest**, **MoralEthics**, and **Othering**. Finally, Socio-technologies and sharing economies discusses the meta-themes of **Technologies**, **Hospitality**, **ConsumerBehavior**, and **HostGuest**.

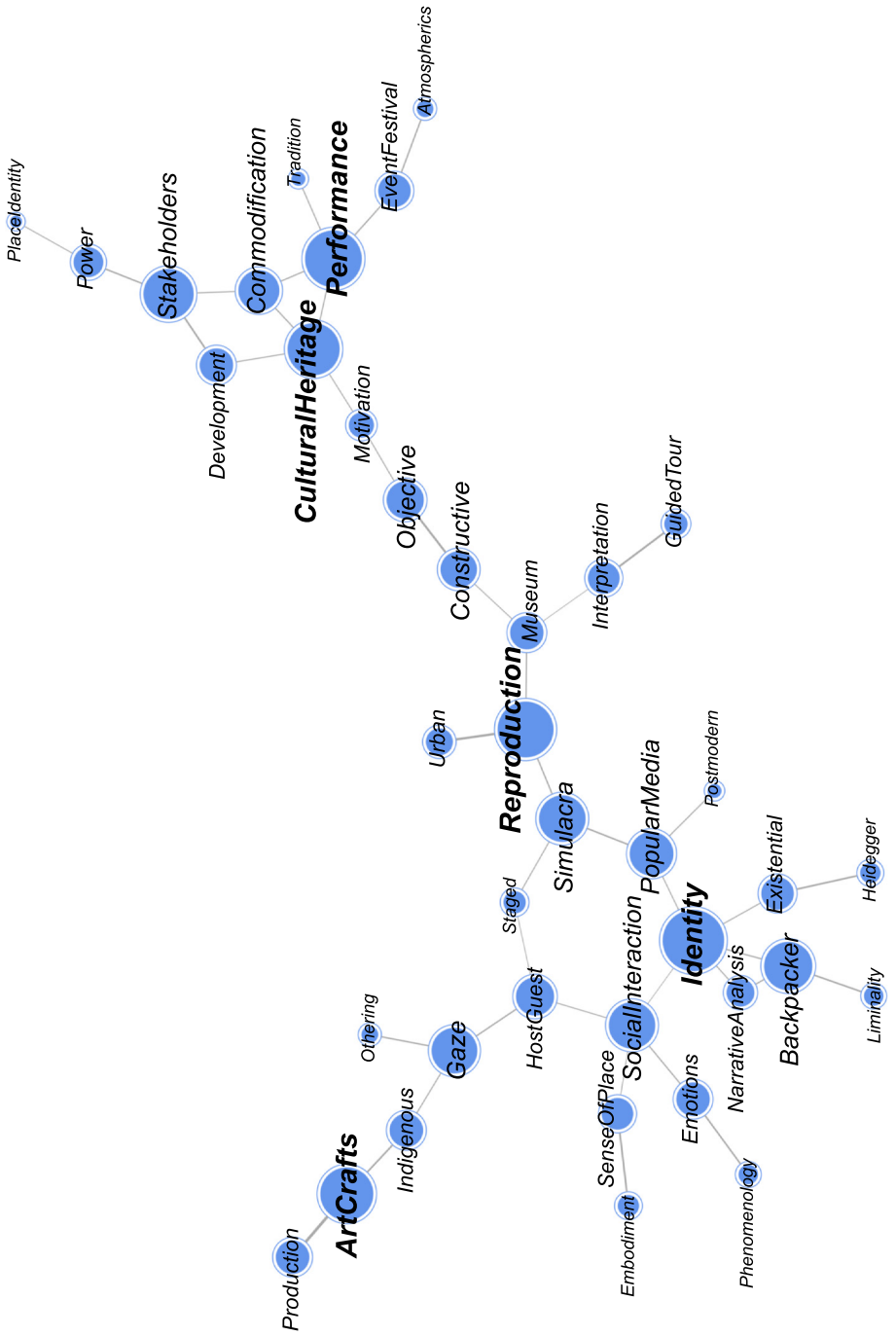

Fig. 11. Co-frequency of research themes 2001–2010.

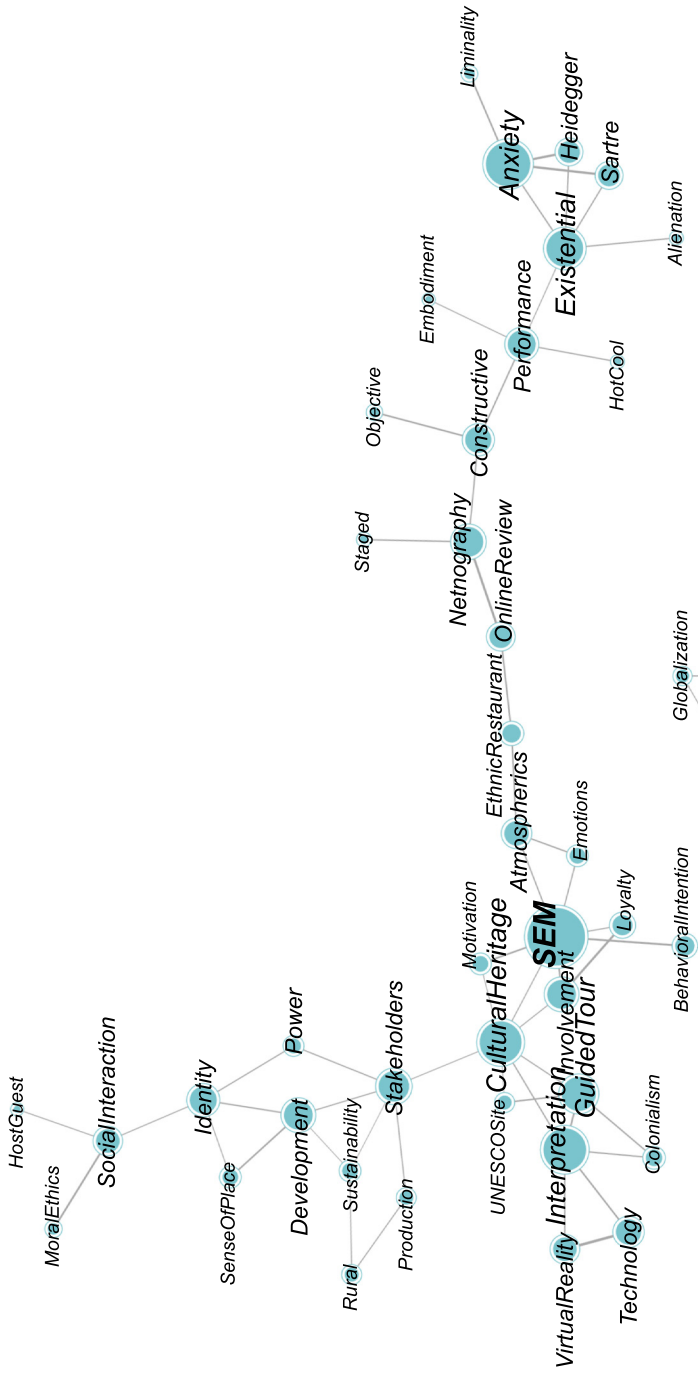

Fig. 12. Co-frequency of research themes 2011–2015.

