Linking Stereotype Congruity to Purchase Behavior Intention: The Roles of Perceived Authenticity and Coffee Shop Preference
(Study on Vosco Coffee Consumers in Malang)

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Abstract

Introduction/Main Objectives: Indonesia continues to strengthen its position as one of the world's most dynamic coffee markets, driven by lifestyle evolution and increasing demand for authentic cafe spaces. Malang, recognized as a hub for education and student culture, has experienced considerable competition amo ng contemporary coffee establishments, particularly Vosco Coffee, which adheres to a lifestyle cafe model. This study aims to examine the influence of stereotype congruity on purchase behavior intention through perceived authenticity, as well as the moderating effect of preference for coffee shops in consumer decision-making.

Background Problems: Intense competition and the homogeneity of concepts among coffee shops have caused some coffee shops, including Vosco Coffee, to experience fluctuating sales volumes that fall short of targets. This situation indicates a mismatch between consumer perceptions of the image and expected experience and the reality offered, thus impacting purchase behavior intention.

Novelty: This study provides novelty by integrating the concept of stereotype congruity with perceived authenticity and purchase behavior intention within the context of lifestyle cafes, a relationship that has not been extensively examined, particularly in Indonesia's dynamic coffee market setting.

Research Methods: The study used a quantitative methodology, administering online and offline questionnaires to 150 Vosco Coffee drinkers in Malang by accidental sampling. Data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with SmartPLS version 4.1.1.4.

Finding/Results: The findings show that stereotype congruity and perceived authenticity both positively and significantly influence purchase behavior intention, with perceived authenticity also acting as a key mediating factor. Additionally, preference for coffee shops strengthens this relationship, highlighting the strategic importance of aligning brand identity and consumer expectations to enhance purchase behavior intention.

Conclusion: This study contributes to the literature on experiential marketing in lifestyle cafes and offers helpful suggestions for coffee shop managers to enhance authentic experiential elements that meet consumer lifestyle perceptions and foster deeper purchase behavior intentions.

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Keywords: Stereotype Congruity, Perceived Authenticity, Preference For Coffee Shop, Purchase Behavior Intention

Introduction

The global coffee industry has grown significantly due to increasing demand for high-quality coffee (Samoggia et al., 2020), while the third-wave movement has shifted coffee from a commodity to an experience (Hayes, 2021). Indonesia, as the fourth-largest coffee producer with 11.95 million bags in 2021 (Prasetio Utomo et al., 2023), has also experienced rising domestic consumption of 4.04%, indicating a shift toward a coffee-centric lifestyle (Munandar & Erdkhadifa, 2023), where coffee represents modernity and individuality (Eshteiwy, 2022). Malang City has become one of the centres of this culture, driven by students and young professionals who value aesthetics and authenticity (Widya Chandra & Fadjar, 2023), resulting in intense competition among more than 500 coffee shops, including around 60 on Jalan Tombro Fish alone (Rohima & Anjaningrum, 2024). Vosco Coffee, established in 2012 with its lifestyle café concept combining a bicycle showroom and industrial design, is one of the players benefiting from this trend (Rohima & Anjaningrum, 2024), yet increasing homogeneity requires deeper understanding of how stereotype congruity, authenticity, and preference affect purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2026).

Stereotype congruity theory explains that consumers evaluate a brand more positively when it aligns with their ideal image of a coffee shop, such as atmosphere, comfort, and unique flavours (Wagner, 2023), while mismatch can trigger cognitive dissonance that harms purchase behaviour (Ibrahim Awwad et al., 2023). Prior studies show that stereotype congruity enhances perceived authenticity, which then increases purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2026), and similar findings were observed in restaurants (Chen et al., 2020) and tourism (Yang et al., 2025). Authenticity whether existential, constructive, or object-based (Chen et al., 2020) plays a central role in shaping evaluations of coffee taste, atmosphere, and brand uniqueness (Yum & Kim, 2024) influencing purchase intention in experience-based services (Shane et al., 2023). In Indonesian coffee shops, brand authenticity mediates the link between self-congruity and loyalty (Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021), and congruity between expectations and reality strengthens authenticity and buying intention (Sander et al., 2021), particularly among young Malang consumers who are highly sensitive to originality and aesthetics (Purnomo et al., 2021).

