Review Article

Uncertainty Avoidance as a Moderating Factor to the Self-Congruity Concept: The Development of a Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

The aim of this article was to propose a framework based on the theory of self-congruity and on Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance. The framework was to combine destination personality, self-congruity, uncertainty avoidance, and tourists' revisit intention. The present conceptual paper proposed an integrated model of self-congruity which incorporates the effect of uncertainty avoidance. More importantly, the uncertainty avoidance was introduced as a moderator between self-congruity and revisit intention. Based on the theoretical framework proposed in this article, the estimated results affirmed the applicability of the theory of self-congruity for tourism research. Moreover, by extending the theoretical model through the incorporation of a variable of uncertainty avoidance in the context of tourism, this article offers a significant contribution to the tourism literature. It is important to understand how the theory of self-congruity applies across a broad cultural spectrum. This article also offers several implications for destination marketing organizations from a practical perspective.

Keywords

uncertainty avoidance, destination personality, cultural distance, self-congruity, revisit intention, Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory

Introduction

Consumer loyalty, as an essential component in marketing research, is closely linked to corporate performance (Reichheld, 1993). In service industries, it is a fact that the retention and maintenance of existing consumer cost less than the acquisition of new consumer (Reichheld, 1996). Naturally then, the management of consumer relationships and the promotion of consumer loyalty are vital for organizations. Tourists' loyalty is frequently discussed in the domain of travel and tourism and has remained the topic of research for more than 20 years (Dimanche & Havitz, 1994). If we consider tourists' experiences at destinations as products, then their level of loyalty can be measured by their behavior of revisiting the same destination (Oppermann, 2000). In consumer literature generally, the theory of self-congruity has been adapted to predict consumer purchase intention. By exploring the self-congruity theory in tourism sector, a coherent body of studies has addressed tourists' revisit intention in relation to destination personality and self-congruity (Chua et al., 2019; Edina & Beykan, 2016; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Huang et al., 2017; Khazaei Pool et al., 2018; Sirgy &

Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; S. Yang, Isa, & Ramayah, 2020). From these studies, it is salient that the relationship between destination personality, self-congruity, and revisit intention is essential to understanding how tourists decide to revisit a destination. However, few studies have examined these relationships by adding any new variables into the theoretical framework, thereby extending the understanding of theoretical development. It is underscored in academy that further studies should develop and examine multiple global or integrative models emerging in recent decades (i.e., C. F. Chen & Phou, 2013; Elliot et al., 2011; H. Zhang et al., 2014).

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Another construct which is likely to be a crucial predictor of tourists' behavioral intention is cultural distance. This has particular relevance with cross-cultural travel. Increasing global tourism has led to a huge amount of research that integrates cultural distance as a crucial variable in tourism studies (J. S. Chen, 2000; Crotts, 2004; Crotts & Erdmann, 2000; Esiyok et al., 2017; Leung et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2018; Ng et al., 2007; Shenkar, 2001; S. Yang et al., 2019; Y. Yang et al., 2018; Y. Yang & Wong, 2012; J. Zhang et al., 2013). The aim of these studies was to contribute to the understanding of how culture explains patterns in tourists' preference and behavior and predicts international tourist flows. Scholars have explicated that cultural distance has the potential to aggravate host–guest misunderstandings as their interpretations of cues vary (Reisinger & Tunrner, 2003), which leads to communication barriers. Tourists' detection of alien environments may increase their feelings of anxiety and uncertainty (A. S. Y. Chen et al., 2011). One research underscored one would be emotionally uncomfortable and unpleasantly surprised when meeting others. Exotic culture is defined as culture shock (J. Yang et al., 2013), a reason for the restriction of cultural travel (Y. Yang et al., 2018). Such studies are supported by theories of social behavior discipline. For example, Hofstede's (1980) theory of cultural dimension implies that travel behavior is influenced by the level of uncertainty avoidance present (Crotts, 2004; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). In the area of consumer behavior, social identify theory supports the notion that consumers identify more with products from cultural similar countries, leading to a positive impact on the purchase of the product (Ma et al., 2012). The present conceptual paper is to argue that cultural distance is one of the principal mechanisms related to destination marketing outcomes, particularly in regard to tourists' revisit intention.