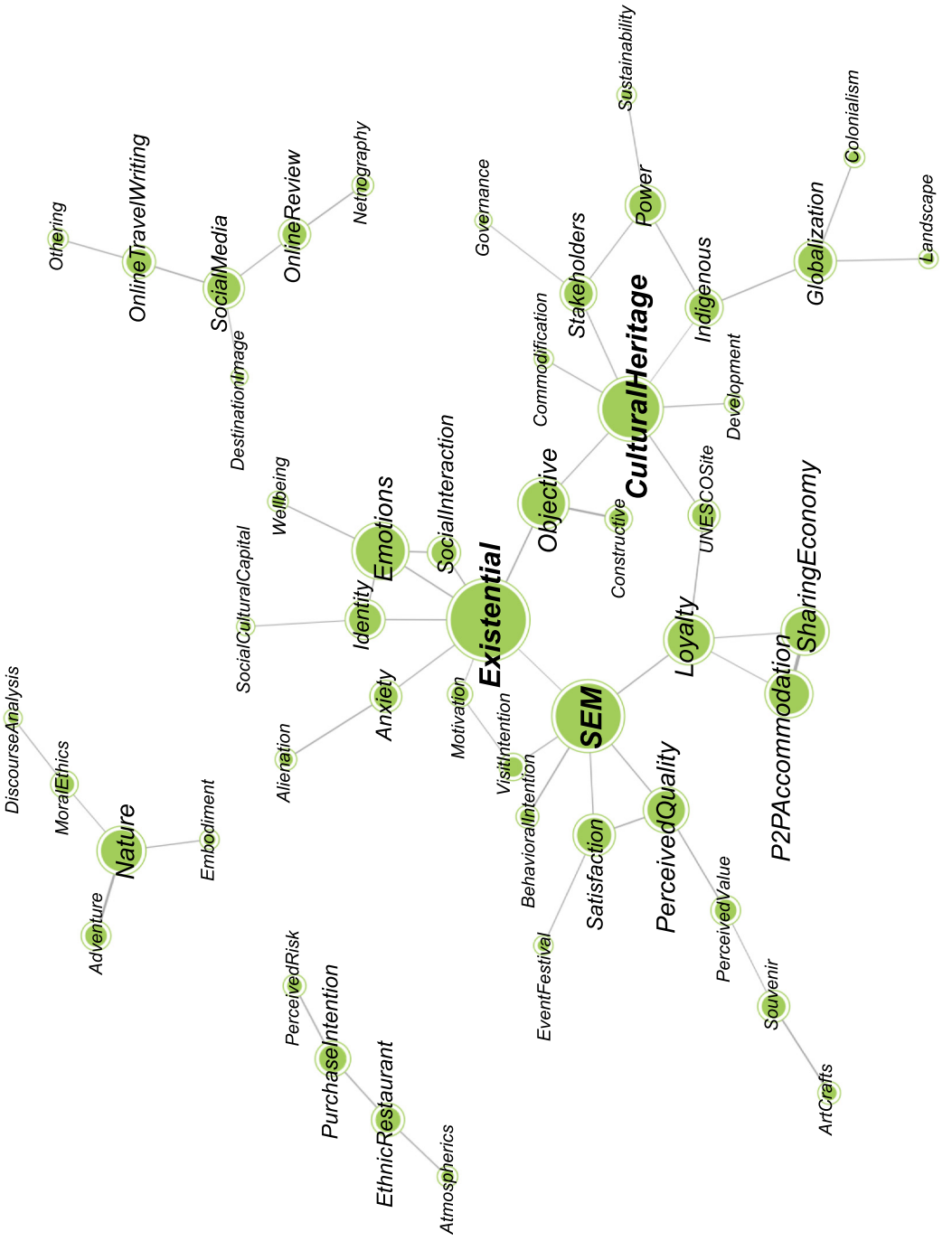

Fig. 13. Co-frequency of research themes 2016–2020.

Table 5
Sampling of the development of themes and meta-themes from keywords.

Meta-theme (n = frequency)	Sample of themes compiled to produce meta-theme	Sample of keywords comprising the themes
CulturalHeritage ($n = 268$)	*Culturalheritage, Tradition, History, Museum, Architecture, LocalFood, EthnicRestaurant, Indigenous*	Culture, Heritage Tourism, History, Tradition, Museum, Architecture, Archeology, Artifacts, Local Food, Ethnic Restaurant, Indigenous, Pilgrimage, Religious Tourism
ConsumerBehavior ($n = 163$)	*Motivation, Satisfaction, PerceivedValue, PerceivedQuality, BehavioralIntention, Loyalty, Segmentation, EventFestival*	Motivation, Satisfaction, Perceived Value, Perceived Quality, Behavioral Intention, (Re)Visit Intention, Purchase Intention, Brand, Loyalty, Market Segmentation, Destination Choice, Event Attendance, Festival Attendance, Perceived Risk, Shopping, Expenditure, Word of Mouth
Staged ($n = 110$)	*Staged, Simulacra, Hyperreality, Atmospherics, ThemePark, ThemeRestaurant, TouristBubble*	Staged, Simulacra, Hyperreal, Theming, Atmospherics, Theme Park, Theme Restaurant, Tourist Bubble, Tourist Trap, Phantasmagoria, Illusion, Fantasy
EmbodimentEmotions ($n = 108$)	*Embodiment, Emotions, SenseOfPlace, Phenomenology, Memorable, Anxiety, Wellbeing*	Embodiment, Emotions, Feelings, Affect, Sense of Place, Belonging, Phenomenology, Memory, Pleasure, Happiness, Anxiety, Wellbeing, Flow, Liminality, Aura, Wellness Tourism, Adventure Tourism
Commodification ($n = 106$)	*Commodification, ArtCrafts, UNESCOSite, Reproduction, PopularMedia*	Commodification, Commoditization, Souvenir (Production/Retail), Art, Handicrafts, Replica, Reproduction, UNESCO, Literature Tourism, Film Tourism, Music Tourism
Identity ($n = 90$)	*Identity, Alienation, SocialCulturalCapital*	Identity, Traveler, Anti-Tourist, Self-change, Self-making, Self-branding, Alienation, Social Capital, Cultural Capital, Positionality
Marketing ($n = 89$)	*DestinationMarketing, DestinationImage*	(Destination/Place) Marketing, Place Branding, Destination Image, Promotional Materials, Advertising
Performance ($n = 68$)	*Performance, GuidedTour, Storytelling, Interpretation*	Performance, Performative, Dance, Concert, Guided Tour, Tour Guide, Storytelling, Interpretation
Development ($n = 62$)	*Development, DestinationManagement, Entrepreneur, Innovation*	Development, Product Development, Entrepreneur, Business, Innovation, Destination Management, Investment, Economic Growth
SocialInteraction ($n = 61$)	*SocialInteraction, Involvement, CoCreation*	Communitas, Family, Crowd, Companion, Involvement, Co-creation
Power ($n = 54$)	*Power, Governance, Resistance*	Power, Politics, Government, Resistance, Protest, Colonialism, Post-colonial, Ideology
Stakeholders ($n = 53$)	*Stakeholders, SocialCulturalChange, PlaceIdentity*	Stakeholders, Community, Social Change, Cultural Change, Host Identity, Community Identity, Place Identity
Technologies ($n = 50$)	*SocialMedia, SocioTechnological, VirtualReality, OnlineInformation, OnlineTravelWriting, OnlineReview*	Technology, Social Media, Socio-technical, Virtual Reality, Gamification, Online Review, Online Information, Travel Blog
HostGuest ($n = 38$)	*HostGuest, CulturalDistance*	Host-Guest Relations, Host-Tourist, Cultural Distance, Volunteer Tourism, Home Stay
Othering ($n = 36$)	*Othering, Gender, Racism, Gaze*	Other, Gender, Race, Ethnicity, Gaze, Sexuality, Age, Orientalism
Hospitality (n = 34)	*Hospitality, HotelAccommodation, PeerToPeerAccommodation, SharingEconomy*	Hospitality, Hotel, AirBnB, Peer to Peer Accommodation, Sharing Economy
TouristPractices ($n = 30$)	*Photography, Sightseeing, Souvenir*	Photography, Sightseeing, Souvenir (Purchase/Display), User-Generated Content, Selfie
Sustainability ($n = 28$)	*Sustainability, EcoEnvironmental, Nature*	Sustainability, Ecological, Environmental, Ecotourism, Nature Tourism, Eco-conscious, Green Tourism, Last Chance Tourism
MoralEthics ($n = 23$)	*MoralEthics, CorporateSocialResponsibility*	Ethics, Morality, Rights, Justice, Values, Care, Corporate Social Responsibility, Responsible Tourism, Sincerity

Findings and discussion

What follows is a discussion of the structure, trends, and evolution of authenticity research in tourism studies using the findings from the thematic analysis and keyword co-occurrence analysis. It begins with how the theoretical approaches to authenticity have developed over time. Next, the major areas of research are presented. A discussion of potential future research directions follows.

Theoretical approaches

In 1999, Wang established theoretical categories for much of the authenticity research in tourism: objective, constructive, postmodern, and existential. Since his seismic paper there have been distinct efforts to further explore these theoretical approaches, making them more robust, as well as introducing new perspectives to enhance the breadth and depth of our investigations. This section takes each of Wang's four observed approaches and discusses their evolution. Then, the newer approaches are discussed, taking note of their theoretical trajectories.

Objective

Wang (1999) declares objective authenticity "the authenticity of the 'original'" (p. 353). The use of objective authenticity is premised on measurable qualities of originality, genuineness of (re)production, and as such requires the knowledge and skill of

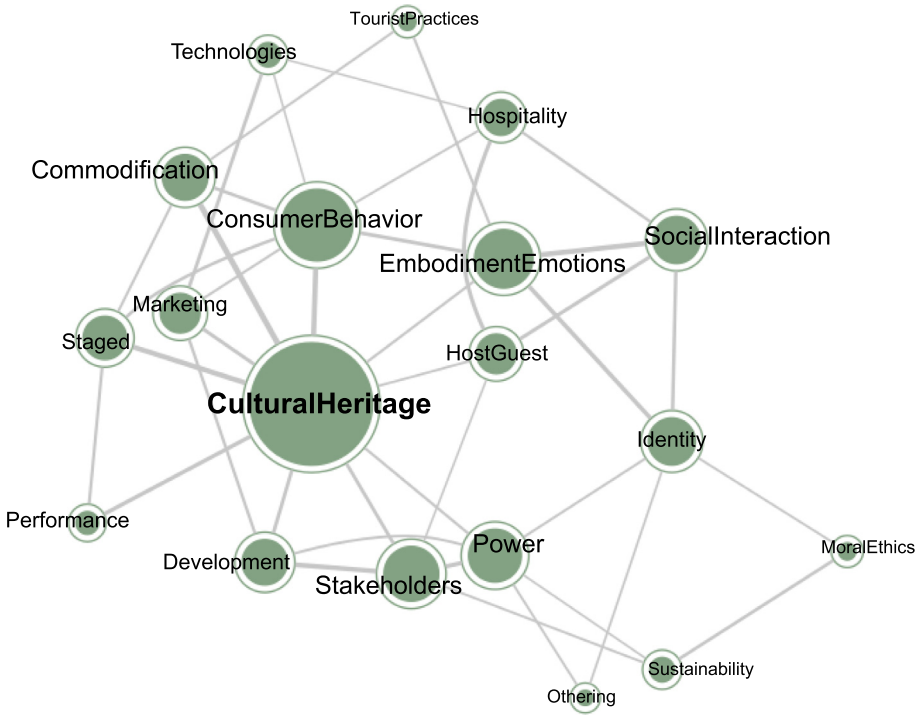

Fig. 14. Co-occurrence of meta-themes.

experts. That knowledge and skill are also verifiable and linked to authoritative bodies of certification (Harkin, 1995). Thus, objective authenticity is an epistemological experience (Wang, 1999). Through its use in tourism contexts, it has been further extended and shaped by modernist, essentialist, and realist perspectives.

