

THE INFLUENCE OF BRAND EXPERIENCE ON PURCHASE INTENTION OF NEW ENERGY VEHICLES: A CASE STUDY OF XIAOMI AUTO

Yilin Wang

An Independent Study submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Management
Program in Creative Industries Management
Rattanakosin International College of Creative Entrepreneurship
Rajamangala University of Technology Rattanakosin
Academic Year 2026
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Advisor: Associate Professor Xuegang Zhan; **Academic Year**: 2026

ABSTRACT

Objectives: The objectives of this research were (1) to examine the effect of brand experience (BE) on consumers' purchase intention (PI) toward new energy vehicles (NEVs) produced by Xiaomi Auto, (2) to analyze the effects of brand experience on perceived value (PV) and brand identification (BI), and (3) to analyze the mediation effect of perceived value and brand identification in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

Research Methodology: This quantitative research employed a questionnaire survey method. The respondents were consumers in Chengdu with potential purchase intentions toward NEVs. A total of 396 valid questionnaires were obtained. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire measuring brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention. Data were collected through a survey method and analyzed using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0, including reliability and validity tests, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), and mediation effect analysis.

Major Findings/Results:(1) On the issue of the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention, brand experience had a significant positive effect on purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.(2) On the issue of the influence of brand experience on psychological variables, brand experience significantly enhanced consumers' perceived value and brand identification, both of which had significant positive effects on purchase intention.(3) On the issue of the mediation mechanism, perceived value and brand identification each played a partial mediating role in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

Keywords: Brand experience; Perceived value; Brand identification; Purchase intention; New energy vehicles; Xiaomi Auto

Advisor's Signature: .....

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Yilin Wang

December 2026

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List of Abbreviation and Glossary

Abbreviation / Glossary	Explanation
BE	Brand Experience
PV	Perceived Value
BI	Brand Identification
PI	Purchase Intention
NEVs	New Energy Vehicles
S–O–R	Stimulus–Organism–Response
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CR	Composite Reliability
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Against the backdrop of intensifying global climate change, ongoing energy structure transformation, and the reinforcement of sustainable development goals, the development of green and low-carbon transportation systems has become a central pathway through which major economies promote industrial upgrading and energy transition in the transport sector. Following the announcement of its carbon peaking and carbon neutrality targets, China elevated the new energy vehicles (NEVs) industry to the level of a strategic emerging industry and assigned it multiple roles, including facilitating energy structure transformation, advancing equipment manufacturing, and supporting high-quality economic development. The New Energy Vehicle Industry Development Plan (2021–2035) explicitly states that NEVs are not only a key instrument for achieving ecological civilization objectives but also a critical pillar in building a modern industrial system (State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2020).

Driven jointly by policy support, technological advancement, and growing market demand, China's NEV industry has maintained rapid growth. According to industry statistics released by the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers, China continued to lead the global market in both production and sales of NEVs in 2024, accompanied by a substantial increase in market penetration. This trend indicates that the NEV sector has gradually shifted from a policy-oriented industry toward a market competition stage centered on user demand (China Association of Automobile Manufacturers [CAAM], 2024).

As market penetration deepens, consumer purchase decisions are no longer determined solely by traditional rational indicators such as price, driving range, or safety performance. Instead, experiential perceptions, psychological evaluations, and emotional connections formed during brand encounters have increasingly become salient determinants of purchasing behavior.

Within this context, consumer decision-making in the automobile market has exhibited pronounced experiential and situational characteristics. Experience economy theory posits that as products and services become increasingly homogenized, the core of value creation shifts from functional utility to the experience itself (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). In brand research, brand experience is commonly defined as the comprehensive set of responses evoked when consumers are exposed to brand-related stimuli—such as product design, communication content, interaction settings, and usage environments —encompassing sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Brakus et al., 2009; Schmitt, 2009). Prior studies have consistently shown that the overall experiential evaluation formed through brand interactions significantly shapes consumers' brand attitudes, value judgments, and subsequent behavioral intentions (Hwang & Hyun, 2012; Zhang & Jeong, 2023). For smart electric vehicles, which represent a high-involvement product category characterized by technological complexity and symbolic meaning, brand experience functions as a higher-order psychological construct composed of multiple experiential elements and holds particular theoretical relevance for explaining consumer decision-making.

Among numerous NEV brands, Xiaomi Auto offers a representative research context for examining experience-driven branding mechanisms. Public disclosures indicate that Xiaomi formally announced its entry into the smart electric vehicle sector in 2021, articulating a brand strategy centered on digital technology and an intelligent hardware ecosystem to create an integrated "human–vehicle–home" experience system (Xiaomi Corporation, 2021). In recent years, Xiaomi Auto-related product launches have attracted substantial attention from both the market and the media. International financial media have continuously reported on market reactions and potential competitive implications following these launches, suggesting that the brand has demonstrated strong initial appeal and visibility during its early market entry phase (Financial Times, 2024; Reuters, 2024). Compared with actual purchasers, potential consumers remain in a formative stage in which brand cognition, attitudes, and value judgments are still developing. Their responses to brand experience cues are therefore more sensitive and provide a suitable basis for examining the psychological mechanisms through which newly entered brands influence consumer decision-making during market introduction.