A wealth of studies have adopted empirical methods to gain a comprehensive understanding of the measurement of cultural distance in tourism research (Cheung & Saha, 2015; Jackson, 2000; Ng et al., 2007, 2009; Y. Yang & Wong, 2012; J. Zhang et al., 2013). However, there are still several limitations for the measurement of cultural distance which have been identified. As the definition of national culture is so complicated and multi-faceted for empirical studies to fully reveal, it is argued that validity of such measures requires corroboration (Y. Yang et al., 2018). Culture continues to develop and is conditioned by ever-changing social factors including political, economic, and technological forces, which has been underscored in some research (Craig & Douglas, 2006; Shenkar, 2001). Those complex social factors make it difficult to generalize any understanding of how cultural distance has an impact on tourists' revisit intention. Cultural distance only reflects temporal changes in terms of capturing individual value. However essential time is as an influencing factor, it has long been overlooked in previous cross-cultural studies. For instance, tourists' behavior could be different in the past and at present. Today, tourists have access to abundant information through social media such as the internet which is beneficial to their travel (Wang et al., 2012). Empirical evidence demonstrates that past examinations of relationship between variables using relatively small number of samples and comparing one country with another fail to reflect the cultural diversity of today's tourists (Y. Yang et al., 2018). Therefore, to better understand tourists' behavior, culture-related factors deserve further study.

Hofstede's multidimensional framework is commonly believed to be the most proper mechanism for measuring cultural distance as it not only lays the foundation but also remains influential and widely utilized (Soares et al., 2007). Indeed, Hofstede's framework is still dominant in cross-cultural studies of tourists (Ng et al., 2007; Reisinger & Turner, 2003; Wong, 2015). Both the literature on general tourism (Money & Crotts, 2003) and the broader literature (Barkema et al., 1997; Barkema & Vermeulen, 1998) have stressed the contention that Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance is more significant than any other cultural dimensions to predict travel behavior from a cross-cultural perspective. Uncertainty avoidance is explained as the extent to which society perceives itself as intimidated by any undetermined and unclear circumstance and attempts to avoid such circumstances. In other words, what is the acceptable level of "risk" a society will tolerate? (Crotts, 2004; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) further explain that individuals with a greater degree of uncertainty culture will try to keep clear of risks and uncertain, or even dangerous, situations. Such people will attempt to achieve a maximum level of non-risk and stability. Those at the opposite end of the spectrum will accept a high level of personal risk (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). Travel risks may be a serious cause of anxiety for tourists and a great cause of uncertainty avoidance (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005), which might contribute to their decision making regarding revisiting a destination. For the purposes of this study, Hofstede's (1984) uncertainty avoidance theory serves as a decent tool to measure variables such as travel risk, travel anxiety, ambiguity, unfamiliar environments, and unstructured situations. Individual cultural values, instead of nations are used as the unit of analysis (Seo et al., 2018). Of note is that an individual value is identified based on selected dimensions of culture (Donthu & Yoo, 1998).

While there have been many studies of uncertainty avoidance related to travel behavior (Litvin et al., 2004; Manrai & Manrai, 2011; Meng, 2010; Money & Crotts, 2003; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005; Seo et al., 2018), they have failed to simultaneously examine the relationship between destination personality, self-congruity, uncertainty avoidance, and revisit intention. The theory of self-congruity, in Sirgy's (1982) eyes, reveals the multidimensional nature of actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity, all of which are normally linked to the illustration and prediction of consumers' behavioral intention. It is also worth mentioning that this theory is utilized by a few scholars (i.e., Beerli et al., 2007; Chon, 1992;

Kastenholz, 2004; Litvin & Goh, 2002; Sirgy & Su, 2000) of tourism to help understand whether self-congruence affects revisit intention.