Preference also moderates how consumers evaluate coffee shops (Abdou, 2025), as it reflects their tendency to choose and revisit based on past experiences (Journal et al., 2025). Factors such as price, product, location, promotion, ambience, and service shape these preferences (Muas et al., 2023), with atmosphere and comfort being dominant determinants (Pratiwi & Sjah, 2025). High-preference consumers evaluate authenticity through deeper experiential elements, while low-preference consumers rely more on general stereotypes (Abdou, 2025), making preference a potentially significant moderator in the relationship between stereotype congruity and perceived authenticity.

Research integrating stereotype congruity, perceived authenticity, preference, and purchase intention in Indonesian coffee shops remains limited, as many studies focus on atmosphere, self-congruity, or brand image(Muas et al., 2023). Although previous research shows the mediating role of authenticity (Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021) and its impact on purchase intention (Chen et al., 2020), the local lifestyle cafe context like Vosco Coffee remains underexplored. This gap highlights the need to understand how these variables interact within neighbourhood coffee shops. Academically, this study contributes to consumer behaviour theory by integrating these constructs within a single framework (Zhang et al., 2026) and supports the development of experience-based marketing literature in emerging countries (Nurazizah & Tajuddien, 2024). Practically, the findings can guide Vosco Coffee in managing symbolic and physical elements to enhance authenticity and congruity, strengthening purchase intentions and competitive advantage in Malang's crowded coffee shop market (Papadopoulou et al., 2023).

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationships among stereotype congruity, perceived authenticity, preference, and purchase behavior intention of Vosco Coffee customers in Malang, specifically: (1) testing the direct effect of stereotype congruity on

purchase intention, (2) measuring its effect on perceived authenticity, (3) assessing the effect of perceived authenticity on purchase intention, (4) testing the mediating role of authenticity, and (5) determining the influence of coffee shop preference on purchase behavior intention.

Stereotype Congruity and Purchase Behavior Intention

Stereotype congruity describes the fit between the image of a place and the social expectations that exist in the minds of consumers. In the context of coffee shops, consumers usually have an ideal image of a modern hangout place that reflects an urban lifestyle, such as an aesthetic interior, a comfortable atmosphere, good coffee quality, and the presence of cultural values attached to the place. When a coffee shop is able to fulfill this stereotype, consumers tend to give positive assessments and increase their interest in consuming behavior. Stereotype congruity theory states that when consumer perceptions of a brand are in line with the expected social image, the perceived value and interest in making a purchase will increase. On the other hand, a mismatch between consumer expectations and brand reality can create cognitive dissonance and weaken purchasing preferences. Research by (Zhang et al., 2026) shows that consumers are more likely to make purchases at coffee shops that reflect their lifestyle identity. This is becoming more important in Malang's lifestyle café market, where customers are mostly young people who care a lot about their social image and lifestyle icons. This means that a customer is more likely to buy something if they like how the coffee shop looks.

H1: Stereotype congruity has a positive and significant effect on purchase behavior intention.

Stereotype Congruity and Perceived Authenticity

Perceived authenticity pertains to consumers' perceptions of the genuineness of the experience provided by a brand, encompassing aspects such as value, concept, and ambiance. When a coffee shop's image successfully aligns with the cultural, lifestyle, and aesthetic expectations held by consumers, they will perceive the experience as authentic and of real value. Research conducted by (Yang et al., 2025) shows that stereotypical congruence between customers' expectations and the atmosphere they encounter increases the perception of destination authenticity. Similarly, (Zhang et al., 2026) discovered that stereotype congruity enhances the perception of authenticity regarding the space, design, and brand identity of coffee establishments that integrate into consumers' social experiences. Thus, stereotype congruity not only affects cognitive assessments but also influences affective responses that lead consumers to perceive the authenticity of the service and environment.

H2: Stereotype congruity has a positive impact on perceived authenticity among coffee establishment consumers.

Perceived Authenticity and Purchase Behavior Intention

Perceived authenticity has become a major consideration in consumer purchasing decisions, particularly in the hospitality, restaurant, and coffee shop industries. Today's consumers aren't just looking for products but also genuine, emotionally valuable experiences. When consumers perceive a coffee shop as providing an authentic experience whether in terms of atmosphere, concept, aesthetics, or social interaction their likelihood of making a purchase increases. (Chen et al., 2020) study showed that perceived authenticity significantly increased consumer purchase intentions and recommendations in the food and beverage sector. (Yum & Kim, 2024) emphasized that the perception of authenticity promotes emotional connection, which leads to the formation of recurrent purchase intentions. As a result, the more authentic the experience, the more likely customers are to buy coffee shop products.

H3: Perceived authenticity has a significant and beneficial impact on purchasing intention.