Objective approaches form the earliest foundations of much of the research on authenticity. Boorstin (1992 [1961])'s notion of the "pseudo-event" suggested tourists' preference for imitation, which inspired MacCannell's (1973, 1999) "staged authenticity" to counter the condemnation of tourists. MacCannell thus extended authenticity beyond a knowledge claim (a measurable quality) to a feeling, and his front-back stages highlight the role of the imagination in tourist experience, which led to postmodern authenticity. Nevertheless, an emphasis on originality and authority have remained, with researchers aiming to locate objective authenticity in destinations and attractions through "genres of authenticity" (Andriotis, 2011) or "authentic concepts" (Engeset & Elvekrok, 2015). Over time, research has drawn inconsistent conclusions about objective authenticity. While some suggest it is of less importance to tourists, although not completely irrelevant (Mkono, 2013a; Rickly-Boyd, 2012b), others find it a central factor of motivation (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017b; Waller & Lea, 1999).

There have also been efforts to revise objective authenticity. Reisinger and Steiner (2006a) drew considerable attention by using existential philosophy to advocate for its abandonment. They argue that object-oriented approaches to authenticity are too unstable and "should be replaced by more explicit, less pretentious terms like genuine, actual, accurate, real, and true" (p. 66). Lau (2010), however, suggests a social realist approach to object authenticity as a broader approach that is independent of motivating forces and experiential outcomes.

While objective authenticity is based on measurable qualities, there has been considerable research on the relationality of objective and constructive approaches especially in cultural and heritage contexts (see Chhabra, 2005, 2008, 2012). For example, Bruner (1994) observed four uses of authenticity at a heritage site: original, historical verisimilitude, genuine reproduction, and authorized. Revilla and Dodd (2003) note five authenticity factors in art produced for tourists: appearance/utility, tradition and certification, rarity, local production, and cost (see also Littrell, Anderson, & Brown, 1993). Most recently, Wang, Huang, and Kim (2015)) developed a framework for integrating authenticity and integrity, a key principle of UNESCO World Heritage. As a result, it is understandable that tourism research often necessitates the use of both objective and constructive approaches (Fig. 7).

Constructive

While also an object-oriented approach, constructive authenticity is used to capture the socially constructed nature of authenticity. As Wang (1999), p. 355) summarizes, "the experience of authenticity is pluralistic, relative to each tourist." As such, constructive authenticity engages symbolic aspects that are emergent (Cohen, 1988), ideologically informed (Ehrentraut, 1993; Silver, 1993), diffused via globalization (Hughes, 1995), contextual (Salamone, 1997), negotiated (Chhabra, 2008), and a result of compromise (Bernardi, 2019). Thus, it is not surprising that this is the most prevalent approach used in the sample (Fig. 5).

Under the broad umbrella of constructive authenticity, we can include studies of the semiotics of authenticity. Culler (1981) works from semiotics in the development of his idea of symbolic authenticity, which highlights the willingness of tourists to perceive objects as authentic (see also Thomsen & Vester, 2016). Indeed, an important aspect of a constructive approach is that it accommodates the multiple and sometimes contradictory elements of authenticity noted in tourists' experiences (see Bruner, 1994; Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003; Dueholm & Smed, 2014; Rickly-Boyd, 2012b; Tan & Kusumo, 2020; Wang, 2007; Yi, Fu, Yu, & Jiang, 2018).

While tourists' perceptions are often the focus of constructive approaches, there are also investigations of the authors of authenticity discourses (Cohen, 2002; Cole, 2007; Duffy, 2019; Fawcett & Cormack, 2001; Hughes, 1995; Maddox, 2015; Robbie, 2008) or what is termed "a producer view" (Bryce, Murdy, & Alexander, 2017; Chhabra, 2005; Farrelly, Kock, & Josiassen, 2019; Lunchaprasith & Macleod, 2018; Mantecón & Huete, 2008; Xie & Shi, 2019; Zatori, Smith, & Puczko, 2018). Such research often considers the role of power in the production of authenticity and authentication processes. Moreover, we can observe a cluster of research on the changing perceptions of authenticity among tourism stakeholders (Schilar & Keskitalo, 2018; Tiberghien & Xie, 2018; Wall & Xie, 2005).

Importantly, the social and cultural processes that underline constructive authenticity mean that it changes over time, which is why Cohen (1988) conceptualized it as emergent. In the last decade, this has been more thoroughly developed with performance theories (Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Zhu, 2012). For example, Olsen (2002) uses ritual theory to extend constructive authenticity beyond object-oriented scenarios to social experiences (see also Carter, 2019). He argues that theories of performance and ritual illustrate how some experiences of existential authenticity are socially constructed. The social construction of authenticity has become essential to considering the roles of intersubjectivity, emic experience, and power in authentication processes. While still related to constructive authenticity, authentication is better captured under the performative approach and is therefore taken up below.

Postmodern

For the most part, postmodern authenticity has come be associated with cynicism (Vidon, Rickly, & Knudsen, 2018). According to Wang (1999), p. 357), "implied in the approach of postmodernism is the justification of the contrived, the copy, and imitation." However, this justification extends to the ways that staged authenticity can be a protective substitute for touristic experience of vulnerable communities and landscapes, as well as enhancing experience through greater aesthetic enjoyment and technological augmentation (Cohen, 1995; Douglass & Raento, 2004). Thus, to understand the significance of fantasy, simulacra, and hyperreality to authenticity, postmodern approaches are taken up.

This is particularly prominent in studies of media-inspired tourism, including film and television (Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010; Larson, Lundberg, & Lexhagen, 2013; Lovell, 2019; Rittichainuwat, Laws, Scott, & Rattanaphinanchai, 2018). Such research highlights the significance of locating fictional places in physical landscapes and tourists' use of imagination to experience the story, which Lovell (2019) terms "fairytale authenticity." Further, Vidon et al. (2018) extend the notions of hyperreality and simulacra beyond the built environment to natural settings, where the "fantasy of authenticity" arguably remains seductive. However, to understand how and why this fantasy beckons has led to the recent infusion of psychoanalytic approaches, discussed below.

Existential

Observing the need to capture experiential dimensions of authenticity, Wang (1999) proposes existential authenticity as an activity-based approach. While Wang (1999) was not the first to suggest an existential approach (see Hamilton-Smith, 1987; Pearce & Moscardo, 1986), he was the first to develop a framework with the distinct dimensions of intrapersonal (bodily feelings and self-making) and interpersonal (communitas and family ties). Indeed, this approach has witnessed considerable uptake. It is used by 22.2% of the sample overall (Fig. 6). However, this is not without challenges and limitations.

Existential authenticity is informed by a broad interpretation of existentialism. As a result, the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions attend to various forces that activate an experience of an authentic self. The dimensions have been widely applied and supported (see Breathnach, 2006; Gillen, 2016; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017a; Rickly-Boyd, 2012c). However, researchers have also demonstrated that existential authenticity is more than a purely subjective experience but is enacted through the interaction of objective and constructive components (Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008; Buchmann et al., 2010; Cook, 2010; Gillen, 2016; Kirillova & Lehto, 2015; Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017a, 2017b; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017a; Lamont, 2014; Moufahim & Lichrou, 2019; Rickly-Boyd, 2013b; Zerva, 2015).

Further, the dimensions of existential authenticity have been explored and contextualized within broader lifestyle choices. Kirillova and Lehto's (2015) existential model of the vacation cycle, noting the role of liminality, awe, and fade-out effects has been particularly innovative. Indeed, the liminality of tourism has been highlighted as a key facilitator of self-discovery and self-change (Brown, 2013; Canavan, 2018; Wearing, McDonald, & Ankor, 2016), while existential estrangement (Serhat & Uzuncan, 2020) or existential avoidance (Canavan, 2019) are proposed as motivators for tourism choices. More recent research has sought to extend beyond the established dimensions of existential authenticity to incorporate mindfulness (Lengyel, 2020), happiness and wellbeing (Yu, Li, & Xiao, 2020), and inauthenticity and hypocrisy (Mkono, 2020). While much of this research casts a positive light on existentially authentic experiences, it has been suggested that these experiences can also induce existential anxiety (Kirillova et al., 2017a, 2017b; Sharma & Rickly, 2019; Vidon & Rickly, 2018).

Existential authenticity has proved a useful addition to the canon, as it was severely lacking a means for interrogating activity-based experiences of authenticity. However, the problem now is that it is too widely used, increasingly distanced from existential philosophy, and encompassing any experiential dimension. This poses a serious problem, but also presents opportunities (see

Kirillova, 2019). Many have turned to Heidegger (Brown, 2013; Light & Brown, 2020; Pearce & Moscardo, 1986; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006a), as well as Sartre (Brown, 2013; Kirillova, 2019) to enhance its philosophical depth, but not without critique (Shepherd, 2015).

Phenomenological

Broadly understood as the study of lived experience, phenomenology offers potential to extend studies of authenticity and experience beyond existentialism. However, it remains peripheral in the field. Phenomenology is concerned with consciousness, intentionality, embodiment, and first-person experience. While Husserl's phenomenology is more realist and descriptive, it was incorporated into some facets of existentialism, such as Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology and Merleau-Pontys embodiment. Some researchers use phenomenology to inform their studies of tourist experience, such as Kirillova et al. (2017a)'s use of a phenomenological method in their study of existential authenticity; yet it is less often linked directly to the conceptualization of authenticity (see also Andriotis, 2009).

