



Objective and Existential Lecturer Authenticity as Drivers of Student Engagement and Learning Performance in Tourism and Hospitality Programmes

Hijriyantomi Suyuthie^{1*}, Rian Surenda¹, Rahmi Fadilah¹, Siti Fatma²

¹ Tourism Department, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia.

² Tourism study program, Universitas Darma Andalas, Padang, Indonesia.

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Corresponding Author:

Hijriyantomi Suyuthie

hsuyuthie@fpp.unp.ac.id

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Abstract: This study examines how lecturers' authenticity—operationalised through objective authenticity (a lecturer's adherence to transparent course standards and consistent professional conduct) and existential authenticity (the warmth, sincerity, and meaningfulness students perceive in the learning experience)—shapes student engagement and perceived learning performance in tourism and hospitality programmes. Drawing on Self-Determination Theory, a quantitative survey was administered to 196 undergraduate students across West Sumatra, Indonesia (August–October 2025), and the proposed model was tested via partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) using a two-stage higher-order construct approach. Results indicate that existential authenticity exerted a stronger positive effect on student engagement ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$) than objective authenticity ($\beta = 0.17$, $p = 0.048$). Student engagement predicted perceived learning performance ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 26% of variance in engagement ($R^2 = 0.26$) and 15% in perceived learning performance ($R^2 = 0.15$). Student engagement fully mediated the relationship between objective authenticity and perceived learning performance, and partially mediated the relationship between existential authenticity and perceived learning performance. Findings underscore the value of meaning-centred, sincere teaching practices for building durable student engagement and enhancing perceived learning outcomes in practice-oriented hospitality programmes.

Keyword: Existential authenticity; Indonesia; Lecturer authenticity; Objective authenticity; Perceived learning performance; PLS-SEM; Student engagement; Tourism and hospitality education

Introduction

Tourism and hospitality education is built around learning experiences that are inherently social, practice-oriented, and performance-based. Students are expected not only to master conceptual frameworks but also to perform effectively in service settings that demand interpersonal competence, emotional regulation, teamwork, and situational judgment (Deale, 2019; Kim & Jeong, 2018). Many learning activities closely mirror workplace realities through service simulations, role-plays, practicum tasks, and reflective projects (Asrori &

Hardianto, 2025; Deale, 2019; Saepudin et al., 2023). In this type of learning environment, academic outcomes are shaped not only by cognitive ability but also by the extent to which students feel psychologically connected to the learning experience and remain willing to invest themselves over time (Guo et al., 2022; Muharis et al., 2025; Sánchez-Cardona et al., 2021).

A crucial yet underexplored question concerns the specific lecturer-related qualities that foster this psychological connection to learning. The novelty of the present study lies in its integration of two constructs—lecturer authenticity and tourist-derived student

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engagement—within a single explanatory model applied to tourism and hospitality higher education in West Sumatra, Indonesia. While authenticity has been examined in tourism service settings (Chen et al., 2022) and engagement has been conceptualised in destination and hospitality research (Harrigan et al., 2017; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2019), no prior empirical study has adapted both frameworks simultaneously to explain student perceived learning performance in a regional Indonesian higher education context. This integration is theoretically meaningful because both constructs share a focus on the psychological depth of connection between an individual and a valued experience—a logic that transfers naturally to the student–lecturer relationship in experiential, practice-oriented programmes.

This study conceptualizes student engagement using the logic developed in tourism and hospitality research on tourist engagement. In that tradition, engagement describes a shift from simple service consumption to deeper psychological involvement (Harrigan et al., 2017; Nangpiire et al., 2022; Rasoolimanesh et al., 2019; Setiawan et al., 2025). A person does not merely consume a service and stop; they develop a binding psychological bond that makes the experience feel close, worth supporting, and worth sustaining. Engagement therefore differs from satisfaction: satisfaction can rise and fall across episodes of service quality, while engagement explains why individuals continue to support and maintain a relationship even when alternatives exist (Marino & Lo Presti, 2018; Thakur, 2019). Guerreiro et al. (2021) measured tourist engagement in a green hotel context using four affectively loaded indicators – passion, active support, pride of association, and continuance intention. Although the original context is transactional, the psychological logic of a “binding connection” transfers readily to the educational sphere because tourism and hospitality students are future practitioners who must internalise professional values before serving others. Passionate attachment to a service experience maps onto passionate commitment to a learning community, particularly in programmes where professional socialisation and identity formation are central goals.