Stereotype Congruity, Perceived Authenticity and Purchase Behavior Intention

The relationship between stereotype congruity and purchase behavior intention is strengthened by a coffee shop's ability to deliver an experience perceived as authentic. When the visual branding, interior, service, and atmosphere align with consumers' imaginations, a sense of emotional connection to the place emerges (Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021) showed that brand authenticity acts as a mediator between self-congruity and consumer loyalty in coffee shops in Indonesia. (Sander et al., 2021) found that alignment between expectations and the reality of experiences increases perceived authenticity, which then triggers purchase intentions. This finding aligns with (Zhang et al., 2026), who explain that perceived authenticity is an important pathway in shaping consumer behavior towards lifestyle cafe brands. As a result, perceived authenticity becomes a psychological factor that bridges the gap between expected image and actual purchasing behavior.

H4: Perceived authenticity acts as a mediator between stereotype congruity and purchase behavior intention.

Preference for Coffee Shops and Purchase Behavior Intention

Preference for coffee shops represents consumers tendencies in choosing coffee shops based on personal preferences, previous experiences, and emotional and functional values. Consumers with a strong preference for coffee shops tend to have a higher interest in exploring the menu, atmosphere, and service, resulting in greater purchase intentions. (Pratiwi & Sjah, 2025) found that consumer preferences are influenced by atmosphere, comfort, price, and product quality in coffee shops, which ultimately increases loyalty and purchase intentions. In addition, (Abdou, 2025) stated that preference for coffee shops strengthens the relationship between value perception and purchasing behavior of young generation consumers. Thus, consumers who have a strong preference for coffee shops will show a higher purchasing tendency than consumers who do not have a strong preference.

H5: Preference for coffee shops has a positive influence on purchase behavior intention.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework
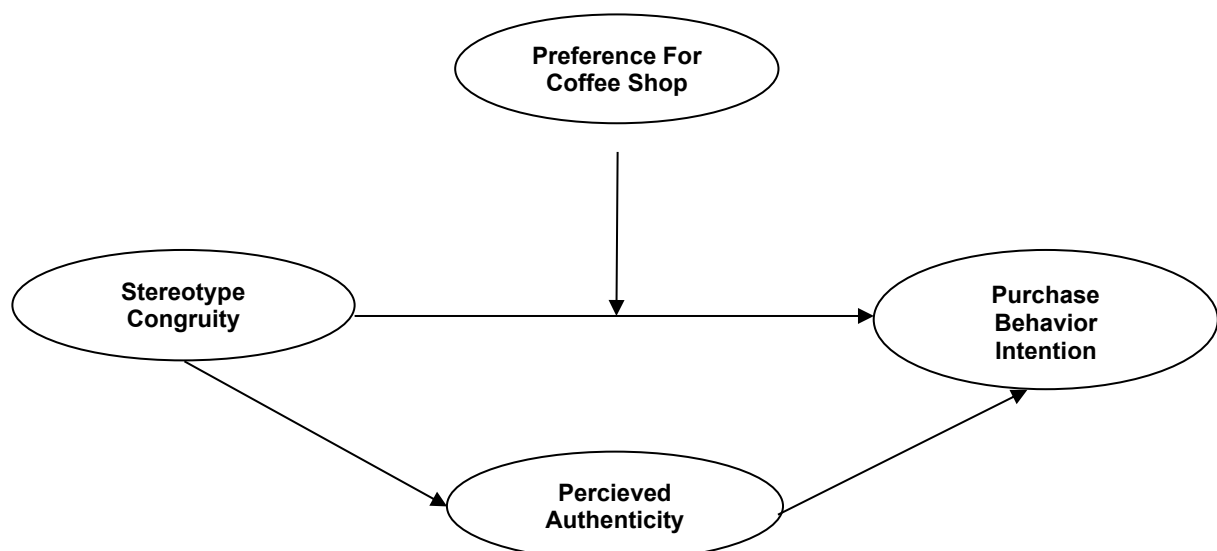
Source: Author's Work, 2025.

Research Methods

This study employed a quantitative methodology using both online and offline questionnaire surveys with a 5-point Likert scale (Rohima & Anjaningrum, 2024). The population of this study is all Vosco Coffee Malang consumers who have visited and made purchases. Non-probability sampling was employed to determine the sample because the precise population size is unknown. The number of indicators used to measure research variables must be ten times the minimum sample size. Therefore, 150 Vosco Coffee respondents in Malang were selected for this study using accidental sampling techniques, the selection of respondents was based on their eligibility for the research criteria and convenience of access. The respondent criteria were: 1. Have made at least two visits to Vosco Coffee. 2. Having purchased a product. 3. Aged 18–40 years old. 4. Using social media to find information about hangouts/coffee spots. Utilizing the most recent SmartPLS software version 4.1.1.4, the quantitative data that had been gathered were then processed and examined utilizing a sophisticated and intricate PLS-SEM analysis. Every research variable was assessed using a number of items that were adapted to the typical circumstances of the F&B sector in Malang City while still making reference to earlier studies (Anjaningrum & Moko, 2023).