There is a small cluster of researchers who take a distinctly geographic approach when relating authenticity and phenomenology. For Li (2000), it is the manifestation of geographical consciousness in experiential learning and tourists' person-place bond that are essential to authentic experiences. Jamal and Hill (2004) use the concept of sense of place to articulate the phenomenological interaction between embodiment and space that results in a "personal authenticity." Hayllar and Griffin (2005) engage with place more broadly to link intimacy and authenticity. Collectively, these suggest there are also performative aspects to phenomenological approaches.

Performative

Beyond Wang's (1999) activity-oriented approach, many instances can be observed in which experiences of authenticity are enacted, giving rise to social belonging, emotional connection, and so on (see McIntosh & Prentice, 1999; Olsen, 2002). As such, performative approaches have been particularly illuminating for examining tour guiding, storytelling, and audience participation (see Cohen-Aharoni, 2017; Overend, 2012). More broadly, performance theories are useful for capturing the relationality of various approaches that may be acting together. For example, Rickly-Boyd (2012a) applies the concept of aura to understand the intersubjective experience of authenticity as tourists simultaneously engage with objective and constructive authenticities. Szmigin, Bengry-Howell, Morey, Griffin, and Riley (2017) further extends the intersubjectivity of aura to the socio-spatial dimensions of existential authenticity.

Performative approaches also include research on the social processes that drive authentication. Authentication incorporates objective, constructive, and existential approaches, by specifically attending to the social processes that enact them. Cohen and Cohen (2012) identify two authentication processes: hot and cool. Cool authentication comprises formal or official acts which use knowledge and/or expertise to declare authenticity. Hot authentication consists of informal, reiterative acts that are accumulative and self-reinforcing, accompanied by emotional commitments to the object of veneration. Importantly, Cohen and Cohen (2012) remind us that these are not mutually exclusive and are often observed operating in tandem. In particular, the role of power in authentication processes has been a popular topic of investigation (see Bear, Avieli, & Feldman, 2021; Chatzopoulou, Gorton, & Kuznesof, 2019; Frisvoll, 2013; Martin, 2010; Taylor, 2001; Xu, Wan, & Fan, 2014; Zhou, Zhang, Zhang, & Ma, 2015; Zhu, 2012). Increasingly, this research is moving into online environments through studies of socio-technological authentication (Lugosi, 2016) and algorithmic authenticity (van Nuenen, 2019).

Psychoanalytic

Comprising just four of the papers in the sample, a psychoanalytic approach is among the newest additions to the canon. It offers unique potential for new avenues of research by addressing a distinct gap. Currently, existential authenticity is the only approach that addresses issues of self-identity. However, psychoanalytic theory suggests that authenticity is a fantasy that can never be fully grasped, but nonetheless remains a salient motivator (Knudsen, Rickly, & Vidon, 2016).

A psychoanalytic approach begins from the premise of alienation, as does existentialism and Marxism; however, it argues that alienation creates a lack for which the fantasy of authenticity promises to assuage. Thereby, it enhances a postmodern approach by informing investigation of tourist desire, motivation, and identity (see Vidon, 2019; Vidon et al., 2018; Vidon & Rickly, 2018). Moreover, a psychoanalytic approach is unique in highlighting the ways that negative aspects of experience can, in fact, contribute to or be rationalized as authentic. Thus, it returns to a fundamental issue highlighted by MacCannell (1973, 1999) – "the quest for authenticity" – and in doing so it foregrounds the quest. As MacCannell (2008), p. 337) himself states, reflecting on the common misreading of his concept: "staged authenticity has never been anything more than a screen for our unrealizable dreams and desires, an opportunity for make-believe, a chance to enter a myth, a fantasy-land."

Alienation

While this review is specifically about authenticity, in recent years there has been a revival of authenticity's dialectical, alienation (Canavan, 2018, 2019; de Groot & van der Horst, 2014; Kirillova, 2019; Knudsen et al., 2016; Rickly-Boyd, 2013a; Serhat & Uzuncan, 2020; Vidon, 2019; Vidon & Rickly, 2018; Xue, Manuel-Navarrete, & Buzinde, 2014;). It is a concept that cuts across Marxism, existentialism, and psychoanalysis as an underlying experience or condition of (post)modern life. According to both Boorstin and MacCannell, alienation is the driver of tourists. While alienation is accepted by Boorstin's tourists, according to MacCannell it is resisted in the touristic quest for authenticity (see also Hamilton-Smith, 1987). Thus, alienation and its embodied feeling of anxiety have been at the center of recent research on experience and authenticity (Canavan, 2020; Kirillova et al., 2017a,

2017b; Serhat & Uzuncan, 2020; Sharma & Rickly, 2019; Vidon, 2019; Vidon & Rickly, 2018). Yet, some research suggests that tourism itself may create or enhance alienation, so that resistance to either tourism market forces (Hughes, 1995) or information technology-infused tourism (Tribe & Mkono, 2017) are where moments of authenticity can be found.

Culture, heritage, and commodification

One of the most prolific and persistent themes of authenticity research in tourism relates to culture and heritage. This comprises the most prominent meta-theme (see Fig. 14 and Table 5), often in relation to staging and commodification. These themes are found throughout each time series and remain strongly represented within the full sample. Exploring its pervasiveness, this section highlights the ways culture and heritage are examined in relation to authenticity and how this has changed over time.

In the first time series representing 1979–2000 (Fig. 10) *CulturalHeritage* and *ArtCrafts* are central nodes connected to themes of *Souvenir, Commodification*, and *Architecture*, among others, that give rise to questions of objective and constructive authenticities. Wang (1999) observes a similar evolution in authenticity research, inspiring him to summarize an object-oriented prevalence of authenticity research. The earliest work in this regard focuses on the accuracy of culture and heritage representations (see Cohen, 1988; Mellinger, 1994; Pitchford, 1995; Silver, 1993; Sternberg, 1997) and the commodification of culture and heritage through the consumption of art, handicrafts, and souvenirs (see Anderson & Littrell, 1995; Cohen, 1993; Littrell et al., 1993; Shenhav-Keller, 1993).

Representation

Broadly, there has been an interest in examining the authenticity of culture and heritage representation. This includes tourists' photographic representations (see Aiello & Gendelman, 2008; Chalfen, 1979; Cohen, Nir, & Almagor, 1992; Herath, Hemmington, & Poulston, 2020; Katahenggam, 2020), as well as representation in destination landscapes and built environments (see Gotham, 2007; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017b; Mura & Lovelock, 2009; Rockett & Ramsey, 2017; Vesey & Dimanche, 2003) and in specific attractions, including museums and living history sites (see Metro-Roland, 2009; Ramshaw & Gammon, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012b; Tiberghien & Lennon, 2019). Within this research, there are particular clusters employing critical approaches that shed light on othering practices, including post/neocolonialism in the marketing and representation of culture (see Mellinger, 1994; Waitt, 2000; White, 2007; Yea, 2002). While this appears in the earliest time series (Fig. 10), over time this research becomes more aligned with studies of Power, stakeholders, and sustainability, and so is taken up further in that section.

The representation of culture and heritage in destination marketing has been a prolific topic. In fact, the globally renowned brand of cultural heritage, UNESCO World Heritage, occurs so often as a keyword in the sample that it appears as a distinct node from 2011 to 2015 (Fig. 12) onwards. While initially linked to *CulturalHeritage* and *GuidedTour*, in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13) it moves to *CulturalHeritage* and *Loyalty*. Much of this research is focused on the effect of perceived authenticity on consumer behavior at UNESCO sites (see Fu, 2019; Kim, Oh, Lee, & Lee, 2018; Park, Choi, & Lee, 2019; Shen, Guo, & Wu, 2014; Shi, Jin, & Li, 2020; Yi et al., 2018).

Inevitably, the interest in culture and heritage representations shifted online, particularly to destination marketing websites, travel blogs, and social media. As a result, netnography has been a popular methodology (see Banyai, 2010; Bernardi, 2019; Jyotsna & Maurya, 2019; Pearce, Wu, & Chen, 2015; Torabian & Arai, 2016; Walter, 2016). Indeed, the node *Netnography* first appears in the 2011–2015 map (Fig. 12), linking *Constructive* authenticity to *Staged* and *OnlineReview*. This work continues a trend towards more critical analysis of authenticity and representation by drawing attention to the staging mechanisms that influence tourist perceptions (see Mkono, 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Zerva, 2015). The role of online environments and social media have had a considerable impact on authenticity research, so it is the focus of a separate later section: Socio-technologies and sharing economies.

Souvenirs

While the theme of *Commodification* is substantial in series 2001–2010 (Fig. 11), it reduces in prevalence in subsequent time series as it returns to more firmly link *CulturalHeritage* and *Souvenir*, similar to how it appears in the mapping for the full sample (Fig. 9). Indeed, there has been an interest in cultural heritage representations in souvenirs, specifically exploring the effects of globalization on souvenir symbolism (see Dumbrovská & Fialová, 2020; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2007; Schilar & Keskitalo, 2018; Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019). However, more prominent has been an examination of authenticity and souvenir purchase behavior, which is examined through the lens of Consumer behavior below. This is particularly observed in time series 2011–2015 (Fig. 12) where the node of *PerceivedValue* appears connected to *Souvenir* illustrating the rise of the cluster of quantitative research on the relationship of souvenir authenticity to perceived value and purchase intention. This is in line with trends around *CulturalHeritage*, more generally, which increasingly attend to authenticity as a variable in consumer behavior.

