

# Authenticity as an Antecedent of the Tourist Experience in Measuring the Gap Between Tourist Experiences at an Accommodation Establishment and a Tourist Attraction in Lesotho



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**Abstract** Authenticity has been a key concept in the description of the genuineness and realness of various cultural heritages, making it very important for the success of cultural festivals and events. Tourists seek authentic experience through engaging in meaningful conversation with indigenous people, thus experiencing the real lives of other people in a geographic area different from their own. Tourists seek out authentic and unique experiences that motivate them to explore cultural events that are new to them, and authenticity is usually a measure of their perception of the genuineness of tourism attractions and experiences. Authenticity refers to the quality of the experience relevant to those who seek it. The purpose of this paper is to explore whether authenticity can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at an accommodation establishment and a tourist attraction in Lesotho. The researchers adopted qualitative content analysis, following content-logical guidelines and step-by-step paradigms before providing qualification in the form of tables. By utilising qualitative content analysis as a methodological approach the researchers followed a positivist epistemology, as it is considered to be objective in its utilisation to reveal true findings. The findings from 96 peer-reviewed published research reports (ScienceDirect Elsevier and Scopus, but excluding research methodology reports) show the dimensions local culture, involvement, meaningfulness, and social interaction to be the most appropriate for measuring authenticity. Furthermore, authenticity can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at accommodation establishments and tourist attractions in Lesotho.

**Keywords** Authenticity · Local culture · Involvement · Meaningfulness · Social interaction

**JEL Classifications** L83 · Sports · Gambling · Restaurants · Recreation · Tourism

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## 1 Introduction

Since 1990–2022, authenticity has become the main term denoting the legitimacy and origin of traditional heritages, and the concept has come to be regarded as significant in the context of traditional festivals and events (Akhoondnejad, 2016; Brida et al., 2013). For tourists, authenticity is usually a measure of their perception of the genuineness of tourism attractions and experiences (Akhoondnejad, 2016). Tourists seek authentic experience through engaging in meaningful conversation with indigenous people (MacCannell, 1976 as cited in Pearce, 2012; Paulauskaite et al., 2017), thus experiencing the real lives of other people in a geographic area different from their own (Pearce, 2012). Moreover, tourists seek authenticity in the form of originality and trustworthiness, which play a key role in current life, changing life ethic, political interpretations, and customer behaviour (Carroll, 2015: 2). For this reason, authenticity is regarded as a pull factor for tourists, and as various tourism businesses compete for customers, authenticity is a key aspect governing tourists' travel decision making (Bernardi, 2019). Nonetheless, it is contended that in scientific research, knowledge concerning the contribution of service providers towards the tourist experience is insufficient (Pan et al., 2018).

According to Makwindi (2016: V), Lesotho tourism is not real, despite the slogan: "Real People, Real Mountains, and Real Culture"; moreover, at cultural sites in Lesotho, "there is an apparent research deficiency into the nature of tourism experience". Makwindi (2016: 128) further observes that visitors to Thaba-Bosiu expressed numerous complaints relating to inadequacies in respect of culture, food, attire, and performances. In reporting on a different study conducted at a different location, Yang and Wall (2009) encouraged the development of cultural products of high quality to attract local and foreign tourists. In the light of this, the authors contend that authenticity can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at accommodation establishments (such as the Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and tourist attractions (such as the Moshoeshoe Walk event). Begin with an introduction of your paper. If required you may change the title but without changing its format.

## 2 Literature Review

Cultural authenticity and natural resources are well documented as being important and valuable tools in that countries and destinations utilise them to attract tourists (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2020). As the experience economy matures, it evolves into authenticity because consumers search for real experiences rather than manufactured "products" (Yeoman, 2008). Raj and Musgrave (2009) explain that commodification is an indication that the demands of tourism, as well as events, have led to changes in and the destruction of the sense of cultural performances and unique events, and that staged authenticity constitutes

imitated experiences that are created purely to satisfy the needs of those attending them. Boorstin (1961) argues that there is no such thing as authenticity, and that everything that tourists experience is nothing more than imitation, simulation, and fabrication. In similar vein, Moutinho and Vargas-Sanchez (2018) propose that the contemporary universal world is full of counterfeit authenticity and pseudo-events staged simply to create photo opportunities.