This study adapts that engagement logic to an educational setting by redefining the object of engagement as the learning experience within tourism and hospitality programmes. Student engagement is treated as a binding psychological connection to learning characterised by passion for participation, active support for the educational values of the programme, pride in belonging to the learning community, and continuance intention over extended periods is particularly relevant in tourism and hospitality education because repeated practice and sustained involvement are necessary for students to

internalise service standards, professional communication routines, and practitioner identity (3/17/2026 9:35:00 AM; Harnani, 2020; Mutiarani et al., 2025; Tukan et al., 2026; Zamora et al., 2025). Durable engagement is therefore a critical pathway through which educational experiences translate into academic performance (Fakhri et al., 2023; Hamu et al., 2023; Hariadi et al., 2025; Hendrowati et al., 2025; Sriyadi et al., 2025).

A central question concerns which lecturer-related qualities foster this psychologically binding form of engagement. This study focuses on lecturer authenticity, conceptualised through two complementary dimensions adapted from authenticity discourse in tourism (Chen et al., 2022). Objective authenticity, as originally theorised by MacCannell (1973) and elaborated by Wang (1999), refers to the authenticity of an object or actor evaluated against objective or expert standards. Adapted to the educational context, objective authenticity captures a lecturer’s adherence to objective professional standards: congruence between stated expectations and actual course practice, transparent assessment procedures, consistent and fair application of classroom rules, and alignment with programme-level learning goals (Chen et al., 2022). This operationalisation is deliberately distinguished from general notions of instructional quality; the focus is on the lecturer’s fidelity to identifiable, observable professional norms.

Existential authenticity refers to the lived sense that an experience feels personally real and meaningful to the self (Wang, 1999). Translated into teaching, existential authenticity is reflected when lecturers create learning that invites self-expression, connects academic tasks to students’ developing professional identity, and generates warmth and sincerity in lecturer–student interactions. In practice-oriented programmes, this dimension is particularly powerful because students evaluate learning against whether it feels like credible preparation for real service work. When classroom activities resonate with professional identity and values, students respond with deeper emotional investment (López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022; Patton et al., 2013).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides the theoretical lens for linking lecturer authenticity to engagement and performance. SDT posits that sustained motivation and high-quality involvement are more likely when learners experience support for relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Farikah et al., 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Objective authenticity supports relatedness and competence through consistency and fairness, which reduce uncertainty and build psychological safety (Hardie et al., 2022; McClintock et al., 2022; Wei & Han, 2025). Existential authenticity supports autonomy and deeper internalisation through meaning-making and

identity relevance, encouraging students to perceive learning goals as self-endorsed rather than externally imposed (Chiu et al., 2023; McCurdy, 2025).

West Sumatra provides a particularly meaningful setting for this investigation. The region’s tourism industry is expanding rapidly, driven by its distinctive Minangkabau cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and growing visitor flows (Saepudin et al., 2023). In Minangkabau culture, the tradition of merantau—leaving one’s homeland to acquire knowledge, skills, and moral character—places high cultural value on integrity, diligence, and the sincere pursuit of learning (Angelia & Hasan, 2017; Hidayat et al., 2021; Marta, 2014). These values resonate strongly with the authenticity constructs examined here, suggesting that lecturer authenticity may carry a heightened cultural significance that amplifies its effects on student engagement and performance in this regional context.

Engagement is expected to translate into academic performance. Psychologically connected students are more likely to persist through demanding tasks, invest sustained effort in coursework, and participate in the iterative practice and feedback cycles that are central to hospitality education (Farida et al., 2024; Mutiara & Kusumawardhani, 2020). Passion and pride sustain motivation when tasks are repetitive or challenging, while support and continuance commitment stabilise involvement across a full semester.