Table 1. Latent Constructs Measurements

Latent Variabel	Indicator	Items
Stereotype Congruity (X) (SC)	SC 1	Coffee shop image and customer expectations are in line
	SC 2	
Adapted From : (Zhang et al., 2026)	SC 3	Service style conformity to brand stereotypes
		Aligning the ambiance of coffee shops with the cultural norms of customers
Purchase Behavior Intention (Y) (PBI)	PBI 1	Desires the product
	PBI 2	Is eager to experience it
Adapt From :	PBI 3	Is thinking about purchasing
(Rohima & Anjaningrum, 2024)	PBI 4	Is eager to learn more about it
	PBI 5	Is interested in the goods
Perceived Authenticity (Mediasi) (PA)	SC 1	Vosco Coffee's design concept showcases
	SC 2	Vespas and a modern industrial style
Adapt From :	SC 3	Vosco Coffee is unique with its modern industrial-style coffee shop concept showcasing Vespas
(Shane et al., 2023)		I can feel the industrial atmosphere with the Vespas on display at Vosco Coffee
Preference for Coffee Shps (Moderasi) (PFCS)	PFCS 1	Quality taste
	PFCS 2	Strategic location
Adapt From :	PFCS 3	Comfortable atmosphere
(Muas et al., 2023)	PFCS 4	Affordable prices

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

Result

Respondent's Demographics

Based on the results of a survey of 150 respondents who are Vosco Coffee consumers in Malang City, it was found that the majority of respondents were female (58%), while men numbered 42%. A total of 86.7% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 30, indicating that the bulk of Vosco Coffee customers are young individuals looking for a fun experience in cafés. In terms of frequency of visits, 40.7% of respondents visited the café 4-6 times, with 23.3% visiting more than six times. This indicates a fairly high level of loyalty to cafes that are considered to suit their lifestyle. Furthermore, the most popular source of

knowledge regarding Vosco Coffee was social media, specifically Instagram (61.3%) and TikTok (27.3%). These data demonstrate that digital promotion methods have an important role in changing customer perceptions and purchase decisions, which aligns with consumption trends among Gen Z and urban millennials.

**Table 2. Respondents' Demographic Overview**

Category	Classification	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	63	42%
	Female	87	58%
Respondents' Age	18–24 years	58	38.7%
	25–30 years	72	48%
	31–40 years	20	13.3%
Frequency of Visits	2–3 times	54	36%
	4–6 times	61	40.7%
	>6 times	35	23.3%
Cafe Reference Media	Instagram	92	61.3%
	TikTok	41	27.3%
	Friends/Word of Mouth	17	11.4%

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

External Model Assessment

In this study, Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to evaluate the research framework consisting of four latent variables: Stereotype Congruity (SC), Perceived Authenticity (PA), Preference for Coffee Shops (PFCS), and Purchase Behavior Intention (PBI). The model was analyzed through two stages: (1) assessment of the external (measurement) model and (2) evaluation of the internal (structural) model. The external model assessment focused on indicator reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity to ensure that all items accurately represented their respective latent constructs. All items met the loading factor requirement of >0.70, which indicates that every indicator used in this study effectively measures its underlying construct (Aliyyuldafa & Anjaningrum, 2025). The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all latent variables were also greater than 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity (Ayu et al., 2025). Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeded the minimum thresholds of 0. 6 and 0.8, respectively, showing strong internal consistency and measurement reliability (Ayu et al., 2025).

