THE EFFECT OF DESTINATION PERSONALITY AND SELF-DESTINATION

CONGRUITY ON VISITORS' INTENTIONS

A Thesis

by

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Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

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May 2013

Major Subject: Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences

ABSTRACT

This research was initiated from two questions: what personality San Antonio has as a tourist destination despite its being an inanimate object and what relationships there are among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions. A conceptual framework was employed based on these questions, and this research focused on the generation of the destination personality of San Antonio and how destination personality and self-destination congruity influence visitors' intentions.

Data were collected from students (n=143) at Texas A&M University in consideration of Texas residents who have visited San Antonio as the focal population for this research. A personality scale consisting of 31 items for San Antonio was first developed from a preliminary survey (n=19), which were then included in a main survey for the measurement of destination personality.

Using an exploratory factor analysis, destination personality dimensions were generated with the 31 personality traits. Finally, five personality dimensions were extracted with 25 traits. The five personality dimensions were: competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy. Three of five dimensions were found in Aaker's (1997) scale: competence, sincerity, and excitement. The dimension of culture was specific to San Antonio, while the dimension of vibrancy was found in another destination personality study.

In this research, six hypotheses regarding the relationships among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions were tested using a multiple

regression analysis. The results indicated that: (1) hypotheses 1 and 2, destination personality will have a positive impact on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, were supported in part; (2) hypotheses 3 and 4, four types of self-congruity (actual, ideal, social, and ideal social self-congruity) will have a positive effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, were not supported, but self-congruity as a single dimension was significant; (3) hypotheses 5 and 6, four types of congruity will mediate the relationship between destination personality and intentions to return and to recommend, were not supported, while destination personality as a single dimension was significant in terms of visitors' intentions.

The results offered practical implications. First, destination marketers need to focus on the personality of a destination from a marketing perspective. Specifically, destination marketers for San Antonio should place emphasis on sincerity regarding intention to return and sincerity and excitement regarding intention to recommend in order to attract potential visitors to San Antonio. Second, destination marketers should know that there is a connection between destination personality and visitors' personalities. They should make their efforts to market to potential visitors who have personalities that are consistent with the destination's personality.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Yang-Weon Lim and Kap-Rye Sur for their

unlimited love and support

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

In recent years, many destinations have been competing to attract potential
visitors domestically and internationally. One important reason for those efforts is that
tourism has been accepted as a growing industry both at the community level and at the
country level (UNWTO, 2012). According to the U.S. Travel Association (2012: p. 2),
tourism has served as a critical "solution to sluggish growth, unemployment,
globalization, and continued economic challenges." The U.S. Travel Association (2012)
also highlighted that communities' investment in travel-related businesses drives
visitation that generates spending in a community from outside of the local community.

Destinations have promoted themselves with similar attributes like wonderful
scenery, beautiful beaches and comfortable places (Murphy, Moscardo, & Benkendorff,
2007; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). However, these marketing techniques are not expected
to differentiate a destination from their competitors, since people are often inundated
with similar destination marketing campaigns. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) argued that
"positioning destinations based on their functional attributes makes them easily
substitutable" (p. 114).

In that sense, building destination brands based on the personality of the
destinations can be a viable tool for destination marketing (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006),
since destination authorities can emphasize differential symbolic and psychological
aspects of destinations through destination brands. Destination personality has been

defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a destination" (Ekinci & Hosany: 2006, p. 127). Usakli and Baloglu (2011) substantiated the effect of destination personality on visitors' behavioral intentions.

In this light, understanding self-congruity can be a motivation for letting tourism managers know how to attract potential visitors to their destination. Self-congruity theory states that consumers tend to prefer brands or products that are similar to their own self-concept. Self-concept has been defined as "the totality of individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object" (Rosenberg & Court: 1979, p. 7). Self-concept has also been developed as a useful construct for explaining and interpreting consumer behavior (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Likewise, the greater the degree of the match between the image of a destination and the image of an individual, the more likely it is that the person will visit the destination (Beerli, Meneses, & Gil, 2007; Hung & Petrick, 2011; Sirgy & Su, 2000). Since self-congruity is based on the match between destination personality and people's personality, tourism managers can get information to assist in developing their marketing strategies by using the distinctive personality of their destination (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). This approach could also lead destination promoters to recognize how to position their destination through analyzing their target market's personality. In that respect, it is notable that Usakli and Baloglu (2011) empirically investigated both actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity, and called for examination into both social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity in terms of the personality of tourist destinations.

1.2 Purpose of the Research

The goal of this research is to empirically investigate the effects of destination personality and self-personality congruity on tourists' intentions to return and to recommend. To achieve this goal, the perceived personality of San Antonio, as a representative tourist destination in Texas, was examined. The proposed model by Usakli and Baloglu (2011: p. 119) regarding the relationships among destination personality, self-congruity, and behavioral intention, was used with the addition of two new congruities: social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity. The two social congruities have also been considered as important determining factors to choosing tourist destinations (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). This new model looked at the role of these four types of self-congruity in the prediction of visitors' behavioral intentions. The proposed conceptual framework is depicted in FIGURE 1-1.

FIGURE 1-1
Conceptual framework of the study
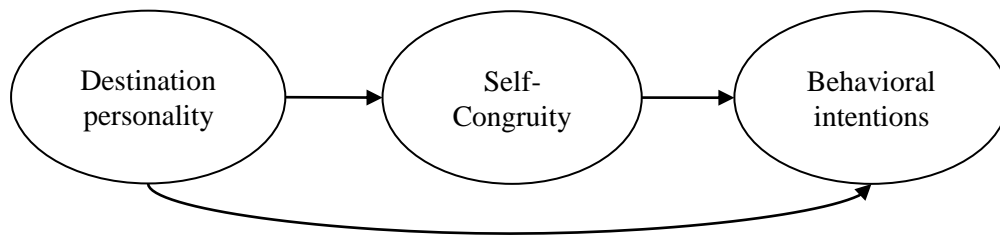
Originated from Usakli and Baloglu (2011: p. 119)

1.3 Objectives and Hypotheses

Destination personality has been accepted as an important factor that affects tourists' behavioral intentions (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). According to them, destination personality had a positive effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. This was in line with Helgeson and Suphellen's (2004) study that brand personality had a positive impact on consumer's intentions. These studies lead to two research questions: (1) what personality San Antonio has as a tourist destination, and (2) what relationships there are among destination personality, self-destination congruity, and visitors' intentions.

Self-congruity theory has been applied to tourism destinations for more than 20 years. It has been also demonstrated as a crucial factor in terms of post-visit loyalty, satisfaction, revisit intentions and willingness to recommend. Many researchers have showed empirical evidence that self-congruity has a positive impact on visitors' behavioral intentions (Beerli et al., 2007; Hung & Petrick, 2011; Sirgy & Su, 2000, Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). In addition, it was substantiated that self-congruity served as a partial mediator between destination personality and visitors' intentions (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

In line with the purposes, the research questions and the literature above, research objectives and hypotheses in this study were proposed as follows.

Objective One: This research intends to test the effect of destination personality on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend.

(H$_1$) Destination personality will have a positive effect on visitors' intention to return.

(H$_2$) Destination personality will have a positive effect on visitors' intention to recommend.

Objective Two: This research intends to test the effect of self-congruity on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend.

(H$_3$) Actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity will have a positive effect on visitors' intention to return.

(H$_4$) Actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity will have a positive effect on visitors' intention to recommend.

Objective Three: This research intends to test the mediating effect of self-congruity between destination personality and visitors' intentions to return and to recommend.

(H$_5$) Actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity will mediate the relationship between destination personality and visitors' intention to return.

(H$_6$) Actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity will mediate the relationship between destination personality and visitors' intention to recommend.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature about brand personality, destination personality, and self-congruity theory based on four types of self-concepts is reviewed. Self-construal theory and the relationship between self-congruity and self-construal are also reviewed.

2.1 Brand Personality

Brand personality is a psychological construct formed by consumers' perceptions and experiences (Sung & Tinkham, 2005) and has been referred to as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997: p. 347). Even though brands are not human beings, consumers tend to think of them as having human personalities (Aaker, 1997; Plummer, 1985). For example, one may attach certain personalities to some brands: "cool, all-American, and real" for the soft drink of Coca Cola, or "young, exciting, and hip" for Pepsi (Aaker, 1997: p. 348).

Brand personality has been conceptualized as different from brand image. Brand personality is interpreted to be more closely related to consumer self-concept than brand image, since it is solely composed of a brand's personality traits in terms of a brand (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). According to Low and Lamb (2000), brand image includes both functional and symbolic attributes of a brand, whereas brand personality only represents the symbolic attributes of a brand (Keller, 1993). Also, even though there has been no empirical research that has examined the relationships between brand image and brand personality (Hosany, Ekinci, & Uysal, 2006), brand personality has been suggested as the human personality traits part of brand image (Sahin & Baloglu, 2011).

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Since Aaker (1997) developed the Brand Personality Scale (BPS) to measure brand personality, research on it has flourished (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003), and the brand personality framework has been applied to various products including tourism destinations, sometimes across cultures (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). For example, Siguaw and Mattila (1999) measured restaurant brands with the Brand Personality Scale. Also the destination personality of the Mediterranean region of Turkey (Hosany et al., 2006), two destinations in Queensland, Australia (Murphy et al., 2007), ten African countries (Pitt, Opoku, Hultman, Abratt, & Spyropoulou, 2007), and Las Vegas (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011) have been measured by adapting the 42 Brand Personality Scale items.

Furthermore, it has been suggested that brand personality is important, since consumers prefer brands with personality traits that are congruent with their personalities (Aaker, 1997). Many researchers have shown that a distinctive brand personality can have a significant effect on consumers' psychology and behaviors such as brand attitudes, intention to return, intention to recommend, greater trust, and favorable evaluations (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Ekinci, Sirakaya-Turk, & Baloglu, 2007; Fournier, 1998; Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004; Sahin & Baloglu, 2011). For instance, Helgeson and Suphellen (2004) empirically demonstrated that brand personality, as a similar but different construct from self-congruity, has a significant impact on consumers' brand attitudes.

2.2 Destination Personality

Destination personality refers to brand personality in a tourism context (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). According to Ekinci and Hosany (2006), destination personality is

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defined as "the set of personality traits associated with a destination" (p. 127).

Destination personality is a relatively new concept in tourism research, whereas

destination image has been investigated since the early 1970s (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006).

Difference of Destination Personality from Destination Image

Efforts have been made to differentiate destination personality from destination

image. Many researchers have found that destination image has both cognitive and

affective components (Crompton, 1979; Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Kotler, Haider, &

Rein, 1993). Hosany et al., (2006) found that destination image and destination

personality are related, but different, concepts, mentioning that while destination image

is "an encompassing concept," destination personality is closely related to the affective

parts of destination image (p. 11).

Formation of Destination Personality

Humans and destinations may differ in terms of forming their personality (Ekinci

& Hosany, 2006). Perceptions of destination personality characteristics can be formed

and shaped by the contact that a tourist may have had with a destination (Plummer,

1985). Destination personality characteristics can also be directly influenced by

residents, hotel employees, and tourist attractions, or simply through a tourist's

"imagery" (Aaker, 1997: p. 347). Also, personality characteristics can also be attached to

destinations through various marketing programs such as advertising (Cai, 2002). In

terms of destination image, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) found that previous visitation

or direct experience with a destination is crucial to destination image formation, because it can modify the image of the destination.