Golomb (1995) as cited in Cohen (2010:5) explains authenticity as “experiencing one’s authentic self”, while Wang (1999) states that authenticity in the tourism community has been introduced as existential authenticity, defined by researchers (Cohen, 2010:7; Mavondo & Reisinger, 2005:217; Morgan et al., 2010:32; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006:300) as being in touch with one’s inner self, knowing one’s self, having a sense of one’s own identity and then living in accord with one’s sense of oneself. According to Kim et al., (2011) and Wang (1999), objective authenticity is the authenticity of archetypes, and consequently, the authentic tourist experience correlates to the theory of knowledge (epistemology) of experience (awareness) of the authenticity of the genuine. Wang (1999) and Kim et al. (2011) describe constructive authenticity as the authenticity projected onto visited objects by tourists based on their beliefs, preferences, influences, and so on. Scholars such as Ahlin (2018) and Rickly and Vidon (2018) argue that authenticity, by contrast, is unique, real, and factual such that it is impossible to duplicate the experience, while Gilmore (2007) states that authenticity refers to the quality experience relevant to those who seek it and regard such quality experience as authentic. Richards (2008) notes that tourists search for authentic and unique experiences that motivate them to explore cultural events unknown to other tourists. For the purposes of this paper, authenticity refers to the availability of unique displays of original cultural heritage at an accommodation establishment and a tourist attraction in Lesotho.

McNulty and Koff (2014) assert that engagement with cultural heritage includes taking tours and viewing various places that form part of the important past or the contemporary cultural identity of a specific cluster of society, while van Zyl (2005) states that cultural heritage is preserved to promote a unique way of understanding living cultures. Kempniak et al., (2017) explain that cultural heritage tourists travel mainly to experience other cultures and acquire knowledge about the past.

In the context of tourist attractions, Kang et al., (2014) postulate that cultural heritage events are used to commemorate local culture and past practices and as a leisure activity to absorb heritage guests. In the context of the lodging industry, scholars (Lee & Chhabra, 2015; Mendiratta, 2013; Timothy & Teye, 2009) indicate that heritage hotels offer the tourists who demand a luxury experience an opportunity to be exposed to the past, sculpture, ethos, styles, customs, and views of different stages that countries have passed through. At Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village, guests may sleep in the chalets and have an authentic Lesotho cultural experience (Lesotho Review, 2019).

Cultural heritage events contribute significantly to “the interpretation of local cultural heritage or as a tool for economic development for both the local economy and host community” (Kang et al., 2014:71). A number of scholars (Kang et al., 2014; Richards, 2008) identify a correlation between cultural heritage and guest

satisfaction, and authenticity in particular is mentioned as being a key aspect of guest satisfaction. On the other hand, both Chang (1997:47) and Lee and Chhabra (2015:103) stipulate that heritage lodging possesses the ability to be a sustainable tourism product in a wide array of contexts as “a tool to promote civic pride, local identity, and cultural capital”. Similarly, Foster (2017) asserts that historic hotels have the potential not only to be an attraction in the form of a tourist destination but also to act as a catalyst for community development as a platform to disseminate information which holds great promise for public historians.

In the lodging industry, heritage and historic hotels are heritage resources that have not been well researched (Lee & Chhabra, 2015). It was for this reason that the study reported on in this paper focused on Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village as a heritage and historic accommodation facility as a basis for investigating tourist experience gaps.

In a study assessing the effects of heritage status the heritage building on minor lodging buildings, Pongsermpol and Upala (2018:92) state that their study lays a solid foundation for evaluating “physical, economic, value, and social issues”, and go on to suggest that further research be undertaken using their study as a standard to investigate hotel changes and impacts (refurbishment). Since Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village was refurbished to become a full hospitality establishment, the value of a study to investigate tourist experience gaps between an accommodation establishment (such as Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (such as the Moshoeshoe Walk event) was recognised. Knowledge relating to the role of service providers in the tourist experience is lacking, and it is this that provided the motivation for the study undertaken to measure tourist experience gaps in terms of authenticity between an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event).