It is also crucial to note that although this theoretical model has been empirically tested in tourism studies for the purpose of predicting tourists' behavioral intention, only a weak relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention has, so far, been demonstrated (Giraldi, 2013; Kastenholz, 2004; Rutelione et al., 2018). Accordingly, calls for the discovery of other potential moderators to enhance and support the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention grow. More importantly, numerous existing studies (e.g., Huang et al., 2017; Kılıç & Sop, 2012; Kim et al., 2017; Rutelione et al., 2018; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; S. Yang, Isa, Ramayah, et al., 2020) have theorized the interrelationship between destination personality, self-congruity, and revisit intention but most of the studies failed to attach uncertainty avoidance in their conceptualization. Surprisingly, it has been found that uncertainty avoidance is strongly associated with revisit intention (Matzler et al., 2016; Seo et al., 2018).

The primary purpose of this conceptual article is to propose a theoretical model which establishes the connections between destination personality, self-congruity, uncertainty avoidance, and revisit intention. It has been identified above that there is a research gap which can be addressed by emphasizing the role played by the moderator on the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention. To address this problem, this article proposes uncertainty avoidance as the moderator which is capable of strengthening and supporting the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention.

Literature Review

Theoretical Background

Self-concept. In behavioral theory, it has been theorized that the decision making of purchasing is often influenced by one's self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Self-concept refers to the totality of a person's own perceptions, whether intellectual or affective, about their own self vis-à-vis a social context (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987). It is a multi-faceted entity which embraces a person's view of their self and includes how a person would like to be in the future; the ideal self (Sirgy, 1982). Hayakawa (1963) believes that protection, maintenance, and enhancement of one's self-concept or symbolic ego are all human activities.

It is proposed by psychological experts that self-concept usually iterates peculiar behavioral models (Onkvisit & Shaw, 1987), which tempts consumers to transfer their behavioral intention to products and services instrumental to the protection and enhancement of their self-concept (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). That is to say, apart from self-images, people make an assumption of products, suppliers, and services (Litvin & Kar, 2004). In most cases, research on theory of self-concept implied that consumers tend to favor products and brands regarded as fitting their self-concept, whereas being comparatively in less favor of products and brands mismatching their self-image (Graeff, 1996).

Self-congruity. The theory of self-concept gives birth to the theory of self-congruity (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011) which provoked profound discussion for almost a half century. Over the last four decades, theory of self-congruity has been commonly employed in marketing and consumer research (Sirgy, 2018; S. Yang, Isa, Ramayah, et al., 2020). Their conclusions are that self-congruity affects consumer behavior in terms of service or product preference, purchase willingness, and repurchase behavior. Self-congruity theory is essentially multidimensional and comprises ideal self-congruity, actual self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity (Sirgy, 1982). It is explicated by Sirgy that self-congruity theory strengthens the idea that consumer perceptions, or propensity, in favor of certain items are materialized via consistency between the product idea/image and the consumer's self-perception. Litvin and Kar (2004) contend that the more congruent product/image and consumers' self-concept are, the higher intention consumers have to purchase the product/service.

Moreover, most current studies simplified the theoretical mode related with product brand, self-congruity, and behavioral intention. Self-congruity, in fact, acts as the mediator between product brand and behavioral intention; an assertion borne out in the tourism studies of various scholars who examined the self-image congruence construct with the aim of explaining tourist behavior (Litvin & Goh, 2002; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Todd, 2001). Other tourism research has employed the quantitative approach to investigate the theory of congruity (Sop, 2020). In addition, it is commonly practiced in two aspects in current tourism studies: actual self-congruity and the idea self-congruity. This was due to the conception that social self-measures is highly related to these two dimensions (Beerli et al., 2007; Chon, 1992; Ekinci & Riley, 2003). Sirgy (1982) in his earlier study utters that the multiple dimensions of self-congruity that received the most theoretical consideration and empirical support are self-congruity (i.e., actual and ideal).

Hofstede's cultural dimension. Hofstede's theory of cultural dimension in this study, one of the most widely used approaches for researching for culture distance (Taras et al., 2012), assists in identifying the most relevant cultural factor to be contained in this theoretical model. Hofstede's cultural dimension theory exists in the form of multi-dimensions, where the perception of international employees' cultural values from different countries are categorized into four dimensions: power distance, individualism–collectivism, masculinity–femininity, and uncertainty avoidance index (Hofstede, 1980). These four dimensions were based on Hofstede's results from a large sample survey of IBM