Measurement of Destination Personality

Measurement of destination personality has been developed from Aaker's (1997) BPS in a brand or product context. Ekinci and Hosany (2006) investigated the applicability of Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale in a tourism context, and found that the scale could be applied to destinations, since tourists often attach human characteristics to destinations. Their findings have helped many researchers study destination personality using the Brand Personality Scale (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Indeed, Ekinci and Hosany (2006) explored the dimensions of destination personality by extending Aaker's (1997) conceptualization of brand personality to tourist destinations. They found perception of destination personality to be three dimensional (sincerity, excitement, and conviviality), which is different from Aaker's (1997) five Brand Personality Scale (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness). Their study suggested that since the BPS was created in the context of consumer behavior, similarly, it may not fully represent the human characteristics associated with tourist destinations.

Murphy et al. (2007) investigated two destinations in Queensland, Australia and found three destination personality dimensions: sincerity, excitement, and conviviality. They also argued that, when the personalities of a destination are measured, respondents' perceptions can change depending on competing destinations. That was a new suggestion found in the literature in regard to the measurement of personality. In

addition, they suggested that the Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale cannot be applied directly to tourist destinations. Since the BPS was devised for products or brands in the context of consumer behavior, direct translation to destinations does not thus seem to be appropriate (Murphy et al., 2007). Sahin and Baloglu (2011) studied Istanbul, Turkey as an international tourist destination and found five destination personality dimensions which were somewhat similar to Aaker's (1997): competence and modernity, originality and vibrancy, sincerity, cool and trendy, and conviviality. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) examined Las Vegas, as a tourist destination, and found five dimensions: vibrancy, sophistication, competence, contemporary, and sincerity. They also suggested that since Aaker's (1997) BPS was not specifically devised for tourist destinations, the BPS might not fully represent destination-specific personality traits.

Destination Personality as an Influential Factor

Destination personality has also been accepted as an important factor that influences visitors' behavioral intentions. For example, Usakli and Baloglu (2011) empirically found that destination personality has a positive effect on visitors' behavioral intentions to return and to recommend. This finding was in line with Helgeson and Suphellen's (2004) suggestion that brand personality had a positive impact on consumers' intentions.

Similarly, Bonn, Joseph, and Dai (2005) investigated how visitors' perceptions of destination image differ by their country of origin. They identified that there are significant differences among resident visitors, non-resident (domestic) visitors, and international visitors' perceptions of destinations' atmosphere and destination service.

2.3 Self-concept

Self-concept has been developed as a useful construct for explaining and interpreting consumer behavior (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Self-concept has been defined as "the totality of individual's thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object" (Rosenberg & Court: 1979, p. 7). Initially self-concept was conceptualized as a uni-dimensional construct (the actual self-concept), but later was conceptualized as a two dimensional construct (the actual self-concept and the ideal self-concept) (Malhotra, 1988). Self-concept has also been accepted as a four-dimensional construct encompassing actual self-concept, ideal self-concept, social self-concept, and ideal social self-concept (Sirgy, 1982).

Actual self-concept can be defined as how a person actually sees himself or herself, whereas ideal self-concept can be defined as how a person would like to see himself or herself (Sirgy, 1982). Social self-concept can be defined as how a person thinks others perceive him or her, whereas ideal social self-concept refers to the way a person desires to be perceived by others (Sirgy, 1982). It is notable that most research has focused on actual self-concept and ideal self-concept in the consumer and tourism literatures (Litvin & Kar, 2003; Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, & Lee, 2006).

Self-motives regarding these four types of self-concept have also been studied. It has been proposed that actual self-concept influences travel behavior through self-consistency motives, whereas ideal self-concept affects travel behavior through self-esteem motives (Sirgy, Johar & Claiborne, 1992; Sirgy & Su, 2000). Social self-concept has been suggested to influence travellers' behavior through social self-consistency

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motives, whereas ideal social self-concept has been suggested to affect travel behavior through social approval motives (Sirgy et. al., 1992; Sirgy & Su, 2000).

2.4 Self-congruity

Self-congruity can be understood as "a natural extension of self-concept" (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011: p. 116). In accordance with the four major types of self-concept, four types of self-congruity have also been defined in the literature: actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity, social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity (Sirgy 1982). In a tourism context, actual self-congruity refers to the degree of match between a tourist's actual self-image and a typical destination visitor's image, whereas ideal self-congruity refers to the degree of match between a tourist's ideal self-image and a typical destination visitor's image (Sirgy & Su, 2000). Social self-congruity refers to "the degree of match between a tourist's social self-image and a typical destination visitor's image," whereas ideal social self-congruity refers to "the degree of match between a tourist's social self-image and a typical destination visitor's image" (Sirgy & Su, 2000). However, there have been criticisms about defining self-congruity in connection with a typical visitor's image (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Brand personality is a more inclusive construct than a typical user's image (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004). A typical destination visitor's image is just one of multiple approaches to personality formation (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

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Self-congruity Theory in the Consumer Literature

Self-congruity theory was first developed in the context of consumer behavior in line with self-concept. Self-congruity theory hypothesizes that consumers prefer products or brands that are congruent with their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). This suggests that the higher the degree of congruity, the more a consumer tends to purchase. While individuals try to maintain cognitive consistency in their beliefs and behaviors, they make an effort to reduce dissonant psychological experiences (Sung & Choi, 2012).

Yet, some researchers have failed to find empirical evidence for self-brand congruity, and have suggested that self-brand congruity lacks explanatory power (Aaker, 1997; Sung & Choi, 2012). For example, Green, Maheshwari, and Rao (1969) found no meaningful connection between self-image congruity and purchase intentions. Also, Suh (2002) questioned whether identity consistency, as a motive of self-congruity, is an essential condition of psychological well-being.

Application of Self-congruity to Tourist Destinations

Self-congruity theory has been applied to tourist destinations for about twenty years. It has been substantiated as an important factor for understanding post-visit loyalty, satisfaction, revisit intentions, and willingness to recommend.

Chon (1992) was the first to apply self-congruity theory to a tourism destination. He demonstrated that self-congruity regarding destination image had a significant effect on tourist satisfaction. Litvin and Kar (2003) examined the effect of self-image congruity on visitors' satisfaction in Singapore and found that they are correlated. Beeri, et al. (2007) clarified the role of self-congruity between destination image and visitor's self-

concept. They also found that if a tourist is already a visitor to a destination, the predictive power of self-destination image congruity for destination choice intentions was decreased. Recently, Hung and Petrick (2011) pointed out that even though the importance of self-congruity has been recognized, empirical investigations into self-congruity have been limited in the tourism area. They also empirically found that both self-congruity and functional-congruity in cruising intentions are positively related. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) also demonstrated that the greater the match between destination personality and a tourist's self-concept, the more likely self-congruity affects their decision making on the basis of a preferable attitude toward that destination. They showed empirical evidence that self-congruity has a positive influence on tourist's behavioral intentions. They further demonstrated that self-congruity was a partial mediator between destination personality and behavioral intentions (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

Undesired Self-congruity

In contrast to most research's focus on self-congruity, Bosnjak (2010) studied the role of undesired self-congruity in the context of vacation destination information search intentions among non-visitors. They posited that undesired self-congruity relates negatively to willingness to search for destination-related information on websites and serves as a new predictor. Their results supported that negative stereotypical images have significant impacts on information search intentions, especially in an early decision-making stage (Bosnjak, 2010).

Comprehensive Congruity Model

A comprehensive congruity model including self-congruity was proposed by Bosnjak, Sirgy, Hellriegel, & Maurer (2011). Their congruity model consisted of seven congruities: self, functional, hedonic, leisure, economic, safety, and moral congruity. Their findings demonstrated that self-congruity, functional-congruity and hedonic-congruity make up most of the total predictive effect. Their findings suggested that self-congruity can be both a determining factor of visitor's intentions and an important moderating variable between destination personality and post-visit loyalty (Bosnjak el al., 2011).

Social and Ideal Social Self-congruity

Although there have been many conceptual propositions in terms of examination of the effects of both social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity (Sirgy & Su, 2000), little literature has empirically investigated visitors' intentions and behaviors in terms of social self-congruity and or ideal social self-congruity.

Hung and Petrick (2011) investigated the effect of the four types of self-image congruity on cruising intentions. According to their results, both ideal self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity have more predictive power on people's cruising intentions than actual self-congruity and social self-congruity. They also highlighted that social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity need to be further studied. In this respect, it is notable that Usakli and Baloglu (2011) called for examination into the effect of social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity in a tourism context, mentioning the growing importance of social factors.

2.5 Summary

In this section, the important concepts and theories utilized in this research were reviewed. The conceptual framework proposed in this research hypothesizes that destination personality and self-congruity will have a positive effect on visitors' intentions to return to and to recommend a particular destination. According to the literature reviewed in this chapter, the effect of destination personality and self-congruity on visitors' intentions has been supported (Beerli el al., 2007; Hung & Petrick, 2011; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Also, self-congruity as a mediating variable between destination personality and visitors' intentions has been substantiated (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

However, it was emphasized that the effect of social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity on visitors' intentions has not been explored despite the suggested growing importance of social factors (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

In this light, Figure 2-1 shows hypothesized relationships between destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions. While Usakli and Baloglu (2011) examined the relationships among destination personality, two self-congruity (actual and ideal self-congruities), tourists' intentions, this study investigated the relationships among four types of self-congruities and the others as seen in Figure 2-1.

FIGURE 2-1

Hypothesized relationships between destination personality, self-congruity, and intentions to return and to recommend
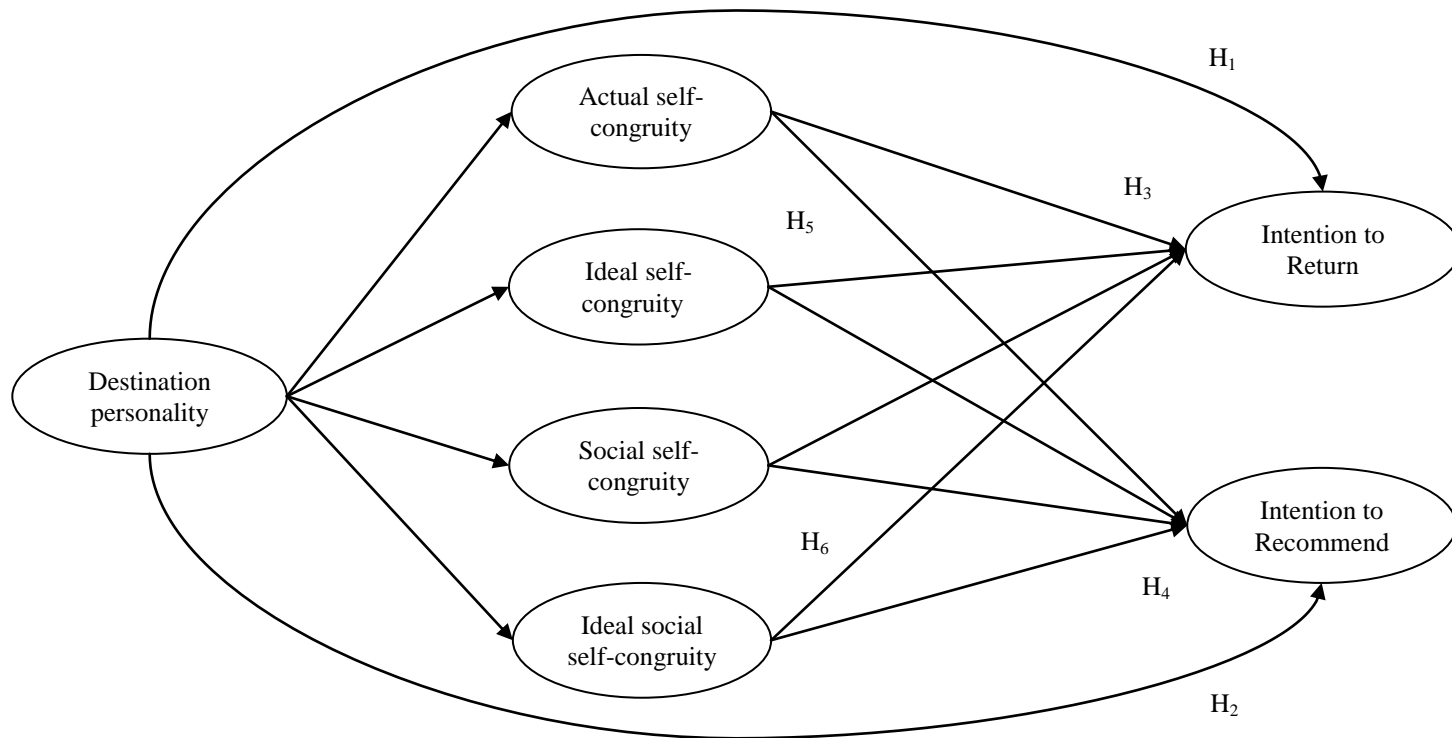
Adapted from Usakli and Baloglu (2011: p. 119)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to investigate the perceived personality of a representative tourist destination in Texas and to empirically examine the effects of destination personality and self-congruity on visitors' intentions. In this chapter, San Antonio is proposed as a study site, and population and sample, and data collection are explained. Subsequently, the methods of analysis are discussed.