### 3 Methodology

The purpose of the study was to explore whether authenticity can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at accommodation establishments and attractions in Lesotho. To achieve the objective of the study, the researchers adopted qualitative content analysis following contentological guidelines and step-by-step paradigms before making qualification in the form of tables (Philipp, 2000, 2014). By utilising qualitative content analysis as a methodological approach, the researchers embraced a positivist epistemology, as objectivity was sought as a means to reveal true findings (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

## 4 Results and Discussions

In support of the research problem, a systematic literature review was conducted. Table 1 shows 30 articles reviewed to support authenticity as an antecedent of the tourist experience. These articles were selected based on a keyword search including “authenticity AND tourist experience”.

Table 1 lists the 30 articles identified that support the concept of *authenticity* as an antecedent of the *tourist experience*. From these articles, *local culture*, *involvement*, *meaningfulness*, and *social interaction* were identified as the most relevant dimensions for an investigation of authenticity.

### 4.1 Local Culture

Vilet (2011) defines local culture as something that one is immersed in from an early age, and that is safeguarded by literature, history, faith, educators, and parents. Local culture is defined as how people perceive and view the world, their way of responding to and evaluating the world, and how people interact with others both verbally and non-verbally (Dingwall et al., 2018). Guleria (2019) and Said and Maryono, (2018) consider culture to be one of the pull factors motivating people to travel to a particular destination. Because local culture forms part of a memorable tourist experience, visitors who engage with and relate to local culture build an exceptional and unforgettable vacation experience (Kanagasapathy, 2017; Tsai, 2016). For the purpose of the study, local culture was taken to refer to the opportunity to experience Lesotho’s local culture at an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event).

Local culture in the lodging industry includes traditional food and an authentic way of cooking (Ivanova et al., 2014:123). Ćinjurević and Almir (2014) concur, stating that local culture includes aspects related to cuisine (local food) and dining in a traditional restaurant. Paulauskaite et al. (2017) suggest that guests in the accommodation sector

**Table 1** Studies supporting authenticity as an antecedent of the tourist experience

Construct	Authors
Authenticity	Akhoondnejad (2016); Brida et al. (2013); Boorstin (1961); Carroll (2015); Cohen (2010); Chang (1997); Foster (2017); Kim et al. (2011); Kempiak et al. (2017); Kang et al. (2014); Lee and Chhabra (2015); Lesotho Review (2019); Makwindi (2016); Mavondo and Reisinger (2005); Mendiratta (2013); McNulty and Koff (2014); Moutinho and Vargas-Sanchez (2018); Morgan et al., (2010); OECD, (2020); Pearce (2012); Pan, et al. (2018); Pongsermpol and Upala (2018); Raj and Musgrave (2009); Richards (2008); Steiner and Reisinger (2006); Timothy and Teye (2009); Zyl (2005); Wang (1999); Yang and Wall (2009); Yeoman (2008)
Number of articles	30

consider experiences to be particularly authentic when they interact with the local culture, and Frumkin (2012) explains that in the hotel setting, local culture can be demonstrated through the incorporation of art; thus, the inclusion of traditional furniture contributes to creating a unique experience. Paulauskaite et al. (2017:17) make the observation that in the lodging industry, tourists' contact with local culture is mediated by sociability factors, including "personal and companionable experience, sparking feelings of familiarity", which in turn results in authentic experiences.

Guttentag et al. (2017) state that in the context of the lodging industry, tourists derive pleasure from the distinctive features and unpretentious feel of accommodation, customised service, a special conversation with the hosts, and the opportunity to acquire local knowledge. As part of attractions such as events, the inclusion of local culture (local cultural festivals or events) contributes towards the development of the local economy and increases the opportunity for recreational activities (Blešić et al., 2014).

Richards (2008) asserts that the demand for an authentic experience in cultural events has resulted in the modification of cultural events content to meet the needs and expectations regarding authentic local culture of those attending the event. Blešić et al. (2014) state that internationally the number of events that incorporate cultural content are increasing significantly, and that to further enrich local culture, events introduce international travellers to indigenous people and their traditions.

The study conducted by Seyfi et al. (2019) to explore memorable cultural experiences in Paris contains the recommendation that further research be directed towards creating a correlation model and investigating other important aspects. In an attempt to fill this gap, the study reported on here used local culture as a dimension of authenticity to investigate tourist experience gaps between an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event). The literature included in Table 2 consists of articles that support local culture as a dimension of authenticity.