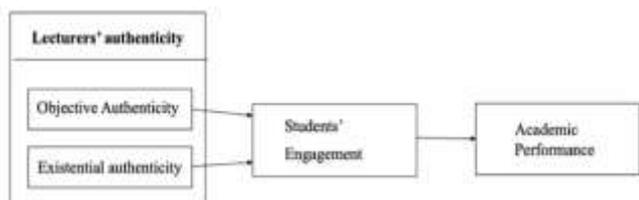


Figure 1. Research model

By testing a parsimonious model linking lecturer authenticity to engagement and perceived learning performance, this study aims to clarify whether authenticity-based perceptions of lecturers foster a binding form of student engagement that supports stronger perceived learning outcomes. The following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Lecturer objective authenticity positively influences student engagement.
- H2: Lecturer existential authenticity positively influences student engagement.
- H3: Student engagement positively influences perceived learning performance.
- H4: Student engagement mediates the relationship between lecturer objective authenticity and perceived learning performance.

H5: Student engagement mediates the relationship between lecturer existential authenticity and perceived learning performance.

Method

Research Design and Setting

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships among lecturer authenticity, student engagement, and perceived learning performance in tourism and hospitality education. The study was conducted in West Sumatra, Indonesia, targeting undergraduate students enrolled in tourism and hospitality programmes at accredited universities. Data collection took place from August to October 2025, covering a single academic term to ensure participants had sufficient exposure to the focal course and lecturer to provide informed perceptions (Research flowchart see figure 2).



Figure 2. Research procedure flowchart

Participants and Sampling Approach

The target population comprised active undergraduate students in tourism and hospitality programmes in West Sumatra who were attending at least one course taught by a lecturer they could evaluate. A non-probability sampling approach was implemented through programme-level access and classroom recruitment across multiple institutions. Inclusion criteria required that students (1) were officially registered in a tourism or hospitality programme in West Sumatra, (2) had attended the focal course long enough to form accurate perceptions, and (3) provided informed consent. To mitigate social desirability bias, the survey was administered independently without the presence of any lecturer or academic staff member. Introductory materials explicitly stated that responses were anonymous, voluntary, and would have no bearing on course grades or academic standing. These

procedures align with recommendations for managing common method concerns in self-reported surveys (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire distributed through programme coordination channels from August to October 2025, using online forms or supervised administration depending on institutional constraints. Of 210 responses received, 196 were retained after screening for completeness and response quality.

Questionnaire Development

All measures were adapted from validated instruments in prior studies. Original English items were subjected to forward and backward translation to ensure semantic equivalence in Indonesian. A pilot test with 30 students from the same population confirmed item clarity and contextual fit, with minor wording refinements applied thereafter. All constructs were measured using reflective indicators rated on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strongly Agree). Respondents evaluated all items with reference to a single focal course and its lecturer; the phrase "this course" was used consistently to maintain referent consistency.

Measures

Lecturer authenticity was modelled as a higher-order reflective-reflective construct with two first-order dimensions, estimated using the two-stage approach to ensure reliable path estimates (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2020). Items were adapted from the authenticity perception scale by Chen et al. (2022), originally developed in a rural homestay context.

Objective authenticity perception (OAP; 5 items) captured students' perceptions of the lecturer's adherence to objective professional standards: congruence between stated expectations and actual course practice; transparent assessment procedures; consistent and fair application of classroom rules; dependable treatment across students; and alignment between course design and programme-level expectations. This operationalisation focuses on the lecturer as an authentic practitioner who adheres to identifiable, objective standards (MacCannell, 1973; Wang, 1999).

Existential authenticity perception (EAP; 6 items) captured warmth, sincerity, attentiveness, and meaningfulness in the learning experience: a warm and supportive learning atmosphere; enhanced understanding of professional life and culture in tourism and hospitality; opportunities to experience authentic professional practices; lecturer attentiveness and

support; perceived sincerity in lecturer-student interactions; and course-induced reflection on professional orientation.

Student engagement (ENG; 4 items) was operationalised as a binding psychological connection characterised by passion for learning participation, active support for educational values, pride in belonging to the learning community, and continuance intention. Items were adapted from the tourist engagement scale applied by Guerreiro et al. (2021), replacing the service object with "this course" and "the learning experience."

Perceived learning performance (LP; 4 items) captured students' self-assessed gains in knowledge, skills, and applied competence: "I gain a lot of knowledge from this course"; "I develop a lot of skills from this course"; "I am able to apply the knowledge and skills gained to practice"; and "Overall, I learn a lot from this course." The construct is labelled perceived learning performance to acknowledge that it captures subjective appraisals rather than objective grade data. The scale was adapted from Tho (2019).

