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THE EFFECT OF DIMENSIONS OF BRAND PERSONALITY ON ACTUAL AND IDEAL SELF-IMAGE CONGRUENCE: EVIDENCE FROM STARBUCKS COFFEE BRAND

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to examine the simultaneous impact of brand personality dimensions on actual and ideal self-image congruence in a sample of Starbucks coffee shops. The data were gathered via an online survey of 471 customers of Starbucks coffee shops in Türkiye. Structural equation modelling was employed for the purpose of data analysis. It has been observed that excitement, which is a dimension of brand personality, has a positive effect on actual self-image congruence. Similarly, the sophistication dimension of brand personality has been found to positively affect ideal self-image congruence. Therefore, it can be said that while Starbucks customers tend to show their actual self-image congruence with the excitement dimension of brand personality, they tend to show their ideal self-image congruence with the sophistication dimension of brand personality. This study represents an inaugural attempt to demonstrate the impact of brand personality dimensions on self-image congruence within the context of branded coffee shops. The results contribute to the growing body of knowledge regarding the relationship between brand personality dimensions and ideal and actual self-image congruence, which is still in its infancy in academic literature.*

Keywords: *Brand Personality, Actual Self-Image Congruence, Ideal Self-Image Congruence.*

JEL classification: *M31*

INTRODUCTION

A discernible shift in consumption patterns has been observed, whereby there has been a shift away from a rational, utilitarian approach towards an experiential or emotional orientation (Czinkota et al., 2021). One of the most illustrative examples of this shift is the substantial rise in the demand for coffee (particularly branded varieties), which is consumed by approximately one-third of the global population. Coffee is one

of the most consumed beverages globally, with production occurring in over 70 countries (Samoggia & Riedel, 2019). It is evident that the demand for coffee shops, which represent one of the primary locations for coffee consumption and serve as social hubs where consumers seek community outside of their immediate circles, has increased globally (Ren et al., 2023). Furthermore, in Türkiye, branded coffee shops, which offer a variety of coffee beverages and are situated in urban centres, have emerged as prominent socialisation spaces in recent years. This has occurred concurrently with a notable increase in coffee consumption in Türkiye, driven by the proliferation of national and international coffee shop chains (Şahin, 2023; Bayındır & Çalıřkan, 2022).

The Starbucks coffee shop brand is the most renowned, with over 38,038 stores operating in 83 countries worldwide (Statista, 2024b) Starbucks is the 31st most valuable of the 500 global brands, with an approximate economic value of 38 billion dollars (Moon et al., 2023b). Türkiye also plays an important role in Starbucks' global operations, ranking second in Europe after the United Kingdom with 676 stores (Statista, 2024a). It is of significant interest to both practitioners and academics to gain insight into the factors that have contributed to the remarkable success of the Starbucks brand. In this context, the Starbucks brand has attracted the attention of many academics, with numerous studies conducted on the Starbucks brand including variables such as brand equity (Susanty & Kenny, 2015; Ren et al., 2023), brand image (Tu & Chang, 2012; Areiza-Padilla & Taulet, 2023), brand trust (Moon et al., 2023a), brand symbolism, brand evangelism (Osmanova et al., 2023), and brand love and brand loyalty (Polat & Çetinsöz, 2021). Nevertheless, an examination of the existing literature on the Starbucks brand reveals a dearth of studies on brand personality (Lin & Huang, 2012; Nabila & Albari, 2024) and a similarly limited corpus of research on self-image congruence (hereafter SC) (Anjani & Dewi, 2021). Moreover, no study has yet been identified that examines the impact of brand personality on SC within the Starbucks context. Nevertheless, brand personality has been identified as a crucial antecedent of SC (Su & Reynolds, 2017; Kim, 2023; Sop & Kozak, 2019; Nguyen et al., 2023). Given the significant impact of SC on a range of consumer behaviours, from brand choice to brand loyalty (Wu et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2012; Li et al., 2020), it is valuable to examine this variable in conjunction with brand personality, which is a key antecedent. In the context of developing highly competitive coffee brands in Türkiye's dynamic and challenging competitive environment, empirical research examining the relationship between brand personality and SC represents a significant academic, practical and meaningful challenge.