Figure 2. PLS-SEM Structual Model
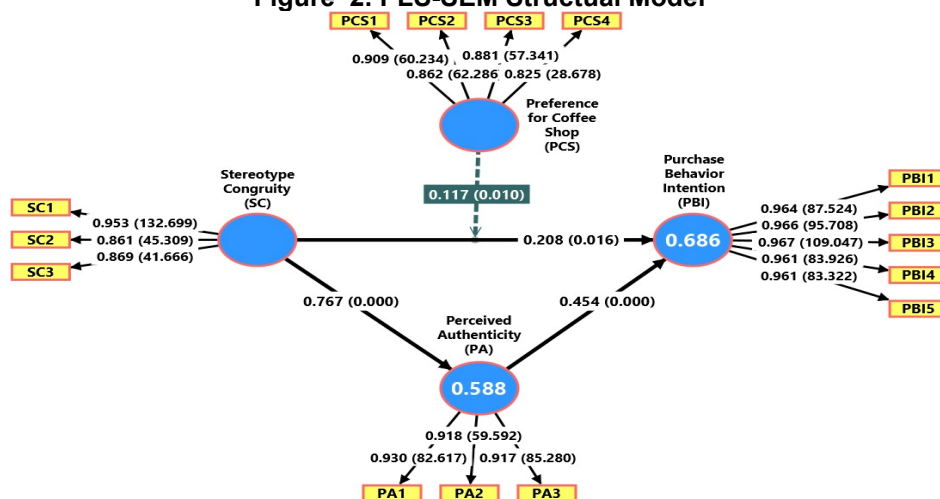
Source: Author's Work, 2025.

Table 3. Reliability and Validity Assessment

Latent Constructs	AVE	CA	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)
PA	0,849	0,911	0,916	0,944
PCS	0,757	0,893	0,897	0,926
PBI	0,929	0,981	0,981	0,985
SC	0,802	0,875	0,880	0,924

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

The results in Table 3 indicate that the research instrument has excellent reliability and validity. AVE values (0.757–0.929), Composite Reliability (0.924–0.985), and Cronbach's Alpha (0.875–0.981) confirm the internal consistency and reliability of the constructs. The Fornell–Larcker test and cross-loading also demonstrate adequate discriminant validity, with each construct having a higher $\sqrt{AVE}$ value than its correlation with other constructs. Overall, the measuring model satisfies all validity and reliability criteria, making it appropriate for evaluating structural interactions among components.

Internal Model Assessment

The second stage of the analysis assessed the internal (structural) model to examine the relationships between Stereotype Congruity (SC), Perceived Authenticity (PA), Preference for Coffee Shops (PFCS), and Purchase Behavior Intention (PBI). The evaluation was conducted using path coefficients, coefficients of determination (R^2), and significance values (t-statistics and p-values). This model was designed to test the direct, indirect, and moderating effects proposed in the research conceptual framework.

The analysis results indicated that the model's explanatory power was quite strong. The R^2 value for PA was 0.767, indicating that SC explained 76.7% of the variance in PA. Meanwhile, the R^2 for PBI reached 0.454, meaning the combination of SC, PA, and PFCS explained 45.4% of the variance in consumer purchase intention. These findings indicate that the proposed model successfully captured most of the factors influencing consumer decision-making at lifestyle cafes in Malang.

All path coefficients were positive and significant ($t > 1.96$, $p < 0.05$), confirming that all hypothesized relationships were empirically supported. SC had a significant effect on PA, and PA had a strong effect on PBI. The direct effect of SC on PBI was relatively weak, indicating that the relationship was primarily mediated by PA. PFCS also strengthened the relationship between SC and PBI, indicating that consumers who preferred the cafe atmosphere responded more strongly when the brand image matched their lifestyle. Thus, PA acted as a key mediator and psychological mechanism linking SC to consumer behavioral intentions.

Tabel 4. F-Test Effect Size

	f-square	Meaning
PA -> PBI	0,261	Medium effect (approaching strong)
PCS -> PBI	0,098	Small to medium effect
PCS x SC -> PBI	0,044	Small effect
SC -> PA	1,428	Very large effect
SC -> PBI	0,045	Small effect

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

F-Square (Effect Size)

An effect size (f²) analysis was performed to assess the relative significance of each independent construct in forecasting the endogenous variables. The f² values were interpreted in accordance with Hair et al. (2014), where 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent minor, medium, and large effects, respectively. Table 4 demonstrates that Stereotype Congruity → Perceived Authenticity has a substantial effect (f² = 1.428), establishing it as the primary pathway within the model. This indicates that the alignment between consumers' expectations and the image of the coffee establishment significantly influences the perception of authenticity. The relationship between perceived authenticity and purchase behavior intention exhibits a moderate to strong effect size (f² = 0.261), confirming that perceptions of authenticity directly influence consumers' willingness to purchase or revisit. Other relationships exhibit small to moderate effects, suggesting that although both preference and congruity play a role, authenticity continues to serve as the essential mediating factor in influencing purchase decisions.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