Staging

Commodification and representation of culture and heritage have also been studied from the perspective of staging in which aspects of cultural simplification, stereotyping, and homogeneity are actively employed to meet to tourists' expectations. In fact, some of the earliest theories of authenticity in tourism came from research with a particular interest in its pseudo-events (Boorstin, 1992 [1961]) and staging mechanisms (MacCannell, 1973).

Staging has remained a common thread of inquiry over time (see Chhabra et al., 2003; Crang, 1996; Daugstad & Kirchengast, 2013; Moscardo & Pearce, 1986; Wang, 2007). Research on staging, replica, and fantasy has given rise to postmodern approaches

to authenticity, which transition from object-oriented to activity-oriented by highlighting the significance of the imagination in transforming objects into fantastical experiences (see Douglass & Raento, 2004; Lovell, 2019). This can be observed in the 2001–2010 time series (Fig. 11) where *Postmodern* authenticity arises in connection with *PopularMedia*, which is further connected to *Simulacra*. Interestingly, this cluster of research disappears from subsequent time series, thus explaining its relative peripheral location on the full sample map (Fig. 9).

Importantly, tourism inspired by popular culture, including film, television, and literature, tends to combine aspects of objective, constructive, postmodern, and more recently existential authenticity, to explore the storytelling mechanisms required to transition from fictional media to on-site tourists' experiences (see Buchmann et al., 2010; Carter, 2019; Cohen-Hattab & Kerber, 2004; Fawcett & Cormack, 2001; Larson et al., 2013; Rittichainuwat et al., 2018; Torchin, 2002). However, attention to authentic experiences can be identified as a distinct area of research on its own, and so is the focus of the following section: Experiential dimensions.

Performing culture and heritage

In the 2001–2010 time series (Fig. 11), the growth of research on the themes of *Performance* and *EventFestival* illustrate the move away from static objects of culture and heritage to interest in more dynamic settings (see Chhabra, 2005; Taylor, 2001; Terry, 2008; Valdez, 2007). In particular, Xie and Lane (2006) develop a lifecycle model of aboriginal arts performances as a way to capture the organic and ever-evolving nature of cultural performances within the context of tourism attractions and visitor expectations.

More specific themes of *GuidedTour, Interpretation*, and *Storytelling* also engage performance theories and performativity to understand meaning-making processes of museum interpretations, historical re-enactments, and tour guiding (Carnegie & McCabe, 2008; Gijanto, 2011; Io & Hallo, 2011; Knox, 2008; Martin, 2010; Overend, 2012; Soewarlan, 2019; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006b; Walby & Piché, 2015; Williams, 2013; Wong, 2013; Zhu, 2012). This research often concerns objective and constructive approaches to authenticity, while also incorporating the emotive nature of performances thus giving rise to the significance of experiential dimensions of authenticity.

Experiential dimensions

The articulation of an activity-oriented approach to authenticity by Wang (1999) has been a fountainhead for research. Existential authenticity, as it was originally devised, offers a broad framework for examining the intrapersonal (bodily feelings and self-identity) and interpersonal (communitas and family ties) dimensions of tourism experience. Experiential dimensions are addressed in many different areas of authenticity research, but most prominently occur within the meta-themes of **EmbodimentEmotions**, **SocialInteraction**, **Identity**, and **HostGuest** (see Fig. 14 and Table 5).

In time series 2001–2010 (Fig. 11), existential authenticity first makes an appearance linked specifically to *Identity*, which is a central node for *SocialInteraction, NarrativeAnalysis*, and *Backpacker*. More peripheral in this time series are *Emotions* and *Embodiment*, demonstrating the burgeoning research interest in these experiential dimensions. By the 2016–2020 time series (Fig. 13), *Existential* is the most prominent node, with connections highlighting both efforts at theoretical development of authenticity (see Theoretical approaches) and trends to understand experiential dimensions of consumer behavior, mainly through quantitative analysis (see Consumer Behavior). Indeed, the explosion of research on existential authenticity in the last decade is also captured in analysis of the full sample, where it is also a central node (Fig. 9).

Relatedly, *Phenomenology* began to surface as a peripheral theme in the first time series (Fig. 10), connected to *TouristBubble*, and then in 2001–2010 (Fig. 11) it was connected to *SenseOfPlace*. Its usage offers a theoretical lens for examining the lived experience of authenticity (see Andriotis, 2009; Hayllar & Griffin, 2005; Jamal & Hill, 2004; Li, 2000). However, it largely disappears from the sample after this and is not represented in the subsequent mappings. It is suspected that phenomenology was subsumed under the concept of sense of place in subsequent research and the lived experience of authenticity was also captured under an existential approach, which grew in popularity over time.

Identity

Experiential dimensions have been especially useful for researchers interested in the role of authenticity in tourists' self-identity (see Brown, 2013; Cary, 2004; de Groot & van der Horst, 2014; Hough, 2011; Noy, 2004; Spracklen, Laurencic, & Kenyon, 2013), with backpacking (Canavan, 2018; Kannisto, 2018; Maoz, 2006; Noy, 2004; Obenour, 2004; Serhat & Uzuncan, 2020) and volunteer tourism (Crossley, 2012; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2017a) being particularly popular areas of investigation. This research sheds light on the ways tourists seek to find themselves through tourism, the performative aspects of identity, and the construction of self through touristic practices, including photography, blogging, and social media. For example, McWha, Frost, Laing, and Best (2016) uncover the identity politics and anti-tourist sentiments used by professional travel writers, while Kane (2012) and van Nuenen (2016) turn to travel bloggers who use discourses of existential authenticity to simultaneously sell and perform their self-identities. While some research is focused on individual identities, it is also acknowledged that interpersonal relations play important roles in self-making and in the experiential dimensions of authenticity.

Social interaction

Being among others, whether companions, family, or in a crowd, can have a considerable impact on touristic experience. This is evidenced across the sample, which resulted in the meta-theme **SocialInteraction** comprising many aspects of sociality

(Table 5). This area of authenticity research first took note of tourists' social interactions as communitas – short-lived friendships in the destination (see Foster, 1986), and later how the presence of others can be essential to the co-creation of touristic experience (see Loureiro & Sarmento, 2019; Szmigin et al., 2017).

Research in this area also considers how social interaction relates to self-identity practices (see Belhassen et al., 2008; Buchmann et al., 2010; Kim & Jamal, 2007) and assessments of social interactions between tourists and host communities (see Gale, Bosak, & Caplins, 2013; Hough, 2011; Mehmetoglu & Olsen, 2003; Mura, 2015; Tiberghien, Bremner, & Milne, 2020; Tucker, 2001; Unger, Fuchs, & Uriely, 2020; Uriely, Maoz, & Reichel, 2009; Kirillova, 2019) (Figs. 11 and 12). Finally, in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13), and as captured in the analysis of the full sample (Fig. 9), *SocialInteraction* becomes more firmly connected to *Existential* and *Emotions* illustrating the ways these aspects of authentic experiences so often overlap.

Emotions and embodiment

Through the rise of experiential dimensions of authenticity also came greater attention to emotions, feelings, and embodiment, which first appear in the 2001–2010 time series (Fig. 11) as peripheral nodes stemming from *SocialInteraction*. Research during this time broadly considered intrapersonal dimensions of authenticity, specifically in medical and wellness tourism (Cook, 2010; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006b) and musical events (Connell & Gibson, 2004; Matheson, 2008).

By 2011–2015 (Fig. 12), these themes move in separate directions with *Emotions* shifting to be more strongly connected to *Atmospherics* and *StructuralEquationModeling*, illustrating the rise of existential authenticity variables in consumer behavior studies. Then, in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13), *Emotions* re-positions to be most strongly connected to *Existential, Identity, SocialInteraction*, and *WellBeing*. As discussed in the previous sections on identity and social interaction, emotion is a crucial variable for understanding oneself. It can be influenced by seeking experiences that are solitary or with others, as is observed in diaspora tourism (see Bryce et al., 2017; Carter, 2019).

While still relatively new, as suggested by the small peripheral node of *WellBeing* connected to *Emotions* in Fig. 9, there is a small cluster of research forming around the relations of authenticity, happiness, and mindfulness (see Lengyel, 2020; McIntosh & Prentice, 1999; Yu et al., 2020), as well as the feelings of anxiety (Canavan, 2019; Kirillova et al., 2017a; Kirillova & Lehto, 2015; Vidon & Rickly, 2018).

Concurrently, *Embodiment* maintains its position as a peripheral node related to *Performance* in 2011–2015 (Fig. 12) and *Nature* in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13). This suggests emerging and evolving areas of authenticity research, which are also captured in the assessment of the full sample (Fig. 9). Indeed, authenticity research which attends specifically to embodiment is particularly concentrated in nature, adventure, and sport tourism (see Lamont, 2014; Maddox, 2015; Mordue, 2016; Vidon et al., 2018; Vidon, 2019), which is not surprising given the active role of the body in these experiences. Further, researchers can also be observed examining embodied practices to identity politics (see Gillen, 2016; Sharma & Rickly, 2019; Zhu, 2012).

Experience economy

In a sub-set of the research on authenticity and touristic experience, there has been a distinct effort to understand the producer and managerial implications of authenticity and experiential design (see Duan, Chan, & Marafa, 2019; Le, Arcodia, Novais, & Kralj, 2019). In particular, the notion of staging has been further refined in terms of atmospherics, where researchers are attuned to multisensory experiences that spark feelings, emotions, and memories. The theme of *Atmospherics* first appears in 2001–2010 (Fig. 11) as a peripheral node connected to *EventFestival*, with research examining the role of the built and social environments of events, markets, and festivals on visitor experience (see Carnegie & McCabe, 2008; Chhabra, 2005; Chhabra et al., 2003; Connell & Gibson, 2004; Matheson, 2008; Terry, 2008).