The concept of brand personality can be defined as the process of associating and reconciling human characteristics with a brand (Aaker J., 1997). The concept of brand personality is of pivotal importance in the understanding of consumer behaviour and the success of a brand (Babu & LavanyaLatha, 2018). It has attracted significant attention from both an academic and a practitioner perspective. SC can be defined as the alignment between the consumer's perception of a product, store, or brand and their own self-image (Kressmann et al., 2006). It is hypothesised that human characteristics can provide insight when evaluating a brand, and that brand personality emerges as a result of people seeking a connection and consistency between the brand images they adopt and their own images. In this context, brand personality is developed for consumers to express their actual or ideal self, and is defined as the array of human

features that consumers ascribe to a brand (Aaker J. , 1997). The aforementioned statements and explanations are consistent with the tenets of Sirgy's (1982) self-congruence theory. Self-congruence theory postulates that individuals engage in the evaluation and analysis of products, services, or brands in a manner that is consistent with the defining characteristics and aspects of their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Our study is based on this perspective and it is important to examine brand personality as a potential antecedent of SC. Despite recent research into the effect of brand personality on SC in the tourism sector (Su & Reynolds, 2017; Kim, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023; Sop & Kozak, 2019), the number of studies in other sectors remains limited (Hellemans et al., 2023). Furthermore, an absence of studies examining the interrelations between these variables has been identified in the context of coffee shops, which has experienced exponential growth both globally and within Türkiye in recent years. The present study will contribute to the existing literature by addressing this gap and elucidating the relationship between these two variables, which are still in their infancy. Accordingly, the objective of this study was to examine the simultaneous impact of brand personality dimensions on actual and ideal self-congruence. The following sections of the study comprise a review of the relevant literature and hypotheses development, followed by the methodology, data analysis and findings. Finally, the article ends with the conclusion section.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Brand personality

Aaker (1996) posits that the concept of brand personality can be understood as a distinctive assemblage of brand-related memories that are shaped through the relationship that is established with the target audience. Aaker, basing his approach on the concept of personality, has reduced the concept of brand personality to five dimensions: sincerity, sophistication, competence, ruggedness and excitement. The dimensions of sincerity are represented by characteristics such as honest, down-to-earth, wholesome and cheerful. The dimensions of excitement are represented by characteristics such as spirited, daring, imaginative and up-to-date. The dimensions of competence are represented by characteristics such as intelligent, reliable and successful. The dimensions of sophistication are represented by characteristics such as upper-class and charming. Finally, the dimensions of ruggedness are represented by characteristics such as outdoorsy and tough (Aaker J. , 1997).

Brands are evaluated as if they were living beings, chosen as if they were friends, and loved as if they were human (King, 1970). The presence of brand personality traits in the brand, which are consciously perceived and evaluated positively by the consumer, serves to facilitate the decision-making process (Tran et al., 2023; Toldos-Romero & Gómez, 2015; Rup et al., 2021). Moreover, brand personality traits contribute to an increase in consumer trust and loyalty towards a brand, thus facilitating the formation of a robust and enduring relationship between the brand and the customer (Bouhleb et al., 2011; Valette-Florence & Valette-Florence, 2020; Villagra et al., 2021). Additionally, brand personality enables differentiation from competitors (George & Anandkumar, 2018) and facilitates adaptation to diverse cultural contexts (Aaker et al., 2001). In other words, brand personality contributes to the value of the brand in a number of ways and affects the brand itself.