employees' value scores. The data collection was from 1967 to 1973 and covered more than 70 countries. Later, Hofstede et al. (2010) added another two dimensions into the framework: Long-term versus Short-term Orientation (LTO) and Indulgence versus Restraint (IRV). Although Hofstede's cultural dimension was an early attempt at providing a theoretical framework in cross-cultural research, it is still generally acknowledged as the most widely applicable cultural framework (Soraes et al., 2007). Naturally, however, there are criticisms. For instance, scholars argued that the framework is based on a relatively unrepresentative sample (Steenkamp, 2001), outdatedness (White & Tadesse, 2008), coupled with a lack of theoretical support (Soares et al., 2007). As noted by Liu et al. (2018), in tourism, cultural distance only reflects temporal changes in discerning the value heterogeneity between individuals in the same nation. Due to this individual heterogeneity, Hofstede cultural dimensions may be interpreted variedly in different cultural backgrounds.

Although indebted to Hofstede, researchers in tourism (Kirkman et al., 2006) and scholars in tourism pinpointed that uncertainty avoidance (e.g., Kozak et al., 2007; Money & Crotts, 2003; J. Y. Pan & Truong, 2018; Quintal et al., 2010; Reisinger & Crotts, 2009) and individualism/collectivism (e.g., Litvin & Kar, 2004; Matzler et al., 2016) are, actually, two most relevant cultural dimensions in terms of destination brand and self-congruity (Lam et al., 2012). Very recently, a study argued that Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance is the most relevant element in inspecting the behavioral intention model in the setting of transportation tourism. That is due to the normal inclusion of evaluation of related uncertainties in intention of decision making (J. Y. Pan & Truong, 2018). For the present conceptual paper, the construct of uncertainty avoidance was considered useful for adoption into the research model.

In general, associations between the theory of self-congruity and Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance theory proposed in this article allows the examination of the interrelationship between these variables, which might further give rise to the successful formulation of a theoretical model. In addition, uncertainty avoidance is theoretically consistent with the conceptualization of culture in international marketing (Soares et al., 2007) as well as in cross-cultural studies of tourists (e.g., Ng et al., 2007; Reisinger & Turner, 2003; Wong, 2015) from the perspective Hofstede's cultural dimension theory. In regard to this matter, Livin and Kar (2004) extended the self-congruity concept by adding a moderator of a single dimension of Hofstede's individualism/collectivism to replicate Chon's (1992) original work. Chon was the first scholar to apply self-congruity to a tourism context. However, it can be said that such studies still leave a gap for further studies which propose the linkage between self-congruity and Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance. Hence, the combination of the structure of uncertainty avoidance in the light of self-congruity theory may verify and solidify the relationship between self-congruity and behavioral intention to a higher degree.

Proposition Development

Destination personality and revisit intention: The mediating roles of self-congruity. Brand personality comprises a series of human characteristics linked to a brand (Aaker, 1997, p. 347). Brand personality is essential to the understanding of consumer brand choices. In marketing studies, Aaker (1997) divided brand personality into five aspects: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness, which are discerned in a wide range of cultures (Hofstede & McCrae, 2004). There are extensive studies on the employment of these basic personality traits to depict brands (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013) where scales of measurement have been modified to assess brands as human personalities. While brand personality has been intensively studied in a variety of contexts (e.g., product and destination brands) and has generally been found to be cross-culturally generalizable (e.g., Aaker et al., 2001; d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Geuens et al., 2009), brand personality in marketing has grown to include concepts of country, service, and, most recently, destination (d'Astous & Levesque, 2003; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Lee et al., 2009; Siguaw et al., 1999). Naturally it should be said that these studies tend to generalize, with different results in various contexts because different dimensions can be used to describe different categories of products as well as customer backgrounds.