Table 2 lists the 17 articles supporting local culture as a dimension of authenticity.

**Table 2** Studies supporting local culture as a dimension of authenticity

Dimension	Authors
Local culture	Ahlin (2018); Blešić et al. (2014); Činjarević and Almir (2014); Dingwall et al. (2018); Frumkin (2012); Gilmore (2007); Guleria (2019); Guttentag et al. (2017); Ivanova et al. (2014); Kanagasapapathy (2017); Paulauskaite et al. (2017); Richards (2008); Rickly and Vidon (2018); Said & Maryono (2018); Seyfi et al. (2019); Tsai (2016); Vilet (2011)
Number of articles	17

## 4.2 *Involvement*

Involvement is described as a “state of motivation, arousal, or interest” (Havitz & Dimanche, 1997, 1999; McWilliams & Crompton, 1997, as cited in Kim, et al., 2009: 249; Warnick & Bojanic, 2010). Scholars (Ayazlar & Arslan, 2017; Paulauskaite et al., 2017) define involvement as those experiences that are unique and fit in with a person’s interests. Yu et al. (2019) state that tourists more clearly recall experiences that fit in closely with their interests, and that involvement increases when a person takes part in tourism activities while on vacation. For the study reported on in this paper, involvement refers to participation in recreational activities at an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event).

Cevik and Simskek (2017) note that in the lodging industry, guests often seek opportunities for recreation and fun. Chhabra et al. (2001) undertook research to ascertain the authenticity of staged Highland Games; the results revealed that attendees viewed the games as being authentic, even though participation in the games involved staging. In their study on green events, Wong et al. (2015) make the observation that involvement forces people to reconstruct and think about relaxation and leisure activities influencing their participation and behaviour. With regard to the lodging industry, scholars such as Costa et al. (2004) and Vovk and Vovk (2017) state that guests involve themselves in recreational activities and that these leisure activities fall within the category of “leisure, fitness and sports activities, as well as live entertainment”. Hemsworth (2018) mentions that guests no longer enjoy simply staying in luxury rooms, but also seek outdoor recreational activities that involve experiencing something real, such as taking adventure tours. At Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village, guests can enjoy an adventure tour and are educated about Thaba-Bosiu, the mountain used by King Moshoeshoe I as a fortress to protect the Basotho nation (Review, 2019).

White et al. (2014:1) state, “Recreation contributes greatly to the physical, mental, and spiritual health of individuals, bonds family and friends, and instils pride in natural and cultural heritage”, while Wong et al. (2015) assert that involvement in events yields positive consumer behaviour and loyalty. At accommodation establishments, recreational activities can offer guests memorable experiences, which can in turn assist in attracting more new customer segments while simultaneously growing the loyalty of existing guests (Hemsworth, 2018).

In their study on the creation of experience value in tourism, Prebensen et al. (2018) note that leisure and tourism scholars have made a significant contribution to the body of knowledge over the past two decades. Prebensen et al. (2018) emphasise that notwithstanding the efforts of these scholars, visitor participation, visitor behaviour, and the creation of quality experience remain areas for potential research that need to be investigated and understood in terms of their usage as well as their practical contributions. Therefore, the study discussed in this paper will fill this important omission by using involvement (participation in recreational activities) as a dimension of authenticity to investigate tourist experience gaps between an

**Table 3** Studies supporting involvement as a dimension of authenticity

Dimension	Authors
Involvement	Ayazlar and Arslan (2017); Cevik and Simskek (2017); Chhabra et al. (2001); Costa et al. (2004); Havitz and Dimanche, (1997, 1999); Hemsworth (2018); Kim et al., (2009); Review (2019); McWilliams and Crompton (1997); Paulauskaite et al. (2017); Prebensen et al. (2018); Vovk and Vovk (2017); Warnick and Bojanic, (2010); White et al. (2014); Wong et al. (2015); Yu et al. (2019)
Number of articles	17

accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event). The literature listed in Table 3 comprises articles that support involvement as a dimension of authenticity.

Table 3 lists the 17 articles identified as supporting involvement as a dimension of authenticity.