PLS-SEM Analysis Procedure

Hypotheses were tested using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), appropriate for prediction-oriented models with complex measurement structures (Hair et al., 2017, 2019). The analysis proceeded in two stages: measurement model assessment and structural model assessment (Guenther et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2011). Bootstrapping with 5,000 sub-samples provided bias-corrected confidence intervals for direct and indirect effects. The reflective measurement model was assessed for indicator reliability (outer loadings), internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability), convergent validity (AVE), and discriminant validity (HTMT ratio). The structural model was evaluated through path coefficients, R² values, and predictive relevance assessed via the PLSpredict procedure focusing on Q²predict values for out-of-sample predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2019). Mediation type (full versus partial) was classified following Zhao et al. (2010).

Common Method Bias

Because data were collected via a single self-reported questionnaire, common method bias was assessed using the full collinearity approach based on variance inflation factors (VIF). VIF values below 3.3 indicate that common method bias is unlikely to materially affect estimates (Kock, 2015). Procedural remedies included anonymous administration without lecturer presence, randomised item order, and explicit assurances of no academic consequences for responses.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary and based on written informed consent. No personally identifying information was collected. Respondents were informed that their participation had no bearing on course evaluation or academic standing, and results would be reported in aggregate form.

Result and Discussion

Respondent Profile

A total of 210 responses were collected between August and October 2025. After screening, 196 responses were retained for analysis. Respondent characteristics are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Profile (n = 196)

Category	Group	n	%
Gender	Male	68	34.69
	Female	125	63.78
	Prefer not to say	3	1.53
Programme	Tourism	84	42.86
	Hospitality	112	57.14
Year/Semester	Year 1 (Sem 1-2)	41	20.92
	Year 2 (Sem 3-4)	59	30.1
	Year 3 (Sem 5-6)	60	30.61
	Year 4 (Sem 7-8)	36	18.37
Data collection month	Aug-25	61	31.12
	Sep-25	80	40.82
	Oct-25	55	28.06

Measurement Model

The reflective measurement model was assessed for indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Table 2). Outer loadings were acceptable across all constructs. Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability met recommended thresholds. Convergent validity was supported as AVE values exceeded 0.50 for all

constructs. The AVE values for OAP (0.54) and EAP (0.53) are close to the minimum threshold, partly attributable to the conceptual breadth of the adapted instrument—originally developed in a homestay service context—and the moderate loadings of some items (0.65–0.67). These values are reported transparently to acknowledge the moderate convergent validity of some authenticity indicators.

Table 2. Measurement Model Quality

Construct	Items	OL	CA	CR	AVE
Objective authenticity perception (OAP)	5	0.67–0.81	0.78	0.85	0.54
Existential authenticity perception (EAP)	6	0.65–0.83	0.82	0.87	0.53
Student engagement (ENG)	4	0.70–0.85	0.81	0.88	0.64
Perceived learning performance (LP)	4	0.71–0.84	0.83	0.88	0.65

Note. OL= Outer Loading; CA= Cohnbach Alpha; CR= Composite Reliability; AVE= Average Variant Extracted

Discriminant validity was examined using the HTMT criterion. As shown in Table 3, all HTMT ratios fell below 0.85, supporting discriminant validity among all constructs.

Table 3. HTMT Matrix

Construct	OAP	EAP	ENG	LP
OAP	–			
EAP	0.73	–		
ENG	0.48	0.61	–	
LP	0.41	0.53	0.65	–

Common Method Bias

Common method bias was assessed using the full collinearity approach. All construct-level VIF values were below 3.3 (Table 4), indicating that common

method bias was unlikely to materially affect the estimates (Kock, 2015).

Table 4. Collinearity VIF Values

Construct	VIF
Objective authenticity perception (OAP)	1.86
Existential authenticity perception (EAP)	2.11
Student engagement (ENG)	2.29
Perceived learning performance (LP)	2.06

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model was evaluated via bootstrapping with 5,000 sub-samples (Table 5). Objective authenticity showed a small but positive association with student engagement (H1: $\beta = 0.17$, $t = 1.98$, $p = 0.048$). This result is considered marginally supported: the p-value is at the conventional boundary,

yet the 95% bias-corrected confidence interval does not include zero, confirming the direction of the effect. Existential authenticity demonstrated a substantially stronger positive association with engagement (H2: $\beta = 0.34$, $t = 4.21$, $p < 0.001$). Student engagement was

robustly and positively associated with perceived learning performance (H3: $\beta = 0.39$, $t = 5.27$, $p < 0.001$). The model explained 26% of the variance in engagement ($R^2 = 0.26$) and 15% of the variance in perceived learning performance ($R^2 = 0.15$).