3.1 San Antonio as a Study Site

San Antonio's population was about 1.3 million in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The city is the second most populated in Texas and the seventh most populated in America. It is located in the south-central part of Texas known as the Texas Triangle. About 28 million tourists visited San Antonio in 2011 (San Antonio Area Tourism Council, 2012), which made it the most visited city in Texas. San Antonio has been developed as a successful tourist destination in the midst of the regional competitors (Dallas, Houston, and New Orleans) with which it must contend (O'Neill, 1998).

As a tourist destination, San Antonio is well known for its diverse and mixed characteristics coming from its historical, cultural, natural, and urbanized resources. For instance, the Alamo, the River Walk, the Tower of the Americas, SeaWorld San Antonio, Six Flags Fiesta Texas, and the Gonzalez Convention Center are representative tourism attractions of San Antonio. Those attributes are understood to contribute to making San Antonio distinctive from neighboring competing cities such as Houston, Dallas, and Austin.

3.2 Population and Sample

Recent research regarding study sites has focused on regions and destinations rather than countries. Since countries have many regions and destinations, regions and destinations have been accepted as more appropriate study sites than countries (Pike, 2002; Sahin & Baloglu, 2011). Thus, San Antonio was chosen as the region study site most appropriate for studying the personality of a destination and its self-congruity. In line with this perspective, Texas residents who have visited San Antonio were selected as the target population of this research. The reason this study examined people who have visited San Antonio was that the research intended to see the effect of destination personality and self-congruity on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. Also, the perceptions of state residents and country residents (people who are living in America) of a regional site were expected to be different, when taking into consideration that state residents are more likely to be familiar with the regional city. In this respect, Texas residents were believed to be more suited to the population of this research than non-Texas residents.

In line with the target population described for this research, Texas A&M students were taken as the sample. Although A&M, as a state university, is not generally accepted to represent Texas residents, university students have been considered as an alternative sample for this type of research. More specifically, for the American sample, students who were taking undergraduate classes in Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences (RPTS) and Anthropology Science in the fall of 2012 were considered. The expected sample size for the regression analysis was more than 100 people.

Overall, this was non-probability type of sampling. Since this was a convenience sample, this sample was not assumed to reflect the entire population of visitors to San Antonio as Texas residents. In addition, the sample of American students who are taking only undergraduate classes in RPTS, was assumed to make it less likely to represent the entire population than to represent students who go to A&M.

3.3 Data Collection

For this research, a quantitative approach was employed in terms of data collection, considering both the characteristics of the research questions and a need for generalization to larger populations. That is, the three questions posed in this research were explained by using numerical values. Accordingly, the quantitative approach, two surveys, construct measurements, questionnaire design and online survey organization are addressed in this section.

Quantitative Approach

Quantitative data were collected by using a survey method. Texas residents who had visited San Antonio were considered as the population of this research and A&M students were considered as the sample. These aspects of this research were expected to be well-handled by a survey. This is because survey research has been understood as an appealing means of data collection with the characteristics of versatility, efficiency, and generalizability (Chambliss & Schutt, 2012).

Two Surveys

  In this study, two online surveys were performed consecutively as shown in Table 3-1: the first one was a preliminary survey and the other was a main survey.

  The first survey was designed to develop personality traits relevant to San Antonio, which were included and assessed in the following main survey. In this preliminary survey, one open-ended question and Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale (BPS) were provided to respondents to examine personality traits relevant to San Antonio. 31 personality traits derived from these two questions were reflected in the main survey. Aaker's (1997) BPS was initially designed for brands or products, consisting of 42 personality items. American graduate students in Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences (RPTS) at Texas A&M University were recruited as principal subjects, while graduate or undergraduate students in other departments at the University were considered secondarily. A total of 19 responses were collected: 11 in RPTS and 8 in other departments at the University. Subjects were contacted by email. They were approached conveniently.

  The main survey was largely a process of assessing personality traits generated from the preliminary survey and measuring respondents' perceptions of the concept of self-congruity and visitors' intentions. Socio-demographic and San Antonio-related trip information were also solicited. In the main survey, students who were taking undergraduate classes in RPTS were considered as primary subject and students who were taking undergraduate classes in other departments were considered as

complementary subject. A total of 143 students participated in this survey. Of the 143 participants, 126 completed the questionnaires.

In terms of assessing destination personality, 31 personality traits elicited from the preliminary survey were measured. For the measurement of self-congruity, 12 statements proposed by the literature (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011) were employed. Visitors' intentions to return and to recommend were assessed using the scale utilized by Usakli and Baloglu (2011).

TABLE 3-1
Principal measurement by two surveys

	Measurement
Preliminary survey	Elicitation of destination personality traits from an open-ended question and Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale (42 items)
Main survey	Destination personality traits (31 items) Self-congruity (12 statements) Two intentions (to return and to recommend)

Construct Measurements

In line with the above questions, destination personality traits, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions were measured as follows. Respondents' socio-demographic information was also measured.

Measurement of Destination Personality Traits. The development of the personality traits of a destination (here San Antonio) was conducted over the two stages, similar to Usakli & Baloglu (2011). The first stage was a process of freely eliciting personality traits pertaining to San Antonio. The second stage was a process of deriving

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personality traits from the Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale (BPS), which is comprised of 42 items. The personality traits developed from the two stages were collected and included in the following main survey.

In the first stage, respondents were asked to think about San Antonio as if it were a person and write down personality traits that came to mind first. Personality traits were generated by a group of 19 graduate students who have visited (18 people) and haven't visited (1 person) San Antonio. They were recruited by a convenience sampling technique. Most of them (n=15) were in the department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University and the others were in other departments at the University. In this process, a total of 51 personality items were generated. While Usakli and Baloglu (2011) used a 25% selection criterion in terms of selecting the personality traits of Las Vegas in this stage, this research used a lower cutoff (10%), taking into consideration that respondents just provided a few traits which lead to a low frequency of trait. Also, some traits were merged with other traits after considering their meanings. For instance, because the trait of Mexican was regarded as similar to that of cultural, it was merged with the trait of cultural. In the end, nine personality traits were generated: historical, old, cultural, fun, traditional, exciting, friendly, charming, and entertaining. Also, even though some traits did not satisfy the 10% criterion, three of the traits listed by the respondents were considered as appropriate and included in the pool of personality traits. They are: authentic, touristy, and vibrant. Ultimately, 12 traits were elicited for the following test from this stage.

In the second stage, personality traits considered to fit San Antonio were derived from the Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale which is comprised of 42 personality items. The 42 items were reviewed in the context of tourist destinations, because they were initially developed for brands or products (Churchill, 1979). The same respondents in the first stage were also employed in this process. The items were assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) not descriptive at all to (5) extremely descriptive. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which each of the 42 traits described San Antonio. In this stage, a mean of 3.00 or above was established as the criterion for selecting traits relevant to San Antonio from the 42 items (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). In the end, 21 of the 42 items were derived from Aaker's (1997) 42 items over Aaker's (1997) 5 dimensions. They are: sincerity (down-to-earth, family-oriented, real, original, cheerful, friendly); excitement (spirited, unique, independent); competence (reliable, hard-working, successful, confident); sophistication (good looking, charming); and ruggedness (masculine, western, tough).

From the two stages, a total of 33 personality traits were produced. One of the 33 items (friendly) was duplicated between the two stages. One (charming) of the 33 items was elicited in the first stage, but it was removed because it was not supported in the second stage. Ultimately, the 31 personality traits were included in the main survey and assessed on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

Measurement of Self-congruity. There has been a debate among three methods (traditional, new, and adaptation) in regard to the way self-congruity should be measured. Traditional self-congruity measurement has been performed by computing a discrepancy ratio for each characteristic. This indirect instrument is also called a gap score formula (Sirgy & Su, 2000). This method has been criticized for using predetermined characteristics which may or may not be relevant to respondents (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004). In contrast, self-congruity between destination personality and a visitor's personality can be measured directly (Sirgy, Grewal, Mangleburg, Park, Chon, Claiborne, & Berkman, 1997). Since this measurement captures self-congruity more globally and holistically, it has been considered to be more predictive than the gap score formula (Sirgy & Su, 2000). However, a problem with this is that this new global measurement postulates a typical visitor, who is believed to reflect the destination personality. It has been pointed out that the typical user imagery of a destination does not include the entire personality of a destination (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

In line with this argument, self-congruity has also been measured with an adaptation of direct measurement. This method compares the personality of a destination with a respondent's self-personality without positing the typical visitor (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Usakli and Baloglu (2011) used the adapted direct score instrument in measuring self-congruity in terms of Las Vegas as a tourist destination. In light of this, this research employed adapted direct score measurement. Also, the operational definition for the four types of self-concepts was applied in composing statements

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regarding each self-congruity (Helgeson & Suphellen, 2004; Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). In the questionnaire, participants were instructed and 12 statements were provided as follows.

> We are interested in how alike your personality and the personality of San Antonio are. Here, please think of San Antonio as if it were a person. For each statement below, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement. For your reference, "significant others" below means family, friends, relatives, coworkers, and other significant persons around you.
>
> (Actual self-congruity);
>
> "San Antonio is consistent with how I see myself".
>
> "I am quite similar to the personality of San Antonio".
>
> "The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I see myself".
>
> (Ideal self-congruity);
>
> "San Antonio is consistent with how I would like to see myself".
>
> "I would like to be perceived as similar to the personality of San Antonio".
>
> "The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like to see myself".
>
> (Social self-congruity);
>
> "San Antonio is consistent with how I believe significant others see me".
>
> "I believe that significant others see my personality quite similar to the personality of San Antonio".

"The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I believe significant others see me".

(Ideal social self-congruity);

"San Antonio is consistent with how I would like others to see me"

"I would like to be perceived as a person who is quite similar to the personality of San Antonio by significant others".

"The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I believe significant others would like to see me".

A 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree was utilized for the measurement of the self-congruity statements.