Self-congruence theory and SC

Sirgy's (1982) self-congruence theory suggests that when an entity (e.g. a brand) is perceived to enhance or confirm a person's self-concept, the person in question exhibits more positive attitudes and behaviours towards that entity. In accordance with the self-congruence theory, consumers utilise brands as a means of accentuating specific elements of their identity, as a means of demonstrating their affiliation with a particular group, and as a symbol of status (Zhu et al., 2019). The self-congruence theory posits that the congruence between a brand image and an individual's self-concept encourages positive behaviour in brand choice (Sirgy, 1985). Accordingly, self-congruence theory posits that self-concept exerts a significant and pervasive influence on consumers' decisions regarding products and services (Wilkie & Rao Hill, 2022). Self-congruence is comprised of four distinct dimensions: actual, ideal, social, and ideal social. The actual self can be defined as the consumer's real self, that is, how they perceive themselves. The ideal self can be defined as the self that the consumer aspires to be. The social self can be defined as how they believe they are perceived by others. Finally, the ideal social self can be defined as how they would like to be perceived and regarded by others (Sirgy, 1982). However, the majority of studies addressing SC in its dimensions (Hellemans et al., 2023; Hosany, 2016; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011; Ibrahim & Najjar, 2008) have examined the self-concept in two dimensions, namely actual and ideal. These two types of SC are most commonly used and have received the strongest empirical support. Accordingly, in this study, the concepts of real and ideal self were analysed in the same way. SC can be defined as the alignment between the consumer's perceptions of a product, store, or brand and their own self-image (Kressmann et al., 2006). Indeed, this definition may be regarded as an accurate representation of actual self-congruity (Hosany, 2016; Yen & Mai, 2020). Additionally, SC is referred to in the literature as self-congruity. This concept has been demonstrated to affect a number of factors, including the consumer's brand choice and loyalty (Wu et al., 2020; Li et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2012). The congruence that emerges in line with the connection between the product preferences that overlap with the identity desired by the individual and the image of these products is called the ideal SC. This concept is shaped according to the characteristics of the person the consumer desires to be (Choi & Rifon, 2012). In the context of the ideal SC, the individual may tend to consume certain well-known brands to reflect his/her preference for goods and services that are compatible with his/her exemplary or imaginary personality (Sirgy, 2015; Li et al., 2020). In addition, it is not uncommon for consumers to have discrepancies between their ideal self and their real self. In this context, the pursuit of self-transcendence and personal growth serves to increase self-esteem and thus motivates the individual to strive for an ideal self-concept (Sirgy et al., 2000).

Implications of brand personality for SC

The most widely used definition of brand personality, conceptualised and expanded on the level of self-concept, is that proposed by Aaker (1997). This definition is related to the people approach and the striving to achieve brand-consumer relationships based on a set of beliefs about the brand and its desired identity (Leflot et al., 2010). In making a choice between brands, individuals differentiate themselves from others by selecting those that align with their personalities (Aaker J., 1997). It is proposed by

researchers that human characteristics inform brand evaluation, with brand personality emerging as a result of individuals seeking a connection and consistency between their own images and the brand images they adopt. In this context, brand personality is produced for consumers to express their actual or ideal selves. The term is defined as the collective set of human characteristics ascribed to a brand by consumers (Aaker J. , 1997). There is a relationship between the brand personality and the consumer image (Parker, 2009; Aaker J. , 1997). These statements and explanations are consistent with the self-congruence theory proposed by Sirgy(1982). The self-congruence theory posits that individuals evaluate and analyse services, products or brands in accordance with the characteristics and aspects that define their self-concept (Sirgy, 1982). Malär et al. (2011) posit that brand personality that is in alignment with consumers' self-concepts has a positive impact on consumers' psychology, and that consumers will continue their relationship with the brand as long as this alignment persists. Moreover, it is essential to recognise that the various dimensions of brand personality do not exert a uniform influence on consumers. Indeed, each dimension has a distinctive impact on consumers (Louis & Lombart, 2010). Consequently, the various dimensions of brand personality are not equally associated with self-congruence (Parker, 2009; Su & Reynolds, 2017). In light of the aforementioned arguments, it is necessary to examine the impact of each dimension on SC separately.