### 4.3 *Meaningfulness*

King et al., (2006: 180) postulate that meaning entails the notion that life has “significance beyond the trivial or momentary”, while Tov et al. (2019) assert that significance means that events have a positive effect on an individual’s life. Scholars (Chen et al., 2020; Movahed et al., 2020; Packer & Gill, 2017; Sthapit, 2017) express the view that meaningfulness is the way people discover the meaning of the over-tourism experience. Such meaningfulness, according to Ayazlar and Arslan (2017) and Yu et al. (2019), offers a sense of physical, responsive, or spiritual accomplishment. Sthapit and Coudounaris (2018) postulate that the tourist’s state of being happy is prompted by meaningfulness. For the purposes of the study, meaningfulness is understood as the availability of activities that result in meaning at accommodation establishments (such as Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and tourist attractions (such as the Moshoeshoe Walk event). Scholars (Paulauskaite et al., 2017; Tussyadiah & Pesonen, 2016) indicate that in the lodging industry, hotel guests seek meaningfulness when they interact with local people to have a unique experience in an authentic environment. This also sparks guests’ motivation to travel regularly, spend more time on leisure, and involve themselves in new leisure activities. Crespi-Vallbona and Richards (2007) express the view that in the context of cultural events, meaningfulness is the source of identity.

In the study conducted by Tov et al. (2019) on aspects of meaningful event experiences, the results revealed the need for research to elicit views on the experiences of visitors attending traditional events; as such events include cultural makeup and meaning. In the study discussed in this paper, meaningfulness was taken to be a dimension of authenticity in an investigation of tourist experience gaps between an



**Table 4** Studies supporting meaningfulness as a dimension of authenticity

Dimension	Authors
Meaningfulness	Ayazlar and Arslan (2017); Chen et al. (2020); Crespi-Vallbona and Richards (2007); King et al. (2006); Movahed et al. (2020); Packer and Gill (2017); Paulauskaite et al. (2017); Sthapit and Coudounaris (2018); Sthapit (2013); Tov et al. (2019); Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016); Yu et al. (2019)
Number of articles	12

accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event). The literature listed in Table 4 consists of articles that support meaningfulness as a dimension of authenticity.

Table 4 lists the 12 articles supporting meaningfulness as a dimension of authenticity.

#### 4.4 Social Interaction

Rummel (1976) classifies social interactions as performances, activities, or exercises between two or many persons sharing their experiences. Mele (2017:1) contends: “Social interaction is defined as the process by which people act and react to each other”, and Carpentier (2015:14) defines social interactions as “Any form of the social encounter between individuals” or “the general series of activities whereby two or more persons are in meaningful contact”. Tourism experiences emerge as people come into contact with other people (Larsen et al., 2019), and so the experiences of tourists are continuously intermediated over social relations (Reichenberger, 2014).

Tourists seek out authentic activities with opportunities for experiencing meaningful social interactions with indigenous inhabitants (Paulauskaite et al., 2017). Social interaction is one of the socio-psychological aspects motivating tourists to travel, and happy moments occur when tourists meet local people, fellow tourists, and other people encountered at random during the tour (Vuuren & Slabbert, 2011). For the study, social interaction was defined as an opportunity for social interaction between tourists and staff at an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event).

For tourists, event authenticity depends on existential authenticity, which is linked to the enjoyableness of both cultural and leisure activities or events, social life and meeting, and interacting with indigenous people or their counterparts (Richards, 2008). Nordvall et al. (2014) express the view that socialisation inspires people to attend events and that the social relations among people attending an event heighten the experience of the event. In the context of the lodging industry, Prayag and Ryan (2012) refer to social interaction as the communication between hotel employees and guests, while Paulauskaite et al. (2017) assert that the feeling of authentic experience occurs when there is close contact and interaction between tourists and local hosts in conjunction with shared information.

Scholars (Brendon et al., 2016; Park, 2016; Simons, 2019) explain that events present an opportunity for customer interaction, and Quinn and Wilks (2013) state that events themselves hold the promise of social interaction.