Measurement of Intentions. Two types of visitors' intentions were assessed: intention to return and intention to recommend. This scale was utilized by Usakli and Baloglu (2011). Regarding the assessment of visitors' intentions to return, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement ranging from (1) do not intend to return to (10) very likely to return. The question was: Please rate the level of your intention to return to San Antonio for vacation purposes over the next two years. In terms of the assessment of visitors' intentions to recommend, they were asked to exhibit their level of agreement ranging from (1) not recommend at all (10) to very likely to recommend. The question was: Please indicate if you would recommend San Antonio as a vacation destination to your friends and relatives.

Questionnaire Design and Online Survey

In this research, the questionnaire was largely composed of the instrument (the adapted direct score measurement) utilized by previous research (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), a newly developed scale in this research (the personality traits of San Antonio), trip-related information, and socio-demographics. Since several difficult concepts like self-concept were employed in the questions, operational definitions for them were considered. In this survey, a translation was not considered because the subject of this study was considered American.

An online method of surveying was employed in this research. The primary consideration regarding the online method was that the method has been found to be an appropriate instrument for both distributing questionnaires and collecting data. Furthermore, online methods can be very helpful in analyzing collected data. These characteristics of online surveying were expected to facilitate the entire process of data collection in this research. The overall procedures for collecting data were handled by Qualtrics as an online survey-intensive program.

3.4 Data Analysis

As exhibited in Table 3-2, 3 types of data analyses were performed by stages: descriptive analysis, exploratory factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis. These analyses were conducted to provide a summary of the sample data, examine assumptions for the analyses, produce appropriate destination personality dimensions, and test six hypotheses proposed in this study.

Descriptive analysis was first conducted in terms of demographic characteristics, travel information, and statistical characteristics. Gender, age, marriage status, race, years living in Texas, and education were analyzed to review respondents' characteristics. Also, San Antonio trip related information was analyzed. For instance, number of visits, accompanying people and number, length of stay, and primary tourist attractions visited were analyzed.

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to develop underlying personality dimensions of San Antonio as a study site. This analysis was processed with 31 personality items derived from the preliminary survey. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation and latent root criterion (eigenvalues > 1) was utilized for factor extraction. Ultimately, through this process, 6 personality items (original, touristy, unique, cool, successful, and old) of the 31 were removed and 5 underlying dimensions (competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy) were identified.

Assumptions for variance were tested for the following analyses such as exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. For the assumption of normality of variance, the skewedness and the Kurtosis values for each item were

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examined in terms of both self-congruity and visitors' intentions. For the independence

assumption, the Durbin-Watson value was used.

Finally, multiple regression analysis was performed to test the relationships

among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions. These

relationships were tested with 6 hypotheses. For this, SPSS 21.0 software was used.

TABLE 3-2
Data analysis

Stage	Data Analysis
Generation of personality dimension	Exploratory factor analysis
Test of Hypotheses	Descriptive analysis
	Multiple regression analysis

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This research focuses on generating the personality of San Antonio as a tourist destination and investigating the effect of destination personality and self-congruity on visitors' intentions to return and recommend. A survey was conducted online at Texas A&M University. A total of 143 students participated in the survey and 126 of them completed the questionnaire. Seventeen uncompleted responses were excluded from the data analysis. This chapter provides a description of the demographic and statistical characteristics of the sample, the data preparation, results of the model testing and a summary of the statistical results found in this study.

4.1 Descriptive Findings

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic characteristics of respondents are provided in Table 4-1. Of the 126 respondents, 11% (14) were male and 89% (112) were female. The majority of the respondents (86%) were in their early twenties. Because students who were taking undergraduate classes in the departments of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences and Anthropology were recruited as the sample, the majority of the sample was relatively young as well as female-dominated. The vast majority of the respondents (93%) were single.

European Americans were the majority of the respondents (77%). Latinos or Hispanics were second most (14%). Of the respondents, 87% (109) have lived there more than 16 years while 13% (17) have lived between 0 and 15 years.

TABLE 4-1
Sample characteristics

Response Category	Frequency (n=126)	%
Gender		
Male	14	11.1
Female	112	88.9
Age		
18-19	13	10.3
20-25	108	85.7
26-30	2	1.6
30 or above	3	2.4
Marriage		
Single	117	92.9
Married	7	5.6
Others	2	1.6
Race/Ethnicity		
European American	97	77.0
Latino or Hispanics	18	14.3
African American	1	0.8
Asian American	3	2.4
Others	7	5.5
Years living in Texas		
0-5	8	6.4
6-10	3	2.4
11-15	5	4.0
16-20	35	27.8
21-25	73	58.0
26 or above	2	1.6
Education		
Some university	65	51.6
University[a]	55	43.7
Master's and PhD	6	4.8

[a] While 'some university' indicates people who have attended university, university was intended to represent people who have a bachelor's degree, although it is possible that some respondents understood 'university' as people who go to university.

Travel Characteristics

Travel characteristics of the sample population were examined through the questionnaire. These characteristics were analyzed with SPSS 21.0.

Of the respondents (n=126), 116 people have visited San Antonio. In the past three years, 28 people (24%) of the sample returned to the city 1 time, followed by three times (18%) and two times (16%). Respondents traveled to San Antonio with their family and relatives most (47%), and their friends (38%) next. In terms of the question as to how many people accompanied the respondent their last tour to San Antonio, 1 person accompanying (21%) and 3 people accompanying (21%) were the two most frequent responses, followed by two people accompanying (14%).

The frequencies showed that visitors' lengths of stay were over 2 nights (2.37) and 3 days (3.23) on average. Results showed that respondents were most motivated to visit San Antonio by seeking fun/excitement (36%) and visiting friends, family or relatives (27%). Of the tourist attractions visited during respondents' last visit to San Antonio, the River Walk was visited most (77%), followed by the Alamo (46%), SeaWorld San Antonio (28%), and Six Flags Fiesta Texas (20%), as shown in Table 4-2.

TABLE 4-2
Respondents' visiting places in San Antonio

Image or Personality	Frequency	%
River Walk	90	77.6
Alamo	53	45.7
SeaWorld San Antonio	33	28.4
Six Flags Fiesta Texas	23	19.8
Tower of the Americas	8	6.9
San Antonio Zoo	8	6.9
San Antonio Botanical Garden	3	2.6

General images or personalities of San Antonio are presented in Table 4-3. These frequencies were elicited from an open-ended question about general images or

personalities of San Antonio. As exhibited in Table 4-3, San Antonio was mostly

associated with the River Walk (24%) by respondents. Respondents indicated the Alamo

(20%) most frequently after the River Walk. These were not surprising results because

the two tourist attractions have been very popular with Texas residents. Other images or

personalities identified by respondents include Mexican (9%), fun (9%), culture (9%),

history (8%), and food (7%). These results in this open-ended question showed similar

characteristics with the earlier question regarding most visited places. In particular, as

the River Walk and the Alamo were both the most visited places and the most identified

image or personality of San Antonio. The two tourist attractions were assumed to have a

significant impact on the personality of San Antonio as a tourist attraction.

TABLE 4-3
Respondents' images and personalities of San Antonio

Image or Personality	Frequency	%
River Walk	46	24.5
Alamo	37	19.7
Mexican (Mexican food)	17	9.0
Fun	16	8.5
Culture	16	8.5
History	15	8.0
Food	14	7.4
Hispanic and Latino	9	4.8
Six Flags Fiesta Texas	9	4.8
Shopping	9	4.8

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of self-congruity and visitors' intentions were estimated

with SPSS 21.0. The statistical characteristics of the 4 types of self-congruity are

provided in Table 4-4 and 2 types of visitors' intentions are presented in Table 4-5.

Values for mean and standard deviation of the constructs are included. The means (3.00

to 3.14) of all the four self-congruities were nearly identical to the median (3.0). Given

that these statements were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly

disagree to strongly agree, the means here are interpreted not to indicate any preference

for self-congruity. In addition, the means over the 4 types of self-congruity (12

statements) showed similar values which are interpreted for respondents as the

respondents being indifferent to the 4 distinct self-congruities. Standard deviations (.93

to 1.01) of the items did not show indifferent values.

The means for visitors' intentions to return (7.85) and to recommend (7.91) were

high, which is assumed to indicate respondents' positive tendency to visit San Antonio

as exhibited in Table 4-5. Intentions to recommend showed both a higher mean and

smaller standard deviation than intention to return.

TABLE 4-4
Descriptive statistics (Self-congruity)

Variable/Item		Mean	S. D.
Actual self-congruity			
SC1	San Antonio is consistent with how I see myself	3.032	.929
SC2	I am quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	3.127	.946
SC3	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I see myself	3.024	.925
Ideal self-congruity			
SC4	San Antonio is consistent with how I would like to see myself	3.071	.982
SC5	I would like to be perceived as similar to the personality of San Antonio	3.135	.975
SC6	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like to see myself	3.008	.984
Social self-congruity			
SC7	San Antonio is consistent with how I believe significant others see me	3.000	.963
SC8	I believe that significant others see my personality quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	3.087	.947
SC9	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I believe significant others see me	3.008	.934
Ideal social self-congruity			
SC10	San Antonio is consistent with how I would like significant others to see me	3.071	1.013
SC11	I would like to be perceived as a person who is quite similar to the personality of San Antonio by significant others	3.087	.996
SC12	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like significant others to see me	3.032	.979

TABLE 4-5
Descriptive statistics (Visitors' intentions)

Variable/Item		Mean	S. D.
VIT1	Visitors' Intention to return	7.853	2.074
VIC1	Visitors' Intention to recommend	7.912	1.752

Note: The level was rated from 1 (do not intend to return/not recommend at all) to 10 (very likely to return/very likely to recommend).

4.2 Data Preparation

Missing Data

There are three categories of missing data in the literature: missing completely at random, missing at random, and not missing at random (Little & Rubin, 2002). The last category is known to be more problematic than the first two categories (Weston & Gore, 2006). According to Weston and Gore (2006), there is no way of determining whether data are missing at random or not. One of the most common solutions to treating missing data is to delete cases, despite the suggestion that deletion of cases is not always satisfactory due to the possibilities of invalid estimation (Weisberg, 2005). In this research, respondents were forced to answer each question. However, there were some participants who dropped out of the survey at a certain point in the course of answering the questions. Most of them stopped completing the questionnaires at an early stage without answering important variables such as destination personality and self-congruity. In this respect, all cases having missing data were deleted in this research.

Normality Test

A normality test was performed with SPSS 21.0. The test outcomes showed that all skewedness values fell within the suggested range of between -2 and +2, which suggests the data are normally distributed (Weston & Gore, 2006; Chou & Bentler, 1990). Kurtosis absolute values for all 12 items in Table 4-6 and for 2 items Table 4-7 fell between -1 and 1. According to Weston and Gore (2006), when an absolute value of Kurtosis is larger than 10.0, it shows a problem. Thus, all items were deemed to have met the normality test.

Reliability Test

For the reliability test, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were utilized in terms of self-congruity and intentions to return and recommend. As exhibited in Table 4-8, the 4 types of self-congruity showed a strong internal consistency respective to one another (.939 < alpha < .974). Self-congruity as one dimension indicated a stronger reliability than the 4 types overall (.979).