A number of empirical studies have demonstrated the impact of brand personality on SC. It has been demonstrated that the dimensions of brand personality, namely sincerity and excitement, exert a positive influence on SC (Su & Reynolds, 2017). In his research on global hotel companies, Kim (2023) demonstrated that brand personality has a positive effect on both real and ideal SC. The impact of brand personality on ideal SC was more pronounced than its influence on actual SC. In their study of the Facebook brand, Hellemans et al. (2023). demonstrated that emotionality and responsible brand personality dimensions exert a positive influence on both real and ideal SC. In their study on Vietnamese tourists, Nguyen et al. (2023) examined the impact of brand personality dimensions on SC. The results indicated that brand personality in all dimensions positively affects SC, with the excitement dimension showing the greatest effect. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) examined the impact of brand personality dimensions on SC in the Las Vegas sample. They found that, with the exception of competence, all dimensions of brand personality positively influenced real SC. In addition, all dimensions except contemporary were found to affect the ideal SC. In the study conducted by Sop and Kozak (2019) on five-star hotels, it was demonstrated that brand personality has a positive impact on SC. In alignment with the aforementioned explanations, this study proposes the following hypotheses for examination within the structural model:

H1 : Each Starbucks brand personality dimension has its own benefits in estimating actual SC.

H2 : Each Starbucks brand personality dimension has its own benefits in estimating ideal SC.

See Fig. 1 for study's research model.

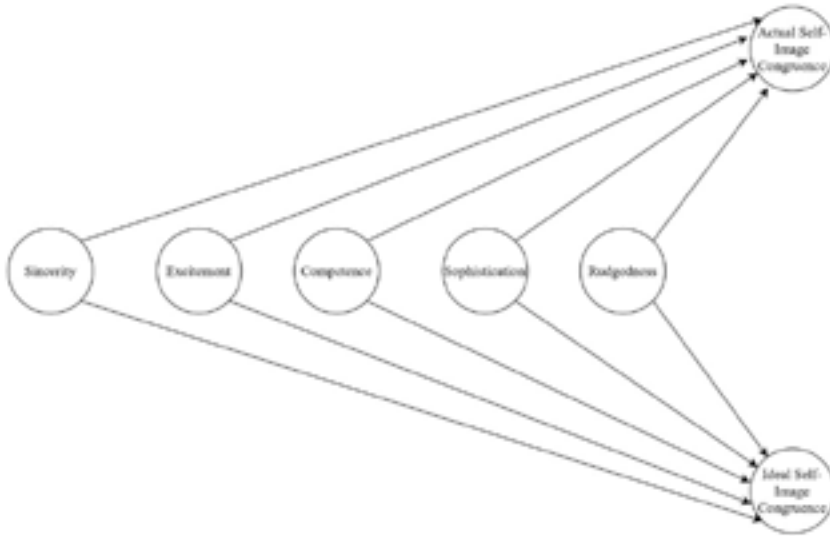


Figure 1. Research model

Source(s): Created by authors

METHOD, DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Measurement, sampling and data collection

The study employed an online survey methodology, targeting individuals who follow the official Starbucks coffee social media accounts in Türkiye. All participants in the study are customers who visit Starbucks coffee shops with a frequency of at least once or twice a month. The respondents were required to provide information regarding their socio-demographic characteristics, including gender, age, educational attainment, monthly household income, and the frequency with which they visit Starbucks coffee shops. A total of 30 questions were asked, 25 questions regarding brand personality and SC. In this study, the scales developed by Aaker (1997) for brand personality and the scales developed by

Rabbanee et al. (2020) for actual SC and ideal SC were used. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the degree of agreement with real and ideal SC items. Brand personality items were asked as follows: “Please visualize Starbucks coffee as if it is a person in your mind, and mark the following statements according to their degrees (1-5)”