In the context tourism literature, brand personality has been adopted and extended as destination personality. Ekinci and Hosany (2006) defined the concept of destination personality as having three dimensions: sincerity, excitement, and conviviality; in recognition that tourists ascribe various personality traits to the destinations. Aaker's (1997) brand personality framework was the first to apply the concept of destination personality in tourism studies, suggesting that the concept of brand personality can be extended to tourism destinations. Destination personality as a concept is, in fact, still popular in the field (Ekinci et al., 2007; Kılıç & Sop, 2012; Matzler et al., 2016; L. Pan et al., 2017; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), with several studies using this component to predict tourist behavior intention toward different touristic destinations (C. F. Chen & Phou, 2013; De Moya & Jain, 2013; Papadimitriou et al., 2015). Other studies have empirically provided evidence supporting the view that tourists ascribe personality traits to destinations (Murphy et al., 2007; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). In Australia, Murphy et al. (2007) detected that tourists ascribe different personality traits to tourism destinations of varied kinds. Sahin and Baloglu (2009) examined the destination personality of Istanbul, whose findings reveal that tourists deem Istanbul as bearing features of sincerity, originality and vibrancy, coolness and trendiness, competence and modernity, and conviviality. On a similar note, Usakli and Baloglu (2011) investigated the perceived destination personality of Las Vegas and concluded that tourists do, indeed, ascribe personality traits to touristic

destinations. Such results suggest that destination personality is a significant predictor of revisit intention.

Clearly, then destination brand personification directly influences tourist revisit intention (e.g., C. F. Chen & Phou, 2013; Chua et al., 2019; De Moya & Jain, 2013; Papadimitriou et al., 2015; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). This is, however, in spite of criticism that consumer revisit destination depends on whether the destination personality is congruent with the consumer's self-concept. As described above, the basic theoretical assumption of self-congruity theory posits the intention of consumers to select products or brands that correspond to one's self-concept (Sirgy, 1992). The self-congruity model builds its foundation on theoretical assumptions in view to inspect the mediating impact of self-congruity on the relationship between brand personality and consumer behavior. In other words, the stronger the congruence between brand personality and the consumer's own personality, the more likely the consumer is to purchase this brand. In the tourism context, scholars only operationalized self-congruity in accordance to two dimensions: actual self-congruity and idea self-congruity to predict behavioral intention (Beerli et al., 2007; Chon, 1992; Ekinci & Riley, 2003). Regarding the interrelationship between destination personality, self-congruity, and revisit intention, previous studies suggest the role of actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity as a mediator between destination personality and revisit intention (Giraldi, 2013; Huang et al., 2017; Khazaei Pool et al., 2018; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; S. Yang, Isa, Ramayah, et al., 2020). Therefore, building on these theoretical arguments and empirical findings, the following is proposed:

> **Proposition 1:** Actual self-congruity mediates the relationship between destination personality and revisit intention.
> **Proposition 2:** Ideal self-congruity mediates the relationship between destination personality and revisit intention.

The Moderating Role of Uncertainty Avoidance

Current marketing literature has extensively examined the relationship between consumer self-congruity and favorable outcome purchasing intentions, such as loyalty, word of mouth, and so on (i.e., Das & Khatwani, 2018; Wallace et al., 2020). In tourism literature, prior studies arrived at various conclusions regarding the impact of self-congruity on revisit intention. For example, several studies concluded that self-congruity does not have any significant impact on revisit intention (Giraldi, 2013; Kastenholz, 2004; Üner et al., 2013). However, these findings are inconsistent with studies conducted by Usakli and Baloglu (2011), Huang et al. (2017), Khazaei Pool et al. (2018), Chua et al. (2019), and S. Yang, Isa, Wu, et al. (2020), all of which reveal a significant relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention. Therefore, the disparities existing in previous research call for the exploration of other potential moderators. This

inconsistency may be related to demographic factors (i.e., gender, age, and nationality) and sample size. In the context of this study, Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance was selected based on findings of current literature and the theoretical underpinnings, particularly S. Yang, Isa, Ramayah, et al.'s (2020) study that self-congruity theoretical model should incorporate with Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance.