TABLE 4-6
Normality test (self-congruity)

Variable/Item		Skewness	Kurtosis
SC1	San Antonio is consistent with how I see myself	-.185	-.214
SC2	I am quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	-.258	-.596
SC3	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I see myself	-.171	-.456
SC4	San Antonio is consistent with how I would like to see myself	-.300	-.509
SC5	I would like to be perceived as similar to the personality of San Antonio	-.434	-.368
SC6	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like to see myself	-.170	-.587
SC7	San Antonio is consistent with how I believe significant others see me	-.164	-.656
SC8	I believe that significant others see my personality quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	-.291	-.582
SC9	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I believe significant others see me	-.196	-.671
SC10	San Antonio is consistent with how I would like significant others to see me	-.239	-.671
SC11	I would like to be perceived as a person who is quite similar to the personality of San Antonio by significant others	-.276	-.729
SC12	The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like significant others to see me	-.220	-.751

TABLE 4-7
Normality test (visitors' intentions)

Variable/Item		Skewness	Kurtosis
VIT1	Visitors' Intention to return	-1.057	.803
VIC2	Visitors' Intention to recommend	-.764	.089

TABLE 4-8
Reliability estimates for self-congruity

Variable/Item	Reliability[a]	Number of items
Four-types of self-congruities	.958	12
Actual self-congruity	(.937)	(3)
Ideal self-congruity	(.943)	(3)
Social self-congruity	(.963)	(3)
Ideal social self-congruity	(.974)	(3)
Self-congruity as one dimension	.979	12

[a] Cronbach's alpha coefficients

4.3 Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the 31 personality items. The factor analysis was intended to reduce data and/or to identify the underlying dimensions. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation and latent root criterion (eigenvalues > 1), was utilized in the factor analysis. A cutoff point of .50 was set to determine items in the inclusion of a factor (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Thus, items with factor loading greater than .50 were considered necessary for practical significance.

Generation of Destination Personality Dimensions

In the initial analysis, six factors were identified. Three items showed both cross-loadings and low factor loadings (<.50), and were removed. The items eliminated from this analysis were "original," "touristy," and "unique." After removing the 3 items one by one, the analyses were repeated. This analysis generated two new items with cross-loadings and low factor loadings (<.50). They were "cool" and "successful." After eliminating the 2 items one by one, third analysis were run. This analysis also produced

one new item with cross-loadings and low factor loadings (<.50) (old). After removing

the item, a fourth analysis was conducted. In the end, after doing the fourth analysis, all

items showed satisfactory factor loadings larger than .50, and no items cross-loaded. In

addition, six factors were reduced to five factors after the fourth analysis.

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (p<.001, chi-square 2037.529) indicated that

adequate correlations existed among the variables to perform a factor analysis. The

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (.900) was good, showing that the

principal component analysis was appropriate for the data. The latent root criterion

(eigenvalues > 1) demonstrated a five-factor solution and explained 69.2% of the

variance. All factor loadings were robust (>.52).

Names for the factors were assigned in consideration of the nature of the items,

comparison and priority among items, previous literature such as studies by Aaker's

(1997), Hosany et al. (2006) and Usakli and Baloglu (2011), and the characteristics of

the major tourist attractions (The Alamo, The River Walk, SeaWorld San Antonio and

Six Flags Fiesta Texas) in San Antonio. Items with high factor loadings were considered

more influential (Hair et al., 2006).

Factor one explained about 44% of the variance and included 6 items mostly

related to the urban developmental characteristics of San Antonio. Three of the items

(hard-working, reliable, and secure) were also found under Aaker's (1997) competence

factor. This factor was thus named "Competence." Factor two explained about 8% of the

variance and included 6 items related to the real and friendly image of San Antonio as a

tourist destination. In particular, 4 items (cheerful, friendly, real, and down-to-earth) of

the 6 were present under Aaker's (1997) sincerity factor. In addition, the 2 items (friendly and cheerful) were also found under a sincerity factor in Usakli and Baloglu study (2011). This factor was thus labeled "sincerity."

Factor three explained about 7% of the variance and consisted of 5 items related to the cultural and historical image of the city. This factor was hard to relate to any of the factors presented in the previous literature. This factor was considered to be specific to the personality of San Antonio. The third factor was named "cultural" in consideration of the importance of the item with the highest loading (cultural: .839) across the 5 factors. Factor four explained 5.6% of the variance and consisted of 4 items related to the fun and entertaining environment of the city. Two of the 4 items ("exciting" and "young") were found under Aaker (1997)'s excitement factor. The fourth factor was thus named "excitement." Factor five explained about 4% of the total variance and included 4 items related to the lively atmosphere of the tourist destination. Only two items ("good-looking" and "confident") were found across two factors in Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale. In the Usakli and Baloglu's (2011) study, the item vibrant was under the factor 'vibrancy.' The fifth factor was thus named "vibrancy."

Cronbach's alpha was employed to test the reliability. The reliabilities of the five factors were relatively high: competence (.874), sincerity (.888), culture (.827), excitement (.867), and vibrancy (.837), all above the .70 threshold level suggested by (Kline, 1999). Table 4-9 provides factors, factor loadings, eigenvalues, the percentage of variance explained by the factors, and the corresponding Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients.

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TABLE 4-9
Exploratory factor analysis of destination personality items[a]

Factors	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	Explained variance (%)	Reliability[b]
Competence		11.175	44.175	.874
Masculine	.761			
Hardworking	.706			
Tough	.697			
Reliable	.694			
Secure	.688			
Independent	.631			
Sincerity		2.037	8.148	.888
Cheerful	.719			
Friendly	.715			
Traditional	.706			
Real	.695			
Down-to-earth	.686			
Spirited	.599			
Culture		1.785	7.142	.827
Cultural	.839			
Historical	.800			
Authentic	.595			
Western	.542			
Family-oriented	.522			
Excitement		1.392	5.569	.867
Entertaining	.792			
Exciting	.787			
Young	.701			
Fun	.676			
Vibrancy		1.034	4.134	.837
Colorful	.741			
Vibrant	.740			
Good-looking	.574			
Confident	.555			
Total variance explained			69.168	

[a] Extraction method: principal component analysis, rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization.
[b] Reliabilities: Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Comparison of Destinations Personality Dimensions and Brands Personality Dimensions

The personality dimensions in this study are similar to Aaker's (1997) brand personality (BP) dimensions. Table 4-10 shows the comparison between the five personality dimensions of the destination in this current study and Aaker's (1997) brand personality dimensions. Three of the five factors replicated the Aaker's (1997) BP dimensions. Thus, the results of this study supported the argument that "Aaker's (1997) BP framework is applicable to tourism destinations" (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011: p. 122). However, two of the five factors ("culture" and "vibrancy") were found to be specific to San Antonio, which supports the previous findings that tourism destinations have their unique personality dimensions (Hosany et al., 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

In addition to the comparison of personality dimensions between destinations and brands, personality traits as components of dimensions should also be noted. According to Ekinci and Hosany (2006), Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale (42 items) may not fully represent destination personality traits. Indeed, although the 3 dimensions in this study were named as the same as those in Aaker's (1997) study, the personality components of the dimensions were not the same. For instance, although the dimensions of competence had 3 same traits (reliable, hard-working, secure), Aaker's (1997) brand personality had 6 different traits, while the dimension of competence in this study had 3 different traits which came from Aaker's (1997) other dimensions. This type of shifting of the personality traits from one dimension to another has been observed in previous research (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Murphy et al., 2007a; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

Consequently, this study exhibits that destination and brand personality can be similar but different in both dimensions and personality traits.

TABLE 4-10
Comparison of destination personality (DP) and brand personality (BP)

The present study (DP dimensions/25 items)	Aaker (1997) (BP dimensions/42 items)	Comparison
Competence (6): masculine, hard-working, tough, reliable, secure, independent	**Competence** (9): reliable, hard-working, secure, intelligent, technical, corporate, successful, leader, confident	Corresponding
Sincerity (6): cheerful, friendly, traditional, real, down-to-earth, spirited	**Sincerity** (11): down-to-earth, family-oriented, small-town, honest, sincere, real, wholesome, original, cheerful, sentimental, friendly	Corresponding
Culture (5): cultural, historical, authentic, western, family-oriented		DP specific
Excitement (4): entertaining, exciting, young, fun	**Excitement** (11): daring, trendy, exciting, spirited, cool, young, imaginative, unique, up-to-date, independent, contemporary	Corresponding
Vibrancy (4): colorful, vibrant, good-looking, confident		DP specific
	Sophistication (6): upper-class, glamorous, good-looking, charming, feminine, smooth	BP specific
	Ruggedness (5): outdoorsy, masculine, western, tough, rugged	BP specific

Comparison with Other Destination Personality Dimensions

      The perceived personality dimensions of San Antonio were largely similar to destination personality dimensions in previous studies. As exhibited in Table 4-11, the dimensions of sincerity, excitement and vibrancy extracted in this study were found in Hosany et al. (2006), Murphy et al. (2007), Sahin and Baloglu (2011), and Usakli and Baloglu (2011)'s studies as personality dimensions of tourist destinations. However, some destinations had unique personality dimensions. For example, Hosany et al. (2006) found 3 personality dimensions with 148 British travelers who visited many destinations. The dimensions of sincerity and excitement were also found in Aaker (1997), but conviviality was newly produced in that research. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) studied of the personality of Las Vegas with 368 visitors and found 5 dimensions: vibrancy, sophistication, competence, contemporary, and sincerity. Vibrancy was evaluated to be a destination-specific personality dimension. In terms of the personality dimensions of San Antonio, the dimension of culture was destination-specific. These comparisons between this study and other destination personality research support the argument that a separate personality scale for tourism destinations is essential as an addition to Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

TABLE 4-11
Comparison of destination dimension (DP) between this study and other studies

Reference	Destination(s) studied	Sample	Dimensions found
Hosany, Ekincy, and Uysal (2006)	A number of destinations visited last	148 British travelers	3 Dimensions: sincerity, excitement, and conviviality
Murphy, Moscardo, and Benkendorff (2007b)	Whitsunday islands in Queensland, Australia	277 Visitors to Queensland	4 Dimensions: sophistication and competence, sincerity, excitement, and ruggedness
Sahin and Baloglu (2011)	Istanbul, Turkey	272 International visitors to Istanbul	5 Dimensions: competence and modernity, originality and vibrancy, sincerity, cool and trendy, and conviviality
Usakli & Baloglu (2011)	Las Vegas	368 Visitors to Las Vegas	5 Dimensions: vibrancy, sophistication, competence, contemporary, and sincerity
The present study	San Antonio	126 Texas residents	5 Dimensions: competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy

Exploratory Factor Analysis of Self-congruity

In this study, respondents were asked to show their levels of agreements with the 12 self-congruity statements. The self-congruity scale was adopted from the literature (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). The 12 statements comprised 4 types of self-congruities which contained 3 statements respectively.

An exploratory factor analysis was performed on four types of self-congruities, despite these types being employed from the literature. When a first analysis was conducted on the four types of self-congruities, only one factor was extracted as exhibited in Table 4-12. Self-congruity as a single dimension explained 89% of the total variance. Eigenvalue (9.74) and reliability (.979) showed good values. The results indicated that self-congruity as one dimension was valid and reliable. Relative to this, Pearson correlations among the four types of self-congruities were very high (all > .824).

When an exploratory factor analysis was performed on 12 statements of self-congruity, only one factor was also extracted. As a result, the exploratory factor analysis for self-congruity showed that self-congruity as a single dimension was appropriate.

TABLE 4-12
Exploratory factor analysis of self-congruity[a] as a single dimension

Analysis object	Eigenvalue	Explained variance (%)	Reliability[b]	Pearson correlation
Four types of self-congruity	3.554	88.839	.958	all > .824
Twelve statements of self-congruities	9.744	81.204	.979	all > .696

[a] Extraction method: principal component analysis, rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization.
[b] Reliabilities: Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

4.4 Model and Hypotheses Testing

The proposed model and the relationships among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions were tested using multiple regression analyses.