Table 1: Measurement items

Construct	Dimension	Item No	Measurement items	Source
Brand Personality	Sincerity	SN 1	Down-to-earth	(Aaker, 1997)
		SN 2	Honest	
		SN 3	Wholesome	
		SN 4	Cheerful	
	Excitement	EX 1	Daring	
		EX 2	Spirited	
		EX 3	Imaginative	
		EX 4	Up-to-date	
	Competence	CM 1	Reliable	
		CM 2	Intelligent	
		CM 3	Successful	
	Sophistication	SP 1	Upper-class	
		SP 2	Charming	
	Rudgedness	RD 1	Outdoorsy	
RD 2		Tough		
Actual SC	-	AS 1	The personality of Starbucks coffee is consistent with how I see myself.	(Rabbanee et al., 2020)
		AS 2	The personality of Starbucks coffee is a mirror image of me.	
		AS 3	People who use Starbucks coffee are similar to how I see myself.	
		AS 4	People who prefer Starbucks coffee are identifiable with me at present.	
		AS 5	The image of a typical Starbucks coffee user is highly consistent with how I see myself.	
Ideal SC	-	IS 1	The personality of Starbucks coffee is consistent with how I would like to be.	(Rabbanee et al., 2020)
		IS 2	The personality of Starbucks coffee is a mirror image of the person I would like to be.	
		IS 3	People who use Starbucks coffee are similar to how I would like to see myself.	
		IS 4	People who prefer Starbucks coffee are identifiable with my ideal self-image.	
		IS 5	The image of a typical Starbucks coffee user is consistent with how I would like to see.	

Note(s): SN (Sincerity), EX (Excitement), CM (Competence), SP (Sophistication), RD (Rudgedness), AS (Actual Self-Image Congruence), IS (Ideal Self-Image Congruence)

Source(s): (Aaker J., 1997; Rabbanee et al., 2020)

The universe of the research includes all Starbucks coffee shops customers in Türkiye. As can be seen in Table 2 below, the sample consists of 213 women, 258 men and 471 individuals aged 18 and above who are customers of Starbucks coffee shops in

Türkiye. The research employed an online survey methodology, disseminating a link to the target population via the official Starbucks coffee social media accounts.

Table 2: Respondent attributes

		Frequency	Percentage %	Cumulative Percentage
Gender	Male	258	54,8	54,8
	Female	213	45,2	100
	Total	471	100	
Age	18-30	331	70,3	70,3
	31-45	92	19,5	89,8
	46-55	29	6,2	96,0
	56-65	7	1,5	97,5
	66 and above	12	2,5	100,0
	Total	471	100	
Educational qualification	Secondary school	105	22,3	22,3
	High School	114	24,2	46,5
	Undergraduate	216	45,9	92,4
	Master	23	4,9	97,2
	Doctorate	13	2,8	100,0
	Total	471	100	
Monthly income (TL)*	0-17.000	13	2,8	2,8
	17.001-37.000	85	18,0	20,8
	37.001- 57.000	160	34,0	54,8
	57.001-77.000	118	25,1	79,8
	77.001-97.000	67	14,2	94,1
	Over 97.000	28	5,9	100,0
	Total	471	100	
Frequency of going to Starbucks coffee shops	1 and 2 per month	126	26,8	26,8
	once a week	87	18,5	45,2
	2 and 3 weeks	138	29,3	74,5
	4 and 5 weeks	86	18,3	92,8
	Diary	34	7,2	100,0
	Total	471	100	

*1 US Dollar is equivalent to 33 Turkish Lira (TL)

Source(s): Created by authors

The majority of participants in the sample group were male (54.8%). When the age factor was considered, the age group with the highest representation was 18-30 years old (70.3%). Subsequently, the 31-45 age group constituted 19.5% of the sample, while the 46-55 age group accounted for 6.2%. The 66-plus age group and over repre-

sented 2.5% of the sample. It was established that the lowest level of participation was 1.5% in the 56-65 age group. This indicates that the majority of participants are young people. An examination of the educational qualifications of the participants reveals that 45.9% are undergraduate students, 24.2% have completed high school, 22.3% have obtained a secondary school qualification, 4.9% are master's graduates, and finally, 2.8% are doctorate graduates. The participants were customers who visited Starbucks coffee shops at least once or twice a month.