A t-test was conducted to examine the statistical validity of the research model for each proposed hypothesis. A relationship is considered statistically significant when the obtained t-value exceeds 1.96 at the 5% confidence level or when the p-value is below 0.05. The path coefficient (Path Coef.) indicates the magnitude and direction of the effect between variables, whether positive or negative. A summary of the testing results is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. T-Test Findings

	Path-coef	T statistics	P values	Inferences
Inderect Impact of Latent Constructs				
PA -> PBI	0,454	6,207	0,000	Positive Significant Effect
PCS -> PBI	0,256	3,255	0,001	Positive Significant Effect
PCS x SC -> PBI	0,117	2,573	0,010	Positive Significant Effect; Supported (Moderation)
SC -> PA	0,767	21,049	0,000	Positive Significant Effect
SC -> PBI	0,208	2,405	0,016	Positive Significant Effect
Spesific Indirect Impact of Larent Constructs				
SC -> PA -> PBI	0,348	5,881	0,000	Positive Significant Effect; Mediated (Supported)

Source: Author's Work, 2025.

The findings presented in Table 5 indicate that all relationships are statistically significant (t > 1.96; p < 0.05), thereby corroborating all of the proposed hypotheses. PA has a positive influence on PBI (coefficient = 0.454; t = 6.207), while Preference for Coffee Shops (PCS) also demonstrates a positive and significant impact on PBI (0.256; t = 3.255). The interaction term between PCS and Stereotype Congruity (PCS × SC) is also positive and statistically significant (0.117; t = 2.573), suggesting that a strong preference for coffee shops enhances the effect of SC on PBI. Stereotype Congruity (SC) exerts a strong and positive influence on Perceived Authenticity (0.767; t = 21.049), indicating that when a coffee shop's image aligns with consumer expectations, the perceived authenticity of the experience is substantially enhanced. SC also exerts a direct influence on Purchase Behavior Intention (0.208; t = 2.405), underscoring the significance of image congruity in shaping consumers' purchasing intentions.

The specific indirect effect of SC on PBI via PA (SC → PA → PBI) is also statistically significant (0.348; t = 5.881; p = 0.000), thereby reaffirming the mediating role of perceived authenticity. These findings highlight that PA functions as a crucial mechanism connecting SC to PBI, with consumer preference for coffee establishments further strengthening this association.

Discussion

Stereotype Congruity and Purchase Behaviour Intention

Research findings reveal that stereotype congruity has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchase behaviour intention at Vosco Coffee. When the cafe's image, including atmosphere, service style, and interior design, aligns with consumers' ideal stereotypes of a coffee shop, it creates stronger cognitive satisfaction and emotional connection. This supports the views of (Sander et al., 2021) and (Zhang et al., 2026), who state that congruence between brand image and consumer expectations can increase perceived value and purchase intention. In the context of Vosco Coffee, the consistency between industrial design and lifestyle branding has been shown to build a sense of belonging among young urban consumers who view the cafe not just as a place to drink coffee, but as a space for self-expression.

The research findings indicate that the visual and sensory harmony displayed by the cafe helps strengthen trust and symbolic bonds between consumers and the brand. Consumer perceptions of congruity extend beyond aesthetic appreciation to social alignment with their lifestyle goals. When consumers' perceived image aligns with the image they use to express their social identity, the visiting experience becomes more meaningful and emotional. Thus, stereotype congruity serves as an indicator of identity relevance, strengthening the affective dimension in the purchasing decision-making process.

Stereotype congruity can also be seen as a foundation that strengthens consumers' relationships with brands through the mechanisms of preference formation and behavioural repetition. Consumers who perceive that the coffee shop they visit aligns with their ideal image are more likely to develop a long-term commitment to the brand. This congruence fosters a consistent experience that reduces the risk of perceptual dissonance, making consumers more likely to demonstrate repurchase intention, recommend the cafe, or make it their primary choice for daily socialising. This is particularly relevant in a competitive cafe market like Malang, where young consumers are highly responsive to symbolic elements and lifestyle imagery.

These findings confirm that maintaining stereotype congruence is not simply a visual differentiation strategy but also a strategic approach to strengthening purchase intentions. Lifestyle cafes like Vosco Coffee need to ensure that all elements of the experience, from ambiance and service to music and branding, align with the social expectations of target consumers. Stereotype congruity has been shown to not only influence consumers' cognitive evaluations but also strengthen emotional and symbolic connections, which directly impact purchase behaviour intention. Therefore, understanding and maintaining congruity is a crucial step for cafe management to maintain brand competitiveness and relevance amidst increasingly intense competition.