Relationship between Destination Personality and Visitors' Intentions (H_1 and H_2)

The relationships between the five dimensions of destination personality and visitors' intentions to return and to recommend were analyzed using multiple regressions. The results are presented in Table 4-13. Destination personality dimensions were statistically significant ($p < .05$) in predicting the visitors' intentions to return and recommend. In Model 1, only the sincerity dimension ($\beta = .439$, $p = .001$) had a significant and positive effect on visitors' intention to return, while the other four dimensions were not statistically significant. However, in Model 2, the dimensions of sincerity ($\beta = .325$, $p = .012$) and excitement ($\beta = .356$, $p = .003$), were statistically significant ($p < .05$). Consequently, Hypotheses 1 and 2, destination personality will have a positive effect on visitors' intention to return and recommend, were partially supported.

The multiple R coefficients (Model 1: .432, Model 2: .489) indicated that the correlations between the destination personality and the two visitors' intentions were moderate (R values > .30) (Cohen, 1988). In Model 1, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was .187, showing that approximately 19% of the total variation in intention to return was explained by the destination personality factors. Similarly, the R^2 was .240 for the Model 2, which denotes that 24% of the total variance of the inference of intention to recommend was explained by the destination personality factors. Accordingly, the results indicated that destination personality was more predictive in the

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estimation of visitors' intention to recommend than intention to return, because the R^2 in Model 2 was higher than in Model 1.

The problem of multicollinearity was not found in either model as the tolerance scores were larger than 0.4. According to Hair et al. (2006), when tolerance scores are higher than 0.30, multicollinearity is considered to be absent. The assumption of independence of errors was satisfied in that the Durbin-Watson value (2.037) was in the range from 1.50 to 2.50 (Hair et al., 2006).

TABLE 4-13
Regression analysis: relationship between destination personality dimensions and visitors' intentions

	Model 1 Intention to return			Model 2 Intention to recommend		
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Competence	-.213	-1.644	.103	-.025	-.204	.839
Sincerity	.439	3.320	.001	.325	2.540	.012
Culture	-.125	-1.039	.301	-.167	-1.436	.154
Excitement	.220	1.826	.071	.356	3.056	.003
Vibrancy	.026	.190	.850	-.027	-.209	.835
Constant		43.678	<.001		53.909	<.001
Multiple R	.432			.489		
R^2	.187			.240		
F test statistics		F=5.062			F=6.929	
significance		P<.001			P<.001	

Relationship between Self-congruity and Visitors' Intentions (H₃ and H₄)

The relationships between self-congruity and visitors' intentions to return and recommend were also analyzed using multiple regression. As exhibited in Table 4-15, none of the four types of self-congruities were statistically significant (p>.05) in estimating visitors' intentions.

The reasons for this result were assumed from the several aspects. First, even though the scale of self-congruity was employed from the literature (Sirgy & Su, 2000, Usakli & Baloglu, 2011), it was likely difficult for the subjects to understand the 12 statements. The frequencies showed a very similar pattern in indicating the level of agreement (3.00 < mean < 3.14, .93 < standard deviation < 1.01). Second, the psychological term of 'congruent' in the statements was likely hard to understand. Third, respondents were asked to think of San Antonio as if it were a person and compare the personality of San Antonio with their personality, but it did not likely work in actual surveying.

On the other hand, multiple regression analysis was conducted on the relationship between self-congruity as one dimension and visitors' intentions. As exhibited in Table 4-16, the effect of self-congruity on visitors' intentions to return and recommend were statistically significant (p<.05). In Model 1, self-congruity (β=.254, p=.006) had a significant and positive effect on visitors' intention to return. Self-congruity (β=.251, p=.007) was also statistically significant (p<.05) in Model 2. These results were totally different from those that four types of self-congruity showed in terms of visitors' intentions in the earlier analyses.

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Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance were utilized to examine multicollinearity in the four types of self-congruities and either Model. Table 4-17 presents the results. The problem of multicollinearity was found in all 4 types of self-congruities in both Model 1 and Model 2 as all the tolerance scores were less than 0.30 and all VIFs were larger than 4. According to Hair et al. (2006), when tolerance scores are lower than 0.30, multicollinearity is considered to be present. In addition, when VIF exceeds 4, further investigation is needed, while VIF exceeding 10 is an indication of serious multicollinearity requiring correction. In this respect, it was interpreted that the 4 types of self-congruity and 12 statements were highly related each other.

The assumption of independence of errors was satisfied in that Durbin-Watson value (Model1: 1.924, Model2: 1.828) were in the range from 1.50 to 2.50 (Hair et al., 2006).

Although the four types of self-congruities did not have a significant and positive effect on the visitors' intentions to return and recommend, self-congruity as a single dimension was statistically significant. In particular, since the 4 types of self-congruities showed multicollinearity, the regression of the 4 types of self-congruities on visitors' intentions was analyzed to be not appropriate. Consequently, the Hypothesis 3 and 4, self-congruity will have a positive effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, were supported respectively.

TABLE 4-14

Regression analysis: relationship between four types of self-congruities and visitors' intentions

	Model 1 Intention to return			Model 2 Intention to recommend		
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Actual congruity	.274	1.439	.153	.300	1.575	.118
Ideal congruity	.036	.150	.881	-.038	-.156	.876
Social congruity	-.193	-.972	.333	-.175	-.882	.380
Ideal social congruity	.152	.614	.541	.180	.725	.470
Constant		41.839	<.001		49.859	<.001
Multiple R	.287				.285	
R^2	.083				.081	
F test statistics		F=2.498			F=6.929	
significance		P=.047			P<.001	

TABLE 4-15

Regression analysis: relationship between self-congruity as one dimension and visitors' intentions

	Model 1 Intention to return			Model 2 Intention to recommend		
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Self-congruity	.254	2.805	.006	.251	2.766	.007
Constant		41.900	<.001		50.026	<.001
Multiple R	.254				.251	
R^2	.065				.063	
F test statistics		F=7.867			F=7.651	
significance		P=.006			P=.007	

TABLE 4-16

Multicollinearity among four types of self-congruities

	Model 1 Intention to return		Model 2 Intention to recommend	
	Tolerance	VIF	Tolerance	VIF
Actual self-congruity	.228	4.390	.228	4.390
Ideal self-congruity	.141	7.089	.141	7.089
Social self-congruity	.210	4.756	.210	4.756
Ideal social self-congruity	.134	7.450	.134	7.450
Durbin-Watson	1.924		1.828	

Mediating Effect of Self-congruity between Destination Personality and Visitors' Intentions (H_5 and H_6)

Hypotheses 5 and 6 were about the mediating effect of self-congruity on the relationships between destination personality and visitors' intentions to return and recommend. To test the mediating effect, Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach was employed. If the four following conditions are met, the mediating effect is determined to be present.

Step 1: This step is the process of regressing the dependent variable on the independent variable. Here, the independent variable must influence the dependent variable. If not, mediation effect is not present, and there is no need for further analyses.

Step 2: This step is the process of regressing the mediator on the independent variable. Here, the independent variable must influence the mediator.

Step 3: This step is the process of regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and the mediator. Here, the mediator must influence the dependent variable.

Step 4: The effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable must be less in the third step than in the first step. Here, if the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is no longer significant, mediation is supported perfectly (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). However, if the absolute effect size of the independent variable on the dependent variable is reduced but remains significant, partial mediation is supported (Hair et al., 2006).

For the analyses of the mediating effect, both destination personality as one dimension and self-congruity as one dimension were utilized. As mentioned in Hypotheses 1 and 2, while destination personality as a single dimension had a significant effect on visitors' intentions, the destination personality dimensions were statistically significant, e.g., Model 1 (sincerity) and Model 2 (sincerity and excitement). In this respect, these results indicated that step 1 was satisfied in terms of the relationship between the dependent variable and the mediator.

In step 2, self-congruity was regressed on destination personality. The results are provided in Table 4-18. The destination personality ($p<.001$) was found to be significant ($p<.05$), showing that there was a significant relationship between destination personality and self-congruity. The multiple R coefficients (.401) indicated that the correlation between destination personality and self-congruity were moderate (.30 < R values < .50) (Cohen, 1988). Destination personality explained 16% of self-congruity ($R^2=.161$). Even though the amount of variance explained by this regression model for self-congruity was low, the F value was highly significant ($p<.001$).

In step 3, the intentions to return and recommend were regressed on both destination personality and self-congruity. The results are provided in Table 4-19 and show that while destination personality had a significant effect ($p<.05$) on the visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, self-congruity was not statistically significant ($p>.05$) for both intentions to return and to recommend. These findings did not satisfy the third step of Baron and Kenny's (1986) test of mediation. Consequently, self-

congruity was interpreted not to be a mediator between destination personality and visitors' intentions.

   On the other hand, the relationship between destination personality as one dimension and visitors' intentions to return and recommend was analyzed using multiple regression. Table 4-18 provides the results. Destination personality as a single dimension was statistically significant ($p<.05$) in estimating the visitors' intentions to return and recommend as exhibited in Table 4-19.

   In this respect, Hypotheses 1 and 2, destination personality as one dimension will have a positive effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, were supported, separate from Hypotheses 5 and 6.

TABLE 4-17
Regression analysis: relationship between destination personality and self-congruity

| | | Self-congruity | |
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Destination personality	.401	4.679	<.001
Constant		.467	.641
Multiple R	.401		
R^2	.161		
F test statistics		F=21.897	
Significance		P<.001	

TABLE 4-18

Regression analysis: relationship between destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions

	Model 1 Intention to return			Model 2 Intention to recommend		
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Destination personality	.224	2.306	.023	.329	3.478	.001
Self-congruity	.164	1.691	.093	.119	1.258	.211
Constant		42.636	<.001		52.203	<.001
Multiple R	.327			.392		
R^2	.107			.154		
F test statistics		F=6.742			F=10.246	
significance		P=.002			P<.001	

TABLE 4-19

Regression analysis: relationship between destination personality as one dimension and visitors' intentions

	Model 1 Intention to return			Model 2 Intention to recommend		
	Beta	t-Value	Sig.	Beta	t-Value	Sig.
Destination personality	.290	3.233	.002	.376	4.337	<.001
Constant		42.270	<.001		52.056	<.001
Multiple R	.290			.376		
R^2	.084			.142		
F test statistics		F=10.452			F=18.814	
significance		P=.002			P<.001	

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceived destination personality of San Antonio and to empirically examine the relationships between destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions. The results of this study offer theoretical and practical contributions to the understanding of the personality dimensions of a tourist destination and the effect of self-congruity on visitors' intentions.

5.1 Major Findings

This study was designed to explore the following research questions: (1) what personality dimensions San Antonio has as a tourist destination, and (2) what relationships there are among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions to return and recommend. For this, the present study produced five personality dimensions of San Antonio and identified the relationships among the variables as follows.

Five Personality Dimensions of San Antonio

San Antonio was analyzed as having five personality dimensions as a tourist destination based on respondents' perceptions: competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy. Of the five dimensions, 3 dimensions (competence, sincerity, and excitement) were found in Aaker (1997), even though the personality traits under the dimensions were not the same. While the dimension of vibrancy had been found in other

destination personality studies, the dimension of culture was analyzed to be specific to San Antonio.