Crucial as cross-cultural differences are, their impacts on effective brand personification strategies are long overlooked (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2014). Litvin and Goh (2003) noted that Hofstede's work is the prerequisite for the application of culture to business practice. As stated previously in this study, Hofstede's cultural model is one of the most widely accepted and applied cultural conceptualizations (Kirkman et al., 2006). Litvin and Goh (2003) extended self-congruity by combining Hofstede's individualism and collectivism, and justifying their practice via empirical evidence. Other research also proposed that uncertainty avoidance is the most relevant cultural dimension in the brand–self-congruity setting (Lam et al., 2012; Matzler et al., 2016). People in cultures of low uncertainty avoidance, ambiguity, and uncertainty are more likely to be tolerated (Mariani et al., 2018). Perceived different degrees of uncertainty avoidance would result in different degrees of revisit intention (Seo et al., 2018). Given that, it is reasonable to assume that tourists are more likely to select a destination if their perceived personality was more compatible with their self-concept which is dependent on their perceived uncertainty avoidance. In this way, another two propositions are put forward:

> **Proposition 3:** Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between actual self-congruity and revisit intention.
> **Proposition 4:** Uncertainty avoidance moderates the relationship between actual self-congruity and revisit intention.

Conclusion

Further to the preceding implications of the current article, the theoretical framework (Figure 1) is established based on two theories and previous empirical evidence. Four research propositions (including the mediating and moderating propositions) emanate from the framework. Self-congruity in this theoretical model is perceived to exert a direct or indirect and positive impact on revisit intention. Meanwhile, the principal mechanism is believed to mediate the relationship between destination personality and revisit intention. Furthermore, it should be understood that uncertainty avoidance plays a significant role in predicting the level of revisit intention. Hence, failure to understand tourists' perceptions of degree of uncertainty avoidance may hinder marketing outcomes that lead to attract the loyalty of tourists (i.e., revisit intention). It can also be recalled that there is evidence for uncertainty avoidance being significantly associated with revisit
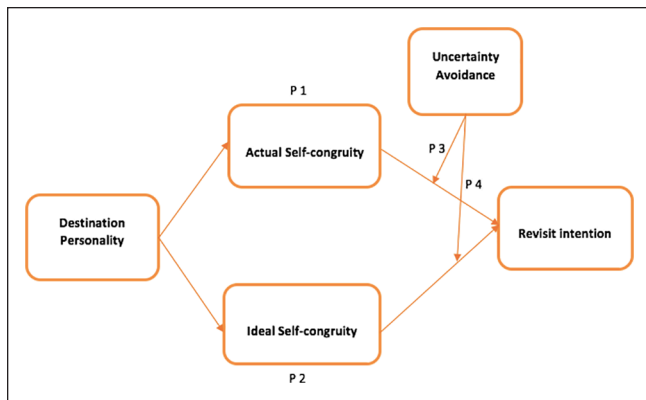
Figure 1. Theoretical framework.

intention (Matzler et al., 2016; Seo et al., 2018). Uncertainty avoidance is, therefore, proposed in the current conceptual paper as the moderator effect which is capable of strengthening and supporting the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention.

Theoretical Implications

This conceptual paper provides a theoretical contribution as a reference for future works. Although, as seen above, there is evidence in the extended literature for the role of self-congruity as the mediator between destination personality and revisit intention as demonstrated in the theoretical framework (Huang et al., 2017; Khazaei Pool et al., 2018; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), the moderator effect of uncertainty avoidance involved in this framework has not been explored in the tourism and marketing literature. This article goes beyond the concept of direct and indirect connection by adding a new moderator on the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention, thereby achieving a more precise depiction of the relationship between these variables. Another theoretical contribution of this study relates to the investigation of destination personality liking with another construct to provide a better explanation from the self-congruity perspective.

This article makes contributions to modifying existing theoretical framework. The proposed integration of these two theories—the theory of self-congruity and Hofstede's cultural dimension (i.e., uncertainty avoidance)—might strongly predict revisit intention and enable it to be embedded into the theoretical framework. Moreover, linking these two theories could also provide a comprehensive explanation of tourist behavioral intention. In other words, tourists with favorable attitudes toward destination personality that matches their own personalities are more likely to revisit and it is dependent on how they perceived uncertainty avoidance. Therefore, the framework has the potential of offering significant and meaningful insights into the marketing theory in emphasizing interactions among various psychological and behavioral variables.