Stereotype Congruity on Perceived Authenticity

The results of this study indicate that stereotype congruity has a significant influence on perceived authenticity among Vosco Coffee consumers. When the cafe's image, including its atmosphere, interior design, and service style, aligns with consumers' ideal stereotype of an authentic coffee shop, they perceive the experience as more authentic and meaningful. This finding aligns with research by (Yang et al., 2025) and (Zhang et al., 2026), which suggests

that congruence between initial expectations and actual experiences enhances the perception of a place's authenticity. In the context of Vosco Coffee, the consistency between its industrial concept, the use of Vespa elements, and its unique branding style has been shown to meet the authenticity expectations of young consumers in Malang.

Stereotype congruity creates the perception that the cafe's experience is not merely a commercial fabrication but truly reflects the identity and values it seeks to convey. When consumers find that the cafe's visual appearance, coffee aroma, ambiance, and distinctive features align with their imagination of a modern industrial-style cafe, their cognitive processes interpret the experience as "authentic" and uncontrived. This reinforces (Nunes et al., 2021) view that authenticity emerges when consumers perceive their experiences as relevant to their personal and social values.

Congruity also plays a role in fostering a deeper emotional connection between consumers and the cafe. When consumers perceive that Vosco Coffee's design and atmosphere align with their lifestyle identity, their perception of authenticity increases because the experience is perceived as reflecting who they are. This congruence facilitates consumers' internalisation of the experience, allowing elements such as the Vespa decor, artistic ambiance, and industrial theme to become symbols that reinforce a sense of authenticity. Thus, stereotype congruity not only influences cognitive perception but also strengthens emotional attachment, a crucial component of perceived authenticity.

These findings confirm that perceived authenticity is formed through a comprehensive assessment of the alignment between consumer expectations and the reality of what the cafe offers. The higher the perceived congruity, the higher the perception that the cafe possesses authenticity in concept, values, and atmosphere. In the case of Vosco Coffee, congruity proved to be the most dominant variable in shaping perceptions of authenticity (as evidenced by the very large f² in the PLS analysis). This shows that maintaining brand image consistency is not only a design strategy but also an important psychological strategy to strengthen the perception of authenticity, which ultimately has an impact on increasing consumer purchasing interest.

Perceived Authenticity on Purchase Behaviour Intention

The results of this study indicate that perceived authenticity has a positive and significant influence on consumer purchase behaviour intention at Vosco Coffee. When consumers perceive their experience at the cafe to be authentic, whether in terms of atmosphere, design concept, or aesthetic value, they are more motivated to make a purchase and revisit the cafe. This finding aligns with (Chen et al., 2020), who found that authenticity is a strong predictor of purchase intention in restaurants and experience-based businesses. In the context of lifestyle cafes like Vosco Coffee, authenticity is a crucial element because today's young consumers value "real" experiences over mere products.

Perceived authenticity also plays a role in building emotional attachments, which form the foundation of purchase intention. When consumers perceive that the cafe's atmosphere is authentic and reflects consistent cultural and aesthetic values, they form a positive emotional connection with the brand. This emotional connection fosters a sense of comfort, self-relevance, and affective satisfaction, which directly increases the desire to purchase the product or enjoy the service. Research by (Yum & Kim, 2024) reinforces this by stating that authenticity fosters emotional bonding, which has implications for increased purchase intention and loyalty.

The statistical analysis in this study shows that perceived authenticity is one of the variables with the strongest influence on behavioural intention, as indicated by significant path coefficients and effect sizes. This indicates that consumers are highly sensitive to the conceptual consistency and uniqueness displayed by Vosco Coffee, such as the industrial design elements and Vespa displays that symbolise unique differentiation. When consumers perceive this uniqueness as more than just a gimmick but as truly representing the cafe's identity, they become more confident and motivated to make a purchase. Therefore, authenticity is key to successfully creating an experience that drives purchase intention.

These findings confirm that perceived authenticity not only shapes value perceptions but is also a key psychological factor underlying consumer purchasing decisions. Consumers who perceive a cafe as authentic will feel that the value they receive is worth the cost and time they spend, thus encouraging repeat purchases. For Vosco Coffee, maintaining authenticity doesn't just mean maintaining the physical design or icon but also ensuring that all elements of the experience, from service to branding consistency, reflect the values that consumers find meaningful. Thus, perceived authenticity has proven to be a significant driver of increased purchase behaviour in the lifestyle cafe industry.