These five dimensions explained about 69% of the total variance and were assumed to indicate that the dimensions are based on the city's developmental image and well-known tourist attractions such as The Alamo, The River Walk, and SeaWorld San Antonio. However, the relationship between the dimensions and those attractions was not identified in this study.

Relationship between Destination Personality on Visitors' Intentions

This study tested whether destination personality has a significant and positive effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend was tested. The visitors' intentions were regressed on the five destination personality dimensions. In terms of the intention to return, only the dimension of sincerity (p=.001) was statistically significant, while the dimensions of sincerity (p=.012) and excitement (p=.003) had a significant and positive effect on visitor's intention to recommend.

The relationship between destination personality as one dimension and visitors' intentions was tested in consideration of partial relationship of the five dimensions with visitors' intentions. The result exhibited that destination personality as a single dimension had a significant and positive effect on visitors' intentions to return (β=.290, p=.002) and to recommend (β=.376, p=.001).

Consequently, destination personality as one dimension had a positive relationship with visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. However, only one dimension related to returning to the destination and two dimensions regarding the

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destination recommendation showed a significant relationship with the visitors'

intentions respectively.

Relationship between Self-congruity on Visitors' Intentions

In this study, the relationship between self-congruity and visitors' intentions were

tested. Self-congruity consisted of four types: actual self-congruity, ideal self-congruity,

social self-congruity, and ideal social self-congruity. The results showed that none of the

self-congruities were statistically significant ($p > .05$).

Visitors' intentions to return and to recommend were also regressed on self-

congruity as one dimension. In contrast to the lack of the relationship of the individual

self-congruity with visitors' intentions, self-congruity as a single dimension had a

significant effect on visitors' intentions to return ($\beta = .254$, $p = .006$) and to recommend

($\beta = .251$, $p = .007$). This result may be interpreted for the self-congruity scale to be

problematic and/or for a sample to be inappropriate for this study.

Consequently, although the relationship of each type of self-congruity with

visitors' intentions was not elucidated, the results indicated that overall self-congruity

had a significant and positive impact on visitors' intentions.

Self-congruity as a Mediator

In this study, whether self-congruity served as a mediator between destination

personality and visitors' intentions was tested. For this test, Baron and Kenny' (1986)

approach requiring four conditions was employed. In consideration of the lack

relationship between individual self-congruities and visitors' intentions, self-congruity as

one dimension was utilized. The results exhibited that self-congruity was not a mediator because the findings failed to satisfy the third condition. When visitors' intentions were regressed on both self-congruity and destination personality, the effect of self-congruity on visitors' intentions was not statistically significant in both intentions.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The major theoretical contributions of this study are largely categorized into two concepts. One is that the personality dimensions of a tourist destination were developed and some of the dimensions had a significant effect on visitors' intentions. The other is that self-congruity theory was empirically evidenced in the tourism context.

Generation of the Destination Personality Dimensions and their Effect on Visitors' Intentions

The present study empirically demonstrated the personality of the destination, San Antonio. The findings supported the argument that visitors often attach personalities to destinations as long examined in the consumer behavior literature (Aaker, 1997; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Plummer 1985; Sung & Tinkham, 2005, Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). Thus, even though destinations are inanimate objects like brands, they may have personalities like human beings. Also, this study evidenced that destination personality as a single dimension had a significant impact on visitors' intentions, while destination personality dimensions were partially significant.

Applicability of Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale to Destinations

San Antonio as a tourist destination has been identified as having five personality dimensions based on respondents' perceptions: competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy. Of the five dimensions, three dimensions (competence, sincerity, and excitement) were similar to those in Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale. Thus, the findings of this study supported the argument that Aaker's (1997) brand personality framework is applicable to tourist destinations (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

The findings also indicated a destination-specific dimension of culture that had not been found in the tourism literature and in Aaker's (1997) brand personality framework. Consequently, this study supported the argument that "Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale may not fully represent all personality traits" associated with tourist destinations (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Usakil & Baloglu, 2011: p. 125).

Self-congruity in the Tourism Context

In this study, the findings supported self-congruity theory in a tourism context. Despite self-congruity being studied extensively in the consumer behavior literature, there has been relatively a little research in the tourism literature (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). This study demonstrated that self-congruity as one dimension had a significant impact on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. Thus, the greater the degree of match between destination personality and visitors' self-concept, the more likely it is that the visitors will have favorable intentions to return and to recommend (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

Yet, when measured as a set of individual factors, self-congruity was not a good predictor. The findings showed that four types of self-congruities did not have a significant effect on visitors' intentions.

5.3 Practical Implications

Building destination brands based on personality of destinations has been considered to be a viable tool for destination marketing (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006). This is because destination marketing organizations can focus on symbolic and psychological aspects of destinations through destination brands. This study provides two practical contributions to destination marketing as follows.

Developing Effective Marketing Strategy Based on Destination Personality

In recent years, people have been often inundated with similar destination marketing campaigns. Indeed, since many destinations have promoted themselves with similar attributes like wonderful scenery and comfortable places, these marketing programs are not expected to differentiate a destination from their competitors. In this respect, the findings of this study provided practical evidence that symbolic aspects of destinations need to be emphasized based on their personalities. It should be noted that this study indicated that while the destination of San Antonio had their specific personality, destination personality (some of personality dimensions) had a significant effect on visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. Thus, destination marketers should focus on the personality of destinations in developing their marketing strategies.

San Antonio's Destination Marketing

In particular, of the five personality dimensions (competence, sincerity, culture, excitement, and vibrancy), the dimension of sincerity was statistically significant in the relationship with the visitors' intention to return and the dimensions of sincerity and excitement had a significant effect on the visitors' intention to recommend. In this respect, destination marketers of San Antonio need to put emphasis on these two dimensions (sincerity and excitement) in their marketing efforts. In other words, destination marketers can appeal to potential visitors by using personality traits under the dimensions of sincerity and excitement making their destination advertisements.

Utilizing Self-congruity in Destination Marketing

According to self-congruity theory, consumers tend to prefer brands or products that are similar to their own self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Likewise, it has been found that visitors also tend to visit destinations that are congruent with their own self-concept in tourism contexts (Beerli et al., 2007; Hung & Petrick, 2011, Sirgy & Su, 2000). In this light, the findings in this study provide the applicability of self-congruity in developing and positioning destination marketing. Indeed, the results in this study exhibited that self-congruity as one dimension had a significant and positive effect on the visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, although the four types of self-congruity did not show statistical significance. These results practically implicate destination marketers need to know that there is "a connection" between destination personality and visitors' self-concept in developing their destination marketing (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011: p. 126).

Thus, destination marketers should make their efforts to market to potential visitors who have personalities that are consistent with the destination's personality.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The present study had several limitations that should be considered in interpreting the findings. Major limitations in this study were the lack of sample randomness and the difficulty of generalization as follows.

Lack of Sample Randomness

One of the major limitations in this study is the lack of random sampling. In this study, a convenience sampling was employed for collecting data. In this respect, it is likely the sample does not represent the entire population of visitors to San Antonio as Texas residents. Indeed, the A&M students recruited as the subject of this study were those who were taking classes only in two departments (Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences and Anthropology Science); it is thus also hard to view the subjects as representative of even the population of Texas A&M University.

Difficulty of Generalizability to Other Destinations

The fact that most of the respondents were undergraduate students at Texas A&M University puts the study at risk of difficulty of generalizability. As seen in Table 4-9, while destinations studied showed similar personality dimensions, they also indicated specific personality dimensions by destinations. Thus, the findings in this study likely should not be generalized.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

In this study, the relationships among destination personality, self-congruity, and visitors' intentions were investigated, but the complicated nature of the relationships and each concept still need to be examined. In light of the findings in this study, several recommendations for future research are proposed as follows:

Measurement of Self-congruity

The measurement of the four types of self-congruity was conducted, but the four types of self-congruity were not statistically significant in the relationship with visitors' intentions to return and to recommend. The twelve items under the four types of self-congruity were also not statistically significant.

Yet, when self-congruity was regarded as one dimension, it had a significant and positive impact on visitors' intentions. Several reasons for this are assumed: (1) The term of congruity in the questionnaire might have not been familiar to respondents, (2) the scale consisting of 12 similar statements might have confused subjects, and (3) it might have not been easy for respondents to compare their personality with the personality of an inanimate object (San Antonio). These assumptions should be considered for the measurement of self-congruity in future research.

Study of Social and Ideal Social Self-congruity

While both actual self-congruity and ideal self-congruity have often been studied in the tourism literature, social and ideal social self-congruity have been little addressed despite their growing importance (Hung & Petrick, 2011; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011).

Destination choice is affected by social factors as well as personal factors in the tourism context (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). For example, visitors who travel with significant others tend to "visit those destinations that would make good impression on significant others" (Sirgy & Su, 2000; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011: p. 126). Hung and Petrick (2011) also suggested that both social self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity need to be further studied, in particular, emphasizing that ideal self-congruity and ideal social self-congruity showed more predictive power on cruising intentions than both actual self-congruity and social self-congruity. The study of social and ideal social self-congruity from a visitors' intentions perspective is expected to contribute to building the destination marketing strategies in the future, although this study did not demonstrate the relationship of those self-congruities with visitors' intentions.

Development of Destination Personality Scale

In the tourism literature, it has been pointed out that "Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale may not fully represent the personality traits associated with tourism destinations" (Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011: p. 126). In the present study, a five-dimensional destination personality was found, but some of the personality traits under the personality dimensions were different from Aaker's (1997) BPS. In that respect, it has been suggested that a valid and generalized destination personality scale needs to be developed in the tourism context (Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). However, for that, destination specific characteristics which can show different destination personalities need to be considered.

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Self-congruity as a Mediator

Also, the effect of self-congruity as a mediator between destination personality and visitors' intentions was examined, but it turned out not to be present as the findings did not satisfy the Baron and Kenny's (1986) test of mediation. However, Usakli and Baloglu (2011) empirically evidenced a mediating effect of self-congruity. Whether self-congruity has a mediating effect between destination personality and visitors' intentions needs to be investigated in the future study.

Influential Factors of Destination Personality

It has been suggested that perceptions of destination personality attributes can be formed by the contact that a tourist may have had with a destination (Plummer, 1985). Destination personality characteristics can also be directly or indirectly influenced by residents, hotel employees, tourist attractions, and marketing programs, or simply through a tourist's "imagery" (Aaker, 1997: p. 347; Cai, 2002). In this study, it was conjectured that major tourist attractions in San Antonio such as The Alamo, The River Walk, and SeaWorld influenced the formation of the personality dimensions of San Antonio, but it wasn't identified. However, if any influential factors to destination personality characteristics are substantiated in the studies of tourist destinations, implications for destination marketing strategy and positioning would be more practical.

Study of Potential Visitors

Study of potential visitors by ethnicities is suggested. As noticed in this research, self-congruity theory is defined based on the relationships between a destination's

personality and a potential visitor's personality. For applying self-destination congruity theory substantiated in this research to tourism marketing area, study of potential visitors is required additionally. Potential visitors have different personalities by ethnicities based on their cultural characteristics (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). For instance, in Texas, there are many types of ethnicities such as European American, African American, Hispanics or Latinos, and Asians, that are deemed to have different personalities. If this type of study of potential visitors by ethnicities is performed in the future, differentially customized marketing strategies could be made available.

Study of Other Important Explanatory Variables

This research indicated relatively low explanatory power in terms of visitors' intentions to return and to recommend, as shown in Table 4-13 and Table 4-16. These results exhibits that unexplained part of visitors' intentions are broad. If important independent variables other than destination personality and self-congruity treated in this research is studied in the future, new theoretical and practical implications could be expected.