In 2011–2015, *Atmospherics* moves to being situated between *StructuralEquationModeling, EthnicRestaurant*, and *Emotions* (Fig. 12), then transitions to a peripheral node again connected to *EthnicRestaurant* in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13). This concentration of research is specifically related to gastronomic experience (see Albrecht, 2011; Hillel, Belhassen, & Shani, 2013; Jang, Ha, & Park, 2012) and tourists' restaurant choice (see Kim & Jang, 2016; Skinner, Chatzopoulou, & Gorton, 2020). Some of this uses structural equation modeling to ascertain the subtle relations of experiential and consumer behavior variables (see Domínguez-Quintero, González-Rodríguez, & Roldán, 2019; Kim & Jang, 2016; Shafieizadeh, Alotaibi, & Tao, 2021; Zatori et al., 2018).

Consumer behavior

Consumer behavior is one of the meta-themes of the review (see Table 5), under which the earliest themes incorporate authenticity as a broad variable of motivation, decision-making, and satisfaction can be found (see Apostolakis, 2003; Moscardo & Pearce, 1986; Waller & Lea, 1999). In the 2011–2015 time series (Fig. 12) motivation is more specifically linked to *CulturalHeritage* and *StructuralEquationModeling*, which is a central node for many distinct aspects of consumer behavior: *BehaviorIntention, Involvement, Loyalty*. Further, in the 2016–2020 time series (Fig. 13), the connections to *StructuralEquationModeling* grow to include *PerceivedQuality, Satisfaction, VisitIntention*, and *Existential* dimensions. This emergence and growth of the structural equation modeling of authenticity as a variable of consumer behavior is also reflected in the marked uptick in quantitative analysis (Table 1). Prior to 2016, quantitative methodologies represented only 19.2% of the sample, from 2016 to 2020 they represent 45.4%.

Notably, Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) study has been influential in this trend. Considering the various interpretations and attributes of authenticity, the authors adopt a managerial standpoint to understand how the concept is related to motivation and satisfaction. In particular, they ask if "authenticity is primarily the driver (motive) or the outcome (experience, evaluative judgment)

of tourist behavior" (2010, p. 653). Through structural equation modeling, they develop a processual, consumer-based model suggesting that while related, object-based and existential authenticity are not "standalone" concepts, but they should be understood as mediators of behavior intentions (2010, p. 660).

Authenticity as a variable of consumer behavior

As is shown throughout the time series visualizations, subsequent research following Kolar and Zabkar (2010) continue a trend towards quantitative models that situate authenticity as a variable in tourist motivation and/or satisfaction (see Domínguez-Quintero, González-Rodríguez, & Paddison, 2020; Lin & Liu, 2018; Park et al., 2019; Shi et al., 2020; Zhou, Zhang, & Edelheim, 2013). This also includes, more specifically, perceived authenticity of destination image to behavioral intention (see Abascal, 2019; Jimenez-Barreto, Rubio, & Campo, 2020; Ramkissoon & Uysal, 2011; Taheri, Farrington, Curran, & O'Gorman, 2018).

Further, a cluster of research interrogating the subtleties of satisfaction in relation to authenticity, including brand loyalty, (re-) visit intention, perceived quality, and perceived value is observed (see Akhoondnejad, 2016; Fu, 2019; See & Goh, 2019; Yi, Lin, Jin, & Luo, 2017; Yi et al., 2018). There is also considerable interest in the relationship of perceived value to souvenir purchasing behavior (see Fu, Liu, Wang, & Chao, 2018; Lin & Wang, 2012; Xie, Wu, & Hsieh, 2012). Additionally, a concentration of research on involvement as a strong indicator of perceived authenticity develops (see Gao, Lin, & Zhang, 2020; Lu, Chi, & Liu, 2015; Scarpi, Mason, & Raggiotto, 2019; Zhang & Xie, 2019).

Interestingly, food and restaurants appear as a distinct cluster of research in this sample. This first appears in the 2011–2015 time series (Fig. 12). This research examines perceived authenticity of food to destination revisit intention (see Chung, Kim, Lee, & Kim, 2018; Robinson & Clifford, 2012); the role of authenticity in food familiarity/novelty and perceived risk (see Özdemir & Seyitoğlu, 2017; Youn & Kim, 2018); and how restaurant purchase intention is influenced by perceived authenticity of food attributes, restaurant image, and emotions while dining (see Kim, Song, & Youn, 2020; Kim, Youn, & Rao, 2017; Youn & Kim, 2017).

Market segmentation

Overarching these efforts to explore the nuances of consumer behavior there is a concentration of work aiming to identify tourist market segments that can be labelled as "authentic tourists" or "authenticity seeking tourists" (see Lenglet & Giannelloni, 2016; Rittichainuwat et al., 2018; Yeoman, Brass, & McMahon-Beattie, 2007). For example, Chhabra (2010) focuses specifically on Generation Y's perspectives on authenticity, uncovering the ideologies that influence their distinctive heritage tourism decision-making.

Power, stakeholders, and sustainability

The theme of *Power* is present in all the visualizations, although it changes positions slightly over time. In the first series, 1979–2000 (Fig. 10), it is connected to *CulturalHeritage, Architecture*, and *HostGuest*. In 2001–2010 (Fig. 11), *Power* reduces in size slightly, while connecting to the emerging theme of *Stakeholders* and *Development*. Then, in 2011–2015 (Fig. 12) *Stakeholders* becomes a central node for *Power, Development, Sustainability*, and *Production*, and while less prominent in 2016–2020 (Fig. 13), the thematic connections remain similar during this time and in the sample as whole (Fig. 9).

Power and ideology

The earliest research on authenticity and power focuses on ideology and politics. This includes studies of tourists' photographic practices capturing host-guest interactions (see Chalfen, 1979; Cohen et al., 1992) and studies of authenticity and the ideological agendas of tourism promotion (see Ehrentraut, 1993; Pitchford, 1995; Shenhav-Keller, 1993). While a small sub-set of the earliest research on authenticity, this quickly grew to studies of host-guest agency and stakeholder engagement.

Host-guest relations

In the earliest time series (Fig. 10), *HostGuest* and *Power* were connected, but in 2001–2010 (Fig. 11) *HostGuest* becomes more associated with *Gaze, Staged*, and *SocialInteraction*. It then disappears from later time series, subsumed under the broader theme of *Stakeholders* or the more specific theme *Indigenous* depending on the research focus. These shifts illustrate both a change in language used in tourism research, where "host-guest" began to fall out of fashion in favor with the rise of stakeholder theory and shifts in research began to locate power outside of politics, broadly, and within touristic gazes (see Halvaksz, 2006; Maoz, 2006) thereby highlighting the specificity of marginalized groups, notably indigenous cultures. Thus, much of this research has shed light on the unequal power relations of hosts and guests, wherein tourists' preferences supersede local residents' place identity (see Bear et al., 2021; Bell, 2015; Soukhathammavong & Park, 2019; Su, Wall, & Ma, 2019; Wang, 2007). This disparity in agency can result in practices of unwelcome against tourists (see Fan, Wu, Wall, & Zhou, 2019; Gale et al., 2013) and acts of resistance (see Sorokina, Wang, & Cobos, 2018; Wei, Qian, & Sun, 2018).

Stakeholder engagement

Power remains an undercurrent of much stakeholder research in the sample. Some of which highlights the loss of community identity and authenticity that can result from the lack of stakeholder engagement and the othering practices of tourism (see Koot, 2016; Montero, 2020; Ounanian, 2019; Robbie, 2008; Xie, 2010; Xu et al., 2014; Yea, 2002). Conversely, some studies focus on the empowerment that comes with inclusion in development processes (see Croft, 2018; Davis, 2007; Di Domenico & Miller, 2012; Xie & Shi, 2019). Further, research that aims to give voice to destination stakeholders by investigating their perceptions of

authenticity in the tourism developments within their home communities is observed (see Cole, 2007; Lunchaprasith & Macleod, 2018; Macleod, 2009; Mantecón & Huete, 2008; Thomsen & Vester, 2016; Zhou et al., 2015). A particular cluster of this research frames stakeholder engagement and authenticity within sustainability discourses (see Alonso, O'Neill, & Kim, 2010; Cohen, 2002; Deville, Wearing, & McDonald, 2016; Tucker, 2001; Wall & Xie, 2005) or social corporate responsibility (Parrish & Downing, 2020).

Responsible, ethical, sustainable

Of the meta-themes, **MoralEthics**, is among the smaller and more peripheral (Fig. 14), representing research generally interested in ethics, morality, responsible tourism, justice, rights, and so on (Table 5). These themes do not appear in the time series analyses until 2011–2015 (Fig. 12) and then as a small, fringe node connected to *SocialInteraction*, and in the following time series, 2016–2020 (Fig. 13), it remains relatively peripheral, but grows to be connected to both *Nature* and *DiscourseAnalysis*. When examining the whole sample, this theme can be found situated between *Sustainability* and *Identity* (Fig. 9).