Data analysis and findings

In the research, the structural equation model was estimated using the Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) method with the Smart PLS 3 (Ringle et al., 2015) statistical program. The initial step was to conduct tests of the scale's validity and reliability. In this context, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was employed to assess internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2017), while factor loadings were used to evaluate item reliability (Hair et al., 2010). Additionally, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Criterion, cross-loadings, and the Fornell-Larcker Criterion values for discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015) were examined. Furthermore, the average variance values for convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) were also considered. Subsequently, the Partial Least Squares method was employed for the estimation of the structural equation model.

Table 3: Factor loadings, cronbach's alpha and ave values

Variables	Item	Factor Loading >0.5	Average Variance Extracted-AVE>0.5	Cronbach's alpha (>0.7)
Sincerity	SN 1	0,895	0,792	0,796
	SN 2	0,795		
	SN 3	0,868		
	SN 4	0,802		
Excitement	EX 1	0,791	0,853	0,894
	EX 2	0,893		
	EX 3	0,889		
	EX 4	0,793		
Competence	CM 1	0,894	0,788	0,794
	CM 2	0,876		
	CM 3	0,793		
Sophistication	SP 1	0,898	0,812	0,896
	SP 2	0,828		
Rudgedness	RD 1	0,738	0,747	0,822
	RD 2	0,803		

Actual SC	AS 1	0,891	0,818	0,894
	AS 2	0,785		
	AS 3	0,895		
	AS 4	0,867		
	AS 5	0,888		
Ideal SC	IS 1	0,797	0,793	0,898
	IS 2	0,866		
	IS 3	0,824		
	IS 4	0,907		
	IS 5	0,898		

Source(s): Created by authors

Table 4: Cross loadings

	Sincerity	Excitement	Competence	Sophistication	Rudgedness	Actual SC	Ideal SC
SN1	0,895	0.586	0.553	0.522	0.647	0.442	0.597
SN2	0,795	0.609	0.559	0.635	0.655	0.542	0.397
SN3	0,868	0.490	0.661	0.538	0.658	0.341	0.401
SN4	0,802	0.690	0.563	0.648	0.628	0.541	0.501
EX1	0.690	0,791	0.461	0.631	0.557	0.343	0.393
EX2	0.492	0,893	0.665	0.635	0.558	0.445	0.497
EX3	0.670	0,889	0.466	0.549	0.643	0.440	0.402
EX4	0.575	0,793	0.572	0.641	0.647	0.543	0.394
CM1	0.558	0.571	0,894	0.563	0.547	0.436	0.399
CM2	0.650	0.560	0,876	0.684	0.540	0.537	0.418
CM3	0.660	0.675	0,793	0.562	0.643	0.434	0.398
SP1	0.527	0.541	0.572	0,898	0.426	0.426	0.426
SP2	0.639	0.649	0.675	0,828	0.532	0.631	0.323
RD1	0.620	0.654	0.681	0.623	0,738	0.426	0.418
RD2	0.612	0.699	0.643	0.692	0,803	0.383	0.394
AS1	0.439	0.438	0.426	0.423	0.431	0,891	0.558
AS2	0.433	0.439	0.441	0.434	0.440	0,785	0.561
AS3	0.548	0.449	0.436	0.426	0.441	0,895	0.551
AS4	0.337	0.448	0.440	0.421	0.440	0,867	0.545
AS5	0.436	0.435	0.423	0.419	0.429	0,888	0.554
IS1	0.405	0.404	0.409	0.429	0.396	0.458	0,797
IS2	0.390	0.393	0.502	0.418	0.387	0.558	0,866
IS3	0.503	0.302	0.407	0.427	0.395	0.561	0,824
IS4	0.395	0.398	0.307	0.523	0.391	0.598	0,907
IS5	0.400	0.329	0.504	0.424	0.491	0.556	0,898