5.6 Final Thoughts

This study largely addressed the generation of destination personality of San Antonio as a tourist destination and the effects of destination personality and self-congruity on visitors' intentions. In this sense, the present study focused on the supply side of a destination and the connection between destinations and potential visitors.

However, in real tourism markets, there are many types of people who are deemed to have different propensities toward destinations. This type of study interest is related to the demand side of destinations. For instance, in Texas, as in many other states that offer tourism destinations, there are many types of ethnicities such as European Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, and Asian Americans. According to cross-cultural psychologists, individuals in collectivistic cultures are much more interdependent than those in individualistic cultures, and then the two distinct views of the self have an effect on a range of psychological processes and behavioral selections (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Cross & Madson, 1997; Suh, Diener, & Updegraff, 2008). Namely, it is estimated that ethnic groups have various destination demands based on their different personalities, which require customized marketing strategy of tourist destinations. In the end, this type of interest can be related to how to attract potential visitors.

Accordingly, if these supply and demand sides surrounding destinations and a connection between destinations and potential visitors are studied together, more theoretical and practical implications would be expected, in particular from the destination marketing perspective.

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APPENDIX A

Purpose

This is part of my Master's thesis, and the primary purpose is to elicit personality traits relevant to San Antonio as a tourist destination. The personality traits derived from this process will be provided to respondents for assessment in a larger survey, to be conducted at a later date.

Process

This process consists of two stages. Firstly, personality traits will be elicited without any references, using an open-ended question. You will be asked to freely describe personality traits that you feel are relevant to San Antonio. Secondly, you will be asked to assess the degree to which each of the 42 personality traits accurately describe San Antonio as a tourist destination.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding this survey, you may contact Dr. James Petrick, Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences, at (979) 845-8806, jpetrick@tamu.edu, or Seonghwan Lim, at (979) 739-5043, sagelim25@gmail.com.
If you would like to be in this study, please click on the button below.

1. ***Here, we are interested in your visitation to San Antonio.*** Have you visited San Antonio in the past 5 years?　□ Yes　　□ No

2. ***Here, we are interested in your perception of San Antonio***. Take a moment to **think about San Antonio as if it were a person**. This may sound unusual, but think of a set of human characteristics you associate with San Antonio as a tourist destination. For example, we can describe that Las Vegas is fun, exciting, outgoing, sexy, energetic, and the like. **Please list what comes to your mind first** in terms of personality traits

that reflect San Antonio using personal adjectives such as young, old, original, tough, and so on. **There are no right or wrong answers.**

…………………………   …………………………   …………………………

…………………………   …………………………   …………………………

…………………………   …………………………   …………………………

3. *Here, we are interested in your perception of San Antonio*. Listed below are the 42 personality traits that have been previously developed. **We would like you to think of San Antonio as a tourist destination and as if it were a person**. Please indicate to what extent these personality traits accurately describe San Antonio. Check the appropriate box for each personality trait.

Personality Items	Not at all descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Somewhat descriptive	Very descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Down-to-earth	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Family-oriented	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Small-town	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Honest	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sincere	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Real	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wholesome	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Original	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cheerful	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sentimental	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friendly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Daring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Trendy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Exciting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spirited	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cool	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Young	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Imaginative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Unique	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Up-to-date	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Independent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Contemporary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reliable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Hard-working	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Secure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intelligent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Technical	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Corporate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Personality Items	Not at all descriptive	Slightly descriptive	Somewhat descriptive	Very descriptive	Extremely descriptive
Successful	□	□	□	□	□
Leader	□	□	□	□	□
Confident	□	□	□	□	□
Upper-class	□	□	□	□	□
Glamorous	□	□	□	□	□
Good-looking	□	□	□	□	□
Charming	□	□	□	□	□
Feminine	□	□	□	□	□
Smooth	□	□	□	□	□
Outdoorsy	□	□	□	□	□
Masculine	□	□	□	□	□
Western	□	□	□	□	□
Tough	□	□	□	□	□
Rugged	□	□	□	□	□

This final section asks for information about you. This information will be kept confidential and used only for statistical purpose.

4. Gender: □ Yes □ No

5. Nationality: □ American □ Others (Please specify) …………………..

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX B

Howdy!

You have been invited to participate in a research study that serves as the basis of a Master's thesis at Texas A&M University. This study investigates (1) what kind of personality traits a tourist destination (here San Antonio) has when thinking of San Antonio as if it were a person, (2) how alike the personality of San Antonio and your own personality are, (3) and how independent or how relational you are on an individual level.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, you may contact Dr. James Petrick, Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Sciences, at (979) 845-8806, jpetrick@tamu.edu, or Seonghwan Lim, at (979) 739-5043, sagelim25@gmail.com.

The following questions are about your visitation to San Antonio. Check the box that best describes your experience with San Antonio.

1. Have you visited San Antonio?   □ Yes   □ No

   IF NO, PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 9

2. How many times have you visited San Antonio in the past 3 years? (Please specify)
   ………..time(s)

3. With whom did you travel to San Antonio in your last trip?
   □ Traveled alone   □ Family/Relatives   □ Friend(s)   □ Tour group
   □ Others (Please specify) ……………………………………

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4. How many people traveled with you during your last visit to San Antonio, excluding you?

………..person(s)

5. What was the length of your stay in your last visit to San Antonio?

………..day(s) ..………..night(s)

6. What was **the primary motivational factor** that influenced your last visit to San Antonio?

Please check **only ONE**

□ Escape/Getting away from the demands at home and/or work

□ Relaxation

□ Fun/Excitement

□ Experiencing new things/different life styles

□ Visiting friends, family or relatives

□ Business

□ Others (Please specify) ……………………………………….

7. Where did you visit during your last trip? Please check **ALL** that apply.

□ The Alamo   □ The River Walk

□ The Tower of the Americas   □ SeaWorld San Antonio

□ Six Flags Fiesta Texas   □ The San Antonio Zoo

□ The San Antonio Botanical Garden   □ Others (Please specify) ………………

8. Please identify the main information sources that influenced your last visit to San Antonio.

Please check **ALL** that apply.

□ Prior visit   □ Newspaper/ magazines/ travel books

□ Movies or TV show   □ Internet

□ Travel agency   □ Travel and tourism fairs

□ Spouse and kid(s)   □ Friends, colleagues and relatives

□ Others (Please specify) …………………………………………….

9. When you think of San Antonio, please list what comes to your mind first in terms of **your general image of San Antonio.**

    ……………………………………………………………………………………………

10. Here we are interested in your perception of San Antonio. Listed below are some personality traits that might be associated with San Antonio. We would like you to **think of San Antonio as if it were a person.** Please indicate to what extent these personality traits accurately describe San Antonio. Check the appropriate box for each personality trait.

    ……………………   …………………………   ……………………………

    ……………………   …………………………   ……………………………

    ……………………   …………………………   ……………………………

11. Here, we are interested in how alike your personality and the personality of San Antonio are. Please think of San Antonio as if it were a person. For each statement below, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement. (cf) Here, "significant others below mean family, friends, relatives, coworkers, and other important persons around you."

Personality Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Historical	□	□	□	□	□
Cultural	□	□	□	□	□
Traditional	□	□	□	□	□
Authentic	□	□	□	□	□
Old	□	□	□	□	□
Touristy	□	□	□	□	□
Fun	□	□	□	□	□
Exciting	□	□	□	□	□
Entertaining	□	□	□	□	□
Young	□	□	□	□	□
Real	□	□	□	□	□
Down-to-earth	□	□	□	□	□
Family-oriented	□	□	□	□	□
Original	□	□	□	□	□
Cheerful	□	□	□	□	□
Friendly	□	□	□	□	□
Spirited	□	□	□	□	□
Cool	□	□	□	□	□
Unique	□	□	□	□	□
Independent	□	□	□	□	□
Reliable	□	□	□	□	□
Hard-working	□	□	□	□	□
Secure	□	□	□	□	□
Colorful	□	□	□	□	□
Successful	□	□	□	□	□
Good-looking	□	□	□	□	□
Masculine	□	□	□	□	□
Western	□	□	□	□	□
Tough	□	□	□	□	□

12. Here, we are interested in your perception about yourself in a variety of situations.

For each statement below, check one that best describes your level of agreement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
San Antonio is consistent with how I see myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I see myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
San Antonio is consistent with how I would like to see myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would like to be perceived as similar to the personality of San Antonio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like to see myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
San Antonio is consistent with how I believe significant others see me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe that significant others see my personality quite similar to the personality of San Antonio	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I believe significant others see me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
San Antonio is consistent with how I would like significant others to see me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would like to be perceived as a person who is quite similar to the personality of San Antonio by significant others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The personality of San Antonio is congruent with how I would like significant others to see me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. Here, we are interested in your perception about yourself in a variety of situations.

For each statement below, check one that best describes your level of agreement.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Undecided	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree
I'd rather say "No" directly, than risk being misunderstood	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Speaking up during a class is not a problem for me	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Having a lively imagination is important to me	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I am comfortable with being singled out for praise or rewards	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I am the same person at home that I am at school	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
Being able to take care of myself is a primary concern for me	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I act the same way no matter who I am with	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel comfortable using someone's first name soon after I meet them, even when they are much older than I am	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I prefer to be direct and forthright when dealing with people I've just met	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
My personal identity independent of others, is very important to me	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
I value being in good health above everything	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Undecided	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree
I have respect for the authority figures with whom I interact	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important for me to maintain harmony within my group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My happiness depends on the happiness of those around me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would offer my seat in a bus to my professor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respect people who are modest about themselves	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I will sacrifice my self-interest for the benefit of the group I am in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often have the feeling that my relationships with others are more important than my own accomplishments	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I should take into consideration my parents' advice when making education/career plans	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It is important to me to respect decisions made by a group that I am in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I will stay in a group if they need me, even when I am not happy with the group	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If my brother or sister fails, I feel responsible	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Even when I strongly disagree with group members, I avoid an argument	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

This section asks for your overall perception of San Antonio and behavioral intentions to visit, return, and recommend.

(14) Please rate the **overall personality of San Antonio** as a vacation destination on a scale from 1 to 10. (1=Very negative, 10=Very positive)

□ 1   □ 2   □ 3   □ 4   □ 5   □ 6   □7   □ 8   □ 9   □ 10

(15) Please rate the level of your **intention to visit (return to)** San Antonio for vacation purposes over the next two years. (1=Do not intend to visit; 10=Very likely to visit)

□ 1   □ 2   □ 3   □ 4   □ 5   □ 6   □7   □ 8   □ 9   □ 10

(16) Please indicate if you would **recommend San Antonio** as a vacation destination to your friends and relatives on a scale from 1 to 10 (1=Not recommend at all, 10=Very likely to recommend)

□ 1   □ 2   □ 3   □ 4   □ 5   □ 6   □7   □ 8   □ 9   □ 10

This final section of the survey asks for information about you. You may be assured that this information will be kept confidential and used for statistics purposes.

(17) Please indicate your age: …………….. age

(18) Gender: □ Male   □ Female   □ Others

(19) Race:

□ European American   □ Latino American or Hispanic

□ African American   □ Asian American

□ Others (Please specify) …………………….

(20) How long have you lived in Texas? (Please write below) ………… year(s)

(21) Marital Status:

□ Single   □ Married   □ Divorced/Separated   □ Others

(22) Education:

□ High School or less   □ Some university   □ University   □ Master's or PhD

I thank you for your time spent taking this survey!!!