Most broadly, research within this area is interested in the consequences of tourist behavior, including tourists' moral or ethical judgments of themselves and others (Foster, 1986). Tourism with ethical or responsible undertones, such as volunteer tourism and ecotourism, are used as a way of rationalizing or elevating touristic choices, while also linking them more directly to personal identities (Canavan, 2018; Crossley, 2012; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2003; McWha et al., 2016; Rickly & Vidon, 2017). For example, Mkono (2020) applies a moral hypocrisy framework to uncover the eco-hypocrisy and *in*authenticity of supposedly environmentally conscious tourism behavior represented in social media.

Additionally, a sub-set of this research considers the role of sustainability in authenticity of experience. While Sims (2009) examines local food choices as a means of enhancing sustainability and authenticity of experience, Biraglia, Gerrath, and Usrey (2018) assess sustainable tourism decision-making and tourists' attraction to the altruistic images of tourism companies (see also Wu, Cheng, Ai, & Wu, 2020).

Socio-technologies and sharing economies

Considering the time scale of this review, 1979–2020, it is to be expected that the role of technologies would not be observed until the later time series. However, what was not anticipated was the significance this research would have when analyzing the full sample, thus comprising the meta-theme **Technologies** (Fig. 14, Table 5). While relatively peripheral, this meta-theme is most prominently connected to **Marketing**, **ConsumerBehavior**, and **Hospitality**, and by examining the emergence and evolution of its comprising themes over time, it is forecast to grow in prominence.

Technologies

The themes *Technology* and *VirtualReality* first appear in the 2011–2015 time series (Fig. 12) as peripheral nodes stemming from *Interpretation*. However, these themes disappear from the subsequent time series and do not appear in the analysis of the full sample. This suggests a distinct burst of research period that has since evolved towards other areas. Indeed, there has been a particular interest in examining the role of digital technologies and virtual/augmented realties on tourists' experiences and perceptions of authenticity. This research assesses virtual reality as a tool for offering potential tourists a glimpse of the on-site experience (see Guttentag, 2010; Jimenez-Barreto et al., 2020; Kim, Lee & Jung, 2020). Moreover, virtual reality and digital supplements may offer opportunities for expanding touristic experience within vulnerable sites (see Bohlin & Brandt, 2014; Dueholm & Smed, 2014; Frenzel & Frisch, 2020; Guttentag, 2010). This is an area of research that has tremendous potential for understanding the extent to which gamification, augmented realities, and digital enhancements affect authenticity.

Social media

While the themes *OnlineReview* and *Netnography* first appear in the 2011–2015 time series (Fig. 12), in 2016–2020 they shift to form part of a cluster of research centered on *SocialMedia*, which is also branches to the themes of *OnlineTravelWriting* and *DestinationImage* (Fig. 13). A similar cluster of research is observed in the analysis of the whole sample (Fig. 9). While some of this research focuses on the analysis of cultural representations in online environments (blogs, social media, destination information, etc.), which was discussed above in the section Culture, heritage, and commodification, we can also observe broader trends that investigate the distinct ways authenticity discourses surface and users engage in authentication processes on social media.

Tourism related user-generated content places the individual in a position of power and privilege. Yet, this content is shared on platforms that espouse populist, egalitarian, and non-elitist values, which inspires questions about authentication processes (Duffy, 2019). Lugosi (2016) conceptualizes a socio-technological approach to authentication of user-generated content as experiential objects. Social networking sites and social media platforms are virtual spaces where objects, actions, and experiences are ascribed value by users, and the negotiation of this value employs authentication processes connecting human and non-human actors (see Kim & Kim, 2020; Wang & Alasuutari, 2017). More specifically, van Nuenen (2019) terms this algorithmic authenticity.

Sharing economies

In the 2016–2020 time series (Fig. 13), *SharingEconomy* and *PeerToPeerAccommodation* appear as peripheral yet rather large nodes that strongly co-occur, with weaker connections to *Loyalty*. Indeed, these appear as strongly co-occurring in the full sample analysis as well, while adding a connection to *PurchaseIntention* (Fig. 9), illustrating that the current research on these themes in relation to authenticity is largely focused on consumer behavior.

In the context of the sharing economy, much of the research in the sample focuses on peer-to-peer accommodation (Airbnb, HomeAway, homestays, home swap, etc.) as offering a more authentic experience than hotel accommodation (see Andriotis & Agiomirgianakis, 2014; Akarsu, Foroudi, & Melewar, 2020; Mody, Hanks, & Dogru, 2019; Souza, Kastenholz, & Barbosa, 2019; Mura, 2015). Relating to the themes in the Consumer behavior section, there is an interest in examining the significance of perceived authenticity to (re)purchase intention (see Liang, Choi, & Joppe, 2018; Mody et al., 2019; Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak, & Morrison, 2017). Further, due to the nature of the sharing economy offering non-traditional forms of hospitality, some studies examine authenticity specifically through the lens of hospitality and host-guest relations (see Shi, Gursoy, & Chen, 2019; Shuqair, Pinto, & Mattila, 2019).

The sharing economy often includes interactive platforms, which are essential to social networking, crafting destination image and tourists' expectations, as well as booking services (Akarsu et al., 2020). Andriotis and Agiomirgianakis (2014) suggest that the sharing economy builds upon virtues of hospitality through technologies. As a result, the sharing economy's connections to collaborative consumption can be observed through various online platforms that allow for hosting electronic word-of-mouth and sharing user-generated content (see Kim & Kim, 2020; Liang et al., 2018). Thus, it is predicted that future research on authenticity in these areas will likely bring together social media and the sharing economy.

Research challenges and opportunities

While authenticity is a much-debated concept, it has been suggested that the crucial question should not be “what is authenticity?”, but rather “how has authenticity been used?”, “who needs authenticity and why?”, and “what does authenticity do?” (Bendix, 1997; Rickly-Boyd, 2012a). In the Findings presented above, much of the research to date has been focused on the question of how authenticity is used, with the latter two questions leaving considerable research opportunities. However, the overuse of the term authenticity and divergent methodological approaches present serious challenges for the future of the concept.

Challenges

If authenticity is everything, it is nothing

As this review has evidenced, authenticity discourses have found their way into nearly every corner of tourism research. While some have argued that its omnipresence creates an unstable concept in need of simplification (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006a), for the most part researchers have found its multifurcations to be an asset. As the time series analyses show, research interested in the concept has only grown exponentially. Nevertheless, there must be a care in its use, otherwise we risk negating it entirely.

Most critically, due to the colloquial usage of the term, it is common to find authenticity used as simply descriptive of an attraction or experience without interrogating its conceptual significance or theoretical undertones. This creates a serious hurdle for researchers trying to gain a robust understanding of authenticity, impinging upon both its conceptual development and its investigation. Therefore, this is a challenge for the broader tourism research community as much as it for authenticity researchers, specifically. When authenticity is not the specific subject of investigation, other descriptive terms should be encouraged as alternatives.

Further, and perhaps because of its pervasiveness, there is a tendency to carve out convenient “new” labels, rather than build upon the existing approaches of objective, constructive, postmodern, and existential authenticities. While many of these efforts find their way to publication, unfortunately few add value to the conceptualization of authenticity. Instead, what results is a growing number of qualifiers that do little more than limit the concept within specific case studies. That is not to suggest that these four approaches to authenticity are the only ones that can exist, and indeed, as outlined above in Theoretical approaches, carefully considered, robust scholarship has diversified our theoretical avenues, infusing phenomenology, performance theories, and psychoanalysis into the canon. Thus, a major challenge for tourism researchers is to uphold the well-evidenced approaches to authenticity, to enhance their analytical potential, and to anchor additional approaches in substantial schools of thought that will have longevity in the field.

Methodological silos

As evidenced in Fig. 5, the majority of authenticity research is qualitative. However, looking at this over time, we can observe that quantitative analyses are growing, particularly in the last five years (Table 1). While the diversification of methodologies is welcomed, there appears to be also be a silo-effect beginning in which qualitative and quantitative researchers infrequently cross this boundary to incorporate and build upon the findings of colleagues. Notably, Kolar and Zabkar's (2010) study is exemplar of an early quantitative assessment of authenticity that built its variables from previous qualitative studies. As a result, the model speaks across this divide and inspires further research (see also Kirillova et al., 2017a). However, many of the subsequent quantitative studies in this sample that work primarily from Kolar and Zabkar (2010) to build further quantitative models, most often structural equation models, focus on specific case studies and do not engage in broader conceptual discussions. Similarly, qualitative researchers most often build their investigations from other qualitative work, thereby excluding the observed mediated effects of various authenticity dimensions from their research design. A lack of cross-methodological conversation threatens to hinder the conceptual development of authenticity.

Opportunities

Theoretical development

For those critical of authenticity, who suggest that it is too complex and unstable, there may already be too many approaches afoot. However, this review has illustrated the great breadth and depth to which authenticity stretches across tourism research, thus supporting the need for distinct approaches to its study. Wang's (1999) objective, constructive, postmodern, and existential approaches are now firmly entrenched in the field. Further, the increased attention to the processes of authentication and relationality of approaches have evidenced the importance of performative authenticity, and it is gaining popularity as a distinct approach. Most recently, Canavan and McCamley (2021) suggest the incorporation of post-postmodern theory into authenticity research to capture the shift from modernist (objective, constructive) to postmodernist (deconstructive, subjective, hyperreal) to post-postmodernist (reconstructive, performative, alterreal) manifestations.