Table 5. Structural Model Results and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	OAP → ENG	0.17	1.98	0.048	Marginally supported
H2	EAP → ENG	0.34	4.21	< 0.001	Supported
H3	ENG → LP	0.39	5.27	< 0.001	Supported

Note. Explained variance (R^2): ENG = 0.26; LP = 0.15.

Mediation Results

Mediation was tested through bootstrapped indirect effects (Table 6). For H4, the indirect effect of OAP on perceived learning performance via ENG was small and borderline (indirect $\beta = 0.07$, $t = 1.96$, $p = 0.050$). Given that no significant direct effect of OAP on LP was independently established, this constitutes full (indirect-only) mediation per Zhao et al. (2010). For

H5, the indirect effect of EAP on LP via ENG was stronger and more robust (indirect $\beta = 0.13$, $t = 2.88$, $p = 0.004$), consistent with partial (complementary) mediation where existential authenticity influences perceived learning performance both through and potentially beyond student engagement (Zhao et al., 2010).

Table 6. Indirect Effects (Mediation Results)

Hypothesis	Indirect path	Indirect β	t-value	p-value	Mediation type
H4	OAP → ENG → LP	0.07	1.96	0.05	Full
H5	EAP → ENG → LP	0.13	2.88	0.004	Partial



Figure 3. Research documentation

Discussion

This study examined how lecturer authenticity relates to student engagement and perceived learning performance among tourism and hospitality students in West Sumatra, Indonesia. Three consistent patterns emerged from the PLS-SEM analysis. First, both OAP and EAP were positively associated with student engagement, with existential authenticity ($\beta = 0.34$) exerting approximately twice the influence of objective authenticity ($\beta = 0.17$), indicating that the warmth and meaning-making quality of the learning experience is a more decisive catalyst for psychological connection than procedural integrity alone. Second, student engagement was a robust predictor of perceived learning performance ($\beta = 0.39$). Third, student engagement served as a psychological mediating bridge: fully mediating the OAP-LP relationship and partially mediating the EAP-LP relationship. Without the presence of student engagement as a mediator, the impact of lecturer authenticity on perceived learning performance may not fully materialise.

Interpreting the Effects of Lecturer Authenticity on Engagement

The marginal positive association between OAP and engagement (H1: $\beta = 0.17$, $p = 0.048$) suggests that observable integrity cues – transparency, consistency, and fairness – function as necessary baseline conditions

rather than strong catalysts. When students perceive congruence between stated expectations and actual course practice, the learning environment becomes more predictable and trustworthy, reducing psychological risk (Hardie et al., 2022; McClintock et al., 2022; Wei & Han, 2025). The small effect size is theoretically consistent with the view that in practice-oriented programmes, baseline professional integrity is expected as a norm; its presence may prevent disengagement more than it actively ignites strong emotional attachment.

Existential authenticity emerged as the more decisive dimension ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$). When lecturers create warm, sincere, and professionally credible learning experiences, students are more likely to feel passionate about participating, identify with the learning community, and maintain a long-term commitment. This aligns with SDT's emphasis on autonomy support: existential authenticity operationalises a form of teaching that makes learning goals feel self-endorsed rather than externally imposed (Chiu et al., 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2020). For tourism and hospitality students simultaneously constructing a professional identity, this meaning-making function is especially potent (López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022; Patton et al., 2013).

Engagement as a Predictor of Perceived Learning Performance

Engagement demonstrated a moderate and robust association with perceived learning performance ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), consistent with the broader educational research literature (Guo et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024; Martínez et al., 2019). The model offers limited but statistically significant explanatory power for perceived learning performance ($R^2 = 0.15$). This figure reflects that lecturer authenticity and student engagement are important contributors, but most variance in perceived learning outcomes is attributable to other factors such as prior competence, curriculum quality, and individual student circumstances—a finding that should be interpreted accordingly rather than overstated.