Scholars (Durantin et al., 2017; Jutbring, 2017a, 2017b; Park, 2016; Sun et al., 2019) further observe that events are social by nature and that they allow those attending them to engage in interaction and share memories with others; in that way, social interactions lead to meaningful experiences. Nordvall et al. (2014) assert that social interactions among those attending events make up a significant part of the event experience and ensure a greater degree of satisfaction for those attending. Laing and Mair (2015) note that social interaction at events has been identified as an aspect contributing to social attachment through learning new skills. Sun et al. (2019) are of the view that interactions among tourists to an increasing degree encourage positive behaviour responses not limited to the willingness to stay, a sense of pleasure, and loyalty.

Zgolli and Zaiem (2017) contend that in the lodging industry social interaction (interaction between guests) is a key aspect, as it forms the basis of human relationships that motivate tourists to go on holiday, and this social interaction gives rise to greater satisfaction, tourist intention to revisit, and loyalty. Also with regard to the lodging industry, Prayag and Ryan (2012) note that social interaction between hotel staff and guests leads to vacation satisfaction, behavioural intention to revisit, and destination competitiveness.

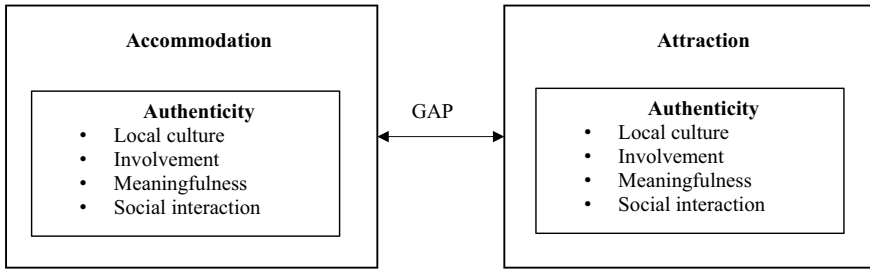
In the study conducted by Wilks and Quinn (2016) dealing with linking social and cultural capital, and heterotopia at events, further research is suggested as a means to find out how events change social relationships. The study reported on in this paper seeks to use social interaction (opportunity for social interaction) as a dimension of authenticity to examine tourist experience gaps between an accommodation establishment (Thaba-Bosiu Cultural Village) and a tourist attraction (Moshoeshoe Walk event). The articles listed in Table 5 support social interaction as a dimension of authenticity.

Table 5 lists the 20 articles supporting social interaction as a dimension of authenticity.

Based on the discussion of the results, a theoretical framework for authenticity as an antecedent of the tourist experience for measuring the gap between tourist

**Table 5** Studies supporting *social interaction* as a dimension of *authenticity*

Dimensions	Authors
Social interaction	Brendon et al. (2016); Carpentier (2015); Durantin et al. (2017); Jutbring (2017a, 2017b); Laing and Mair (2015); Larsen et al. (2019); Mele (2017); Nordvall et al. (2014); Paulauskaite et al. (2017); Park (2016); Prayag and Ryan (2012); Quinn and Wilks (2013); Reichenberger (2014); Richards (2008); Rummel (1976); Simons (2019); Sun et al. (2019); Vuuren and Slabbert (2011); Wilks and Quinn (2016); Zgolli and Zaiem (2017)
Number of articles	20



**Fig. 1** Theoretical framework

experiences at an accommodation establishment and a tourist attraction is proposed and is depicted in Fig. 1.

## 5 Conclusion

The purpose of the study reported on in this paper was to investigate whether authenticity can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at accommodation establishments and attractions in Lesotho. The findings reveal that authenticity is supported through the dimensions: local culture, involvement, meaningfulness, and social interaction. The practical implications of the findings are very important for strategic consideration by the managers of accommodation establishments and tourist attractions. In accommodation establishments and at tourist attractions, tourists seek authentic experiences, and so managers need to plan such that their facilities are able to improve tourists' authentic experiences in an effective way.

This paper makes a new contribution to the body of knowledge contained in the tourism and hospitality management literature, as none of the existing studies were found to have explored whether authenticity through the dimensions: local culture, involvement, meaningfulness, and social interaction can be applied as an antecedent of the tourist experience in measuring the gap between tourist experiences at an accommodation establishment and a tourist attraction in Lesotho. Since the authors used qualitative content analysis, future research could adopt a quantitative research methodology. Through the utilisation of the quantitative research approach, future studies could use confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) as multivariate statistical techniques to test the theoretical model proposed in this paper. The research in this context has yet to be conducted, in Lesotho specifically.

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