Perceived Authenticity as a Mediating Variable

The results of this study confirm that perceived authenticity plays a crucial mediating role in the relationship between stereotype congruity and purchase behaviour intention. When consumers perceive that a cafe's image aligns with their expectations, this does not immediately increase purchase intention but first creates a strong perception of authenticity. This finding aligns with (Hidayat & Setiawati, 2021), who stated that authenticity acts as a psychological bridge connecting congruity with loyalty and behavioural intention. In the context of Vosco Coffee, the harmony between the industrial design, Vespa theme, and modern atmosphere are elements that trigger the perception that the cafe is truly authentic. This perception then strengthens consumers' intention to make a purchase.

The mediating role of perceived authenticity is evident in the high and significant indirect effect (SC → PA → PBI), indicating that the influence of stereotype congruity on purchase behaviour intention largely operates through authenticity. This means that although congruity has a direct influence, its greatest contribution occurs when consumers perceive the experience they receive as authentic, uncontrived, and emotionally valuable. This condition supports the findings (Chen et al., 2020), which explain that authentic experiences strengthen perceived value and increase positive behavioural intentions. Thus, authenticity becomes an affective mechanism that transforms cognitive perceptions into behavioural tendencies.

These results indicate that perceived authenticity is not merely a statistical mediator but a psychological mediator that links consumers' evaluations of a cafe's identity. Consumers who perceive congruity need proof that the alignment is not merely a visual appearance but rather a consistent representation of values. When they perceive that the atmosphere, service, and branding concept truly possess authentic integrity, they are more likely to form a purchase commitment. In other words, authenticity functions as a filter that transforms congruity into an emotionally meaningful experience relevant to consumers' self-identity.

The mediating role of perceived authenticity offers important managerial implications for the lifestyle cafe industry, such as Vosco Coffee. To increase purchase behaviour intention, management must not only create a concept that aligns with consumer stereotypes but also ensure that the experience offered feels authentic. This includes consistent interior design, service that aligns with brand values, and an integrated visual and symbolic narrative. When congruity is authentically processed and delivered, consumers not only feel a cognitive fit but also a strong emotional connection, which encourages repeat purchase intention. Thus,

perceived authenticity is proven to be a key mediator in determining how effectively stereotype congruity influences purchase behaviour intention.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretical Implications: This study provides a significant theoretical contribution by integrating stereotype congruity, perceived authenticity, and preference for coffee shops into a unified conceptual framework explaining purchase behavior intention. It extends stereotype congruity theory beyond mere cognitive fit, incorporating the emotional and experiential dimensions that define consumer authenticity perception. The model offers a new perspective in experiential marketing literature, particularly within developing countries, where social identity and lifestyle expression heavily shape consumption. The findings affirm that authenticity serves as a psychological bridge connecting stereotype congruity with purchase behavior intention, while coffee shop preference explains variability in consumer responsiveness to these relationships. Practical Implications: From a managerial standpoint, the findings guide lifestyle cafe owners such as Vosco Coffee in designing holistic brand strategies that emphasize congruent and authentic experiences. Managers should curate an environment that visually and emotionally represents the target consumers' lifestyle stereotypes, including consistent spatial design, personalized service, and genuine storytelling that fosters authenticity. By focusing on the alignment between brand symbolism and consumer expectations, cafes can enhance perceived authenticity, which directly drives purchase intention. Moreover, segmenting customers based on their level of coffee shop preference allows for tailored strategies such as loyalty programs, themed events, and personalized engagement initiatives that sustain consumer interest and strengthen long-term brand loyalty.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that stereotype congruity and perceived authenticity play a significant role in shaping consumer purchase behaviour intention at Vosco Coffee Malang. Stereotype congruity was shown to significantly increase perceived authenticity, while authenticity served as a key link strengthening the relationship between cafe image congruence and purchase intention. These findings confirm that the congruence between the cafe concept and consumer expectations not only influences cognitive assessments but also creates an authentic emotional experience, thus encouraging purchase intention and repeat visits. Furthermore, preference for the coffee shop strengthened the relationship between stereotype congruity and purchase intention, such that consumers who genuinely enjoyed the cafe atmosphere showed a stronger response to brand-image congruence. The limitations of this study take three independent variables, namely stereotype congruity, preference for coffee shops and perceived authenticity, and one dependent variable, namely purchase behaviour intention of Vosco Coffee located in Malang City, as the object of the study. Suggestions for future researchers are to add other relevant variables, expand the research object to different coffee shops, and use more comprehensive methods and analysis so that the research results are stronger and generalisable.

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