While cognizant of the challenge that the overproduction of new authenticities presents, there remains a gap in our approaches in terms of how we account for the role of authenticity in negative or traumatic experiences. Instead, authenticity is most often interpreted as a positive feeling. In recent years, there has been growing attention to anxiety (Kirillova et al., 2017a; Sharma & Rickly, 2019; Vidon & Rickly, 2018), avoidance (Canavan, 2019), estrangement (Serhat & Uzuncan, 2020), and inauthenticity (Mkono, 2020). Notably, Zhou, Zhang, Zhang, and Li (2018) highlight the phenomenon of collective amnesia as "negative authenticity" in which host communities and/or tourists actively "forget" unwanted aspects of the destination's past. While drawing together constructive and postmodern approaches, negative authenticity suggests a kind of creative destruction. Relatedly, a psychoanalytic approach to authenticity is a newer approach to consider the ways tourists rationalize their behavior, whether refusing to acknowledge unwanted elements of destination culture as authentic (Knudsen et al., 2016) or reframing unpleasant experiences as enjoyable adventures (Vidon et al., 2018). Thus, this an area of opportunity for authenticity research.

Experiential versus existential authenticity

A keen observer of the themes and meta-themes produced in this review would have noticed that "experience" is not present. Yet, in the discussion of the findings, the broad notion of authentic experiences appears quite often. This is the result of two factors. First, discussion of the authenticity of tourist and/or host experience is so pervasive in the sample that it was deemed a common denominator early in the open and axial coding processes. Second, "authentic experience" presents challenges for concept building, as it is not always clear what exactly is under analysis, which made coding and theme development a challenge.

As Wang (1999) notes in his rethinking of authenticity, much of the earlier research was object-oriented so that experiences of authenticity were assessed epistemologically. This substantiates the need for an activity-based approach to understand what activates tourists' experience of an existential state of Being. The dimensions of intrapersonal and interpersonal further establish an applicable framework for existential authenticity. However, in the wave of research that has followed we can observe a loss of rigor in applying the concept. Existential authenticity has come to account for any experience, even if not activating a sense of self. Thus, tourists' reports of "authentic experiences" are too often interpreted as "existential authenticity" and positive in nature.

This presents a research opportunity to both clarify our terms and enhance their analytical power, thereby raising questions for future research:

- How do we conceptualize the relationship of experience and authenticity outside of existentialism?
- Can phenomenology's relationship with consciousness, intentionality, embodiment, and lived experience be of use to supplement or extend existential/experiential authenticity?
- Is the experiential authenticity captured by performative authenticity robust enough to fill this gap?

Efforts to refine existential authenticity through the infusion of existentialist philosophy are making headway, as scholars are explicating the nuances of existential authenticity in relation to other existential concepts, such as freedom, responsibility, and ambiguity (see Brown, 2013; Kirillova, 2019; Light & Brown, 2020; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006a; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006a; Wassler & Kirillova, 2019). Most recently, Rickly, Vidon, and Knudsen (2021) expose the ethical deficit of existential authenticity, evidencing that most research that has attempted to bring together ethics and existential authenticity is lacking philosophically, and that future research should consider Beauvoir's existential ethics as a way forward.

Relationality of authenticity

The relationality of authenticity has been gaining acceptance and studies increasingly employ multiple approaches in their research design (Andrade-Matos, Richards, & Azevedo Barbosa, 2022; Cohen & Cohen, 2012; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Rickly-Boyd, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Zhang and Yin, 2020) (Fig. 7). This is a positive direction for future research and suggests the possibility of greater conceptual development. Specifically, this is an opportunity for qualitative and quantitative research to be brought into conversation and reduce a potential silo effect. Considering the research to date, attention to the relationality of authenticity suggests that authenticity performs work, and therefore is essential to answering the broader question: what does authenticity do? It also inspires further questions:

- How do we reconcile the various scales (individual to society, producer to consumer, etc.) at which authenticity and authentication processes operate?
- How do material encounters, embodiment, and subjective meaning-making influence one another in the experience of authenticity?

- Is authenticity a factor in mindfulness, well-being, ethics, or happiness? If so, how to account for its dialects of alienation and anxiety in this relationship?
- How do we investigate authenticity in virtual environments, including online, social media, and virtual and augmented reality?

Moore, Buchmann, Månsson and Fisher (2021) argue that the dualism of authentic experience – "experiences of the authentic" (objects, places, cultures) and "experiences of authenticity" (personal feelings) – can be reconciled by approaching authenticity as negotiated and relational through signifying processes. The issue of relationality is further explored in the most recent research by Anastasiadou and Vettese (2021) on 3D printed souvenirs. The transience of the souvenir's physical state and performativity of tourists' engagement with the production process suggests a personal infusion of aura and enhancement of authenticity. Similarly, Andrade-Matos et al. (2022) introduce complexity paradigm to analyze authenticity as an integrated co-creation system in their investigation of the situational, contextual, and actor-related factors of cacao plantations turned tourist attractions.

Authentication processes

The hot/cool framework proposed by Cohen and Cohen (2012) has been monumental for uncovering the social processes that drive authentication (see also Zhu, 2012). Importantly, it provides a perspective for highlighting the power dynamics of authenticity. As such, research on authentication moves beyond the uses of authenticity to suggest the means to address the broader question: Who needs authenticity and why? In addition, it inspires the following questions:

- How do we situate individual uses of authenticity discourses, particularly in terms of responsible/ethical/sustainable tourism behavior, into broader social processes that authenticate such practices?
- Can we account for multiple stakeholder voices and various levels of power and privilege in authentication research?
- How do the social processes of authentication operate in online contexts? In what ways are they influenced by and/or contribute to technological and algorithmic processes?

Some aspects of these authentication research opportunities can be observed in the latest publications. Salet (2021) considers the production of authenticity in online travel writing platforms, highlighting the roles of competition and participatory journalism. Further, Lovell and Thurgill (2021) expand our understanding of hot authentication by incorporating imagination and the suspension of disbelief in their investigation of tourists' pursuit of urban legends.

Conclusion

This paper has aimed to produce a systematic literature review of the authenticity research in tourism studies. The challenge of conducting this review is the incredible ubiquity of the concept in the field as a colloquial as well as analytical term. As a result, search criteria were established to identify research articles interested specifically in the concept, either for concept-building or as a key variable in another relationship under study. The review began with the first paper meeting the search criteria, published in 1979, and includes articles through 2020, thus representing 42 years of research. While the first 10 years of publications on the topic appear at a relatively slower rate, we can observe an exponential increase in research activity over time.

The analysis incorporated mixed methods of thematic coding, descriptive statistics, and keyword co-frequency analysis to facilitate an examination of the sample from various perspectives. Coding revealed major trends in theoretical approach and methodology. Constructive authenticity is the most prominent approach, although the majority of articles use more than one approach. Performative authenticity is an emerging approach of the last 10 years and gaining recognition, and most recently a psychoanalytic approach offers potential for novel insights. The majority use qualitative methods, while quantitative analysis has been on the rise in the last five years.

Keyword analysis, which incorporated open and axial coding, was instrumental for gaining insights to the sample as a whole and for distinct time series. Topics related to culture and heritage were most prevalent, with specific interests in its commodification, staging, and performance, as well as consumer behavior in relation to tourists' perceptions of authenticity. Notably, following Wang's (1999) publication, existential authenticity emerged as a popular area of research for incorporating experiential dimensions. More recent trends incorporate stakeholders' perspectives on authenticity into sustainability studies and examine authentication processes in relation to power and agency. The latest emerging areas of research turn attention to technologies, including social media and virtual reality.

From the analysis, the review suggests two main challenges for future authenticity research: the colloquial overuse of the term and the threat of methodological silos. First, the overuse of the term without connections to existing analytical approaches weakens it overall. Second, research trends suggest that there is little cross-methodological consideration in the development of new research, which threatens to foster divergence rather than collectively building authenticity as a concept. However, the review also revealed research opportunities related to: 1) theoretical development – there remain aspects of authenticity not fully addressed by current theoretical approaches; 2) experiential versus existential authenticity – currently there is an over-reliance on existential authenticity for all experiential dimensions of authenticity; 3) relationality of authenticity – understanding the value of multiple approaches to the investigation of authenticity; and 4) authentication processes – considering the power dynamics and social processes that drive authenticity.

The papers included in the launch of this Curated Collection take steps towards addressing these research opportunities and evidence the robust potential of future interest in authenticity. Canavan and McCamley (2021) and Andrade-Matos et al. (2022) introduce potential theoretical interventions to capture the evolving and relational character of authenticity. Moore

et al. (2021) address the duality of experiential dimensions (experiences of the authentic versus experiences of authenticity), while Rickly et al. (2021) highlight the ethical deficit of existential authenticity and its misuse. The other papers delve into various aspects of the production/consumption of authenticity and nuances of authentication processes that accompany it, including 3D souvenir printing (Anastasiadou & Vettese, 2021), tourist imagination and urban legend (Lovell & Thurgill, 2021), and online travel writing (Salet, 2021).

Finally, this review has a few notable limitations. It has aimed to review a large time scale (1979–2020), thereby generating a large sample ($N = 458$), which means some finer details may not be elaborated and the strict search criteria may have excluded some relevant papers. Authenticity and tourism research stretch far beyond the boundaries of the Web of Science category "Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism," and there many papers that use tourism as a context of study but publish in sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, geography, economics, and many other journals. However, when considering where and how to establish the boundaries of in/exclusion for this review, the objectives were carefully applied to focus on authenticity research with tourism journals. Further, this review was limited to English language publications. Due to the popularity of authenticity research in the field, there are likely many noteworthy publications in other languages that would be valuable for future reviews. Additionally, future reviews might take a specific interest in the geographic scope of authors, collaboration networks, and co-citation to understand the trends of the production of authenticity research.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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