Source(s): Created by authors

Table 5: Fornell-larcker criterion values

	EX	AS	IS	SP	SN	RD	CM
EX	0,924						
AS	0,547	0,904					
IS	0,600	0,660	0,891				
SP	0,647	0,430	0,426	0,901			
SN	0,662	0,443	0,400	0,635	0,890		
RD	0,690	0,441	0,393	0,631	0,627	0,864	
CM	0,699	0,438	0,407	0,676	0,562	0,649	0,888

Source(s): Created by authors

As can be seen in Table 3 above, item reliability was ensured since all factor loadings were higher than 0.5. Internal consistency reliability were provided since Cronbach’s Alpha values for the variables were higher than 0.7, and Convergent validity were provided because the average variance values were higher than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). Two criteria were used for discriminant validity. The first of these is cross-loading (table 4). According to this criterion, the factor loading of the variable under which an expression is included must be higher than the factor load of other variables. The second is the Fornell-Larcker criterion (table 5). The values are compared with the values of other variables and the diagonal values are expected to be the largest. When examined in this direction, it can be seen that discriminant validity is achieved.

Table 6: Results of structural equation model

Path	β	S.S.	T value	P value
Sincerity -> Actual SC	-0,056	0,195	0,215	0,415
Sincerity -> Ideal SC	0,334	0,417	0,665	0,253
Excitement->Actual SC	0,349	0,224	2,185	0,048
Excitement -> Ideal SC	-0,236	0,484	0,368	0,357
Competence ->Actual SC	-0,054	0,147	0,281	0,389
Competence-> Ideal SC	-0,237	0,318	0,757	0,225
Sophistication ->Actual SC	0,057	0,150	0,321	0,374
Sophistication-> Ideal SC	0,620	0,179	3,308	0,000
Rudgedness->Actual SC	0,159	0,141	1,107	0,134
Rudgedness-> Ideal SC	-0,056	0,167	0,154	0,439

Source(s): Created by authors

The PLS results of the structural model are shown graphically in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. PLS results of the structural model

Source(s): Created by authors

The brand personality dimension, excitement affects the actual SC positively ($\beta = 0.349$ $t = 2.185$ $p < 0.05$). In addition, sophistication, another dimension of brand personality, positively affects ideal SC ($\beta = 0.620$ $t = 3.308$ $p < 0.001$). Therefore, it can be said that the H1 and H2 hypothesis are partially accepted. 20.2% of the variance in the actual SC variable and 18.4% of the variance in the ideal SC variable were explained.

CONCLUSION

Theoretical implications

Despite recent applications (Su & Reynolds, 2017; Hellemans et al., 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023) the effects of brand personality dimensions on SC remain an understudied topic. This study represents the inaugural attempt to demonstrate the impact of brand personality dimensions on SC, with branded coffee shops serving as the illustrative example. The global consumption of coffee and the number of branded coffee shop chains are both increasing. The global coffee shop chain Starbucks, which is the most well-known and successful in the world, has made a significant contribution to the growth of the coffee shop market. Türkiye also occupies a notable position in terms of the number of Starbucks coffee shops, and it is a country where both national and global coffee chains are experiencing growth. Additionally it is important to examine consumers' SC, which affects many factors from brand choice to loyalty (Liu et al., 2012; Wu et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020), together with brand personality, which is one of its significant antecedents. The effect of brand personality on SC in the tourism sector has been the subject of recent investigation in the literature (Su & Reynolds, 2017;

Kim, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023; Sop & Kozak, 2019). However, the number of studies in other sectors is limited (Hellemans et al., 2023), and there are no studies on coffee shops. Accordingly, the objective of this study was to examine the impact of brand personality dimensions on actual and ideal SC among Starbucks coffee shop customers in Türkiye.