Naturally, researchers will need to conduct empirical testing of the theoretical framework proposed in this article. Existing article concerning theoretical build-up reconciles contradictory debates about the influence of destination personality, self-congruity, and revisit intention by means of examining the direct and indirect relationship on tourists' revisit intention, such as the potential mediator of self-congruity between destination personality and revisit intention. It also succeeds in extending the body of knowledge on tourists' loyalty (revisit intention) by investigating its antecedents in the tourism context. The present article also introduced the moderating role of uncertainty avoidance to strengthen the relationship between self-congruity and revisit intention, which further contributed to the conceptualization of self-congruity from the tourists' perspective, as well as making up for the limited number of studies on the poor correlation between self-congruity and revisit intention.

Managerial Implications

This article presents practical enlightenment for tourism stakeholders despite the fact that proposed conceptualization remains to be empirically proved. One of these implications refers to the significant insights offered for destination marketing organizations from the observation of the importance of tourists' perception of uncertainty avoidance as a helpful factor for determining their revisit intention. This proposed framework has the potential of allowing tourism authorities and marketers to figure out the most valuable cultural destination that is beneficial to the promotion and enhancement of intriguing tourism activities that require minimum cultural distance between travelers' hometown and the destination.

Another point worth noting is that this article supplies the crucial expertise required to ensure the efficient allocation of destination resources. Tourism experts need to determine the personality trait that foreign tourists associate with a particular tourism destination and select tourism destinations on the basis of those traits. Destination marketing organizations might also obtain a better understanding of destination personality, which should be consistent with how tourists both actually and ideally see themselves, to ensure building a good match between tourists and destinations. The proposed framework also has the potential to provide tourism authorities and tourism marketers with new insights regarding the development of tourists' loyalty.

The conceptual article might also facilitate tourism marketing managers' formulation of marketing campaigns that harvest the maximum profits like word of mouth, event marketing, product placement, and public relationships. Moreover, those advantages to tourism authorities and tourism marketers could give rise to very positive marketing outcomes (e.g., tourist loyalty). Overall, this conceptual framework will contribute not only to tourism marketers who need to meet tourists' psychological needs but also to the consideration of supporting tourists' spiritual needs.

Limitations and Future Suggestions

In spite of its theoretical contributions and practical implications, this article is limited regarding following areas: First, it is purely theoretical and does not test the existing framework and complemented conceptualizations via empirical evidence; second, there exists some weakness in the structure of revisit intention, that is, marketing practitioners play an essential role in planning marketing costs or profits before the investment, however important attracting revisit tourists is to the destination marketing organizations' flourish. More importantly, the limitation of the measurement of cultural distance should be highlighted in the current study. This study only selects the variable of Hofstede uncertainty avoidance, which might not represent a complete measurement of cultural distance. Uncertainty avoidance was applied, but this might not fully capture the complex nature of culture in this study. Further research could also be considered to explore Hofstede cultural dimension and other relevant components to measure the cultural distance from tourists. Y. Yang et al. (2018) emphasize that it is necessary to introduce other well-established cultural factors to further evaluate the construct of cultural distance impact on destination choice.

Moreover, readers are advised to take heed when viewing this theoretical framework in terms of various destinations as it does not necessarily permit application to a single destination. It could be utilized in future exploration aiming at exploring alternative tourism or tourism out of special interests as a theoretical underpinning. For instance, this framework can be applied to investigate revisit intention with different purposes including medical tourism, wellness tourism, and food tourism. Thus, future investigation in alternative tourism or special interest tourism might make interesting and insightful contribution and complement tourism marketing literature.

In addition, only some substantial factors are investigated in this article from theoretical angle. Thus, future researchers are recommended to integrate more factors into this framework via employment of planned behavior rather than fixating on self-congruity and revisit intention. It should also be remarked that this study still leaves a gap between revisit intention and tourists' actual revisit behavior, in spite of the discovery that both self-congruity and uncertainty avoidance tend to exert a positive impact on revisit intention. Therefore, empirical testing of the relationship between behavioral intention to revisit destination and actual behavior on revisit destination and suggestion on the basis of the extension of other related behavioral theories is necessary.

Nevertheless, the current conceptual paper succeeds in integrating disparate concepts in tourism marketing and is, therefore, significant in building a theoretical framework that is underpinned by two existing theories (i.e., theory of self-congruity and Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance), which have interdisciplinary applications. It is suggested that further studies should test this framework by data collected from individuals with different levels of uncertainty avoidance, which would make it possible to test all the propositions in this model.

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