Mediation Through Engagement

The full mediation for OAP indicates that objective authenticity perceptions do not independently drive perceived learning gains; their effect depends entirely on first fostering a binding psychological connection to learning. The partial mediation for EAP suggests that existential authenticity may exert effects through both engagement and additional pathways—such as direct motivational inspiration or identity alignment—consistent with the broader reach of meaning-based teaching (López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022; Patton et al., 2013).

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to hospitality education research by importing a precise engagement conceptualisation from tourism research and demonstrating its applicability in an educational context. Treating engagement as a binding psychological connection characterised by passion, support, pride, and continuance intention reveals how authenticity-based teaching relates to the deeper motivational structures underpinning learning performance. The study further demonstrates that lecturer authenticity can be decomposed into objective and existential dimensions with distinct magnitudes of influence on engagement, extending Chen et al.'s (2022) framework from service to higher education contexts. The alignment with SDT principles provides a coherent account of these patterns, positioning lecturer authenticity as a quality of the learning environment that satisfies core psychological needs and thereby strengthens internalised engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Practical Implications

The findings offer actionable guidance for lecturers and programme managers. First, objective authenticity should be maintained as a professional baseline: clear communication of expectations, consistent assessment criteria, and transparent feedback create the trustworthy environment that enables engagement to develop. Second, existential authenticity should be treated as a primary lever for deeper engagement through authentic case work grounded in local Minangkabau tourism contexts, structured role-plays mirroring genuine service encounters, and interpersonal communication conveying sincere care for students' professional development. Third, student engagement should be recognised as a strategic outcome, cultivated by building community identity, celebrating professional values, and constructing coherent narratives linking course content to career pathways in the expanding West Sumatran tourism sector.

Limitations

Several limitations warrant acknowledgement. The study relied on self-reported, cross-sectional survey data, limiting causal inference. Perceived learning performance captures subjective appraisals rather than objective grade data; future research should triangulate with course grades or practicum outcomes. The sample was drawn from West Sumatra, limiting broader generalisability. Non-probability sampling through programme access introduces potential selection bias. Additionally, AVE values for OAP and EAP, while meeting the minimum threshold, are close to 0.50, reflecting the moderate adaptation challenge of

transplanting an authenticity instrument from a homestay service context to higher education.

Future Research Directions

Future studies could adopt time-lagged or longitudinal designs measuring authenticity perceptions early in the semester and performance at its end. Multi-source measurement incorporating objective grade data would reduce common method concerns. Cross-cultural comparisons between West Sumatran programmes and those in other Indonesian regions or Southeast Asian hospitality education contexts would yield valuable generalisability insights.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that lecturer authenticity is a meaningful antecedent of student engagement and perceived learning performance in tourism and hospitality education. Existential authenticity ($\beta = 0.34$) proved approximately twice as influential as objective authenticity ($\beta = 0.17$) in driving student engagement, highlighting that the warmth, sincerity, and meaningfulness of the learning experience are more powerful catalysts for psychological connection to learning than observable procedural integrity alone. Student engagement, in turn, predicted perceived learning performance ($\beta = 0.39$) and served as the necessary psychological bridge through which both dimensions of lecturer authenticity produced downstream effects on perceived learning outcomes. Without this engaged connection, the impact of authentic lecturer behaviour may not translate into perceived academic gains. The model explained 26% of variance in engagement ($R^2 = 0.26$) and 15% in perceived learning performance ($R^2 = 0.15$), confirming that while lecturer authenticity and student engagement are important contributing factors, they are not the sole determinants of learning outcomes in practice-oriented programmes. In the context of West Sumatra's expanding tourism industry and its culturally distinctive Minangkabau emphasis on integrity and sincere professional formation, these findings reinforce the value of authenticity-focused teaching practices as a pathway to stronger student engagement and enhanced perceived learning performance. Programme administrators are encouraged to support professional development that cultivates both dimensions of lecturer authenticity, with particular emphasis on creating warm, professionally credible, and identity-relevant learning experiences that transform course attendance into meaningful, durable engagement.

Author Contributions

C.D.W: Conceptualization; methodology; formal analysis; investigation; data curation; writing—original draft preparation; project administration; S.T: Conceptualization; validation; resources; supervision; writing—review and editing; funding acquisition; S.A.S: Software; investigation; data curation; visualization; validation; I.M.B: Validation; resources; writing—review and editing.

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Conflicts of Interest

No conflict of interest.

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