The findings of this study indicate that excitement, a dimension of brand personality, has a positive effect on actual SC. Furthermore, it has been observed that another dimension of brand personality, namely sophistication, has a positive effect on ideal SC. Consequently, as the level of excitement associated with the Starbucks brand among customers increases, so too does the degree to which customers associate the Starbucks brand with their own personal identities. Similarly, as the level of sophistication ascribed to the Starbucks brand by its customers increases, so too does the degree to which customers associate the Starbucks brand with their ideal selves.

A synthesis of the results of this study and the relevant literature reveals two fundamental elements. Firstly, the dimensions of brand personality exert varying effects on SC, with some exerting no effect whatsoever. Similar results have been reported in other studies (Nguyen et al., 2023; Usakli & Baloglu, 2011). The second noteworthy element is that brand personality, or a specific brand personality dimension, exerts disparate effects on actual and ideal SC. Similarly, other studies in the literature have yielded comparable results (Kim, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023). It is hypothesised that this result is caused by the fact that consumers reconcile brand personality dimensions in different proportions in their actual and ideal SC. The aforementioned differences can assist organisations in determining the dimensions of brand personality that should be prioritised in order to enhance consumer SC. Furthermore, the impact of brand personality dimensions varies across studies. For example, Usakli and Baloglu (2011) found that, with the exception of competence, all dimensions of brand personality had a positive effect on actual SC, while all dimensions except contemporary had a positive effect on ideal SC. The findings of this study indicate that excitement has a positive influence on actual SC, while sophistication has a positive influence on ideal SC. The observed difference in results may be attributed to the fact that consumer characteristics vary across sectors and brands.

Practical implications

It is anticipated that the findings will offer novel insights into the nascent market of branded coffee shops and may have significant implications and recommendations for both academic researchers and experts in the fields of brand personality and SC. The findings of this research indicate that customers of Starbucks tend to demonstrate their actual SC with the brand personality excitement dimension, whereas they tend to demonstrate their ideal SC with the brand personality sophistication dimension. In light of these findings, it would be prudent for those responsible for the stewardship of the Starbucks brand to direct their attention towards the dimensions of excitement and sophistication. By identifying the attributes that evoke the excitement dimension, the Starbucks brand can be enhanced to align more closely with the actual self-concept of its customers. Similarly, by emphasising the elements that exemplify the sophistication dimension, the brand can be elevated to better reflect the ideal self-concept of its customers. As previously stated, excitement brand personality is associated with attributes

such as spirited, daring, up-to-date and imaginative. The concept of sophistication is associated with characteristics that may be perceived as charming and upper-class. In light of the aforementioned characteristics, it is evident that these are the key areas that require attention in the development of the Starbucks coffee brand. It is essential that these features be emphasised in all aspects of the brand. It is therefore essential to concentrate on the products themselves, the service experiences offered, the characteristics of the staff, the atmosphere created in the stores, and other relevant elements. As a consequence of these endeavours, consumers' SC will be enhanced. Furthermore, the results of both actual and aspirational SC can assist the brand in identifying potential customers within the context of market research. It may also be recommended that the Starbucks brand create specialised departments with the objective of implementing improvements to its current brand personality, with a view to further enhancing customers' real and ideal SC. It is further recommended that other branded coffee shops conduct their own market research on the subject and identify the features that should be the focus of their attention.

Limitations and future work

In light of the findings and limitations of the study, recommendations can be put forth for future research. It is recommended that future studies consider including a larger proportion of middle-aged people in the sample, given that the majority of participants in this study were young individuals. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to expand the geographical scope of the selected sample group beyond Türkiye to encompass other countries. Finally, it would be recommended that future studies examine other brands as well.

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