Although existing research across various product and service contexts has confirmed the positive effect of brand experience on purchase intention and has suggested that experiential influences may operate through value evaluation and brand-related psychological connections (Brakus et al., 2009; Hwang & Hyun, 2012), the specific psychological pathways through which brand experience affects purchase intention in the NEV context remain insufficiently examined. This gap is particularly evident given that NEVs represent a high-involvement, technology-intensive product category associated with extended decision cycles. How potential consumers translate experiential cues into judgments of perceived value regarding whether a product is "worth purchasing," and how these cues foster brand identification at emotional and identity levels that subsequently drive purchase intention, has received limited empirical attention.

Building on this research background, the present study adopts the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework as its overarching analytical perspective. Brand experience is conceptualized as an external stimulus (S), perceived value and brand identification are treated as internal psychological responses (O), and purchase intention is specified as the behavioral response (R). Within this framework, the study systematically examines the mechanism through which brand experience influences purchase intention among potential consumers. By simultaneously incorporating perceived value and brand identification as mediating variables, the analysis explicates experience-driven decision-making through both a value evaluation pathway and an identity connection pathway. This approach seeks to reveal the key psychological mechanisms linking brand experience and purchase intention in the NEV market while maintaining a focused and parsimonious model structure.

1.2 Significance of the Study

1.2.1 Theoretical Significance

Within the new energy vehicles (NEVs) category—characterized by high technological complexity, pronounced information asymmetry, and extended consumer decision cycles—the mechanisms through which brand experience shapes consumer attitudes and behaviors have not yet been examined in a sufficiently systematic manner. Although prior research has demonstrated the positive effects of brand experience on

consumer behavior across various contexts (Iglesias et al., 2011), most empirical evidence has been derived from low-involvement or immediate-consumption settings such as fast-moving consumer goods, retail, and service industries. In contrast, high-involvement durable products such as smart electric vehicles require consumers to engage in more complex processes of cognitive evaluation, value trade-off, and affective judgment prior to purchase. Whether, and through what mechanisms, brand experience operates in this context remains an open theoretical question.

Moreover, existing studies on brand experience have predominantly focused on purchasers or actual users, thereby paying limited attention to potential consumers who play a critical role during brand introduction and market expansion phases. Compared with users whose attitudes have largely stabilized, potential consumers are still in the process of constructing experiential perceptions of the brand. Their perceived value and brand identification are not yet fully formed, making this group particularly suitable for uncovering the psychological mechanisms through which brand experience influences decision-making at the pre-adoption stage. By examining potential consumers of Xiaomi Auto, the present study extends the applicability of brand experience theory to pre-purchase decision contexts.

At the level of theoretical modeling, this study positions brand experience as a higher-order core construct and introduces perceived value and brand identification as two mediating variables with strong explanatory power in consumer psychology and behavior research. On this basis, a multi-path mechanism model linking brand experience and purchase intention is developed. By integrating perspectives from experience research, value evaluation, and identity-based processes, the model addresses the relative lack of attention to mediation mechanisms in prior brand experience studies. It also enriches the application of the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework in high-technology, high-experience product contexts, offering a more systematic account of the internal psychological processes underlying consumer decision-making.

In addition, using Xiaomi Auto—a digitally native brand entering the NEV industry—as the research context enables an experience-based examination of how digital ecosystem brands construct brand experience during brand extension and cross-industry integration. By analyzing the roles of ecosystem coordination, content interaction, and community participation in shaping potential consumers' psychological

responses, this study deepens the theoretical understanding of brand experience in settings characterized by multi-scenario integration and cross-boundary innovation.

1.2.2 Practical Significance

As national subsidies for NEVs are gradually phased out and industry competition intensifies, enhancing the quality of potential consumers' brand cognition and purchase intention has become a central concern for firms seeking market expansion and brand development. For individuals who have not yet completed their purchase decisions, brand experience serves as a primary source of information for forming perceived value, affective attitudes, and behavioral tendencies. High-quality brand experience facilitates favorable value judgments and increases the likelihood of purchase conversion by strengthening brand identification. By clarifying the functional pathways among brand experience, perceived value, and brand identification, this study provides targeted managerial insights for firms in areas such as pre-purchase user journey design, integrated marketing communication, and brand touchpoint management.

Taking Xiaomi Auto as an illustrative case, the brand leverages its digital ecosystem, content interaction mechanisms, and user community participation to construct a multi-touchpoint and immersive experiential communication pathway. This approach enables potential consumers to develop relatively clear brand cognition and emotional connection even before actual product usage. The analysis of Xiaomi Auto's experience-driven strategy offers transferable insights for other digitally native brands or firms entering the NEV sector through cross-industry expansion, particularly in understanding how experience-based approaches can support brand extension and user migration.

From an industry and policy perspective, continuous optimization of brand experience contributes to improving public awareness and social acceptance of NEV products, thereby facilitating the diffusion of green mobility concepts. As consumer decision drivers shift from policy-based incentives toward experience-based considerations, a deeper understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying value perception and brand preference formation among potential consumers becomes increasingly important. Such understanding is relevant for refining market cultivation strategies, optimizing industrial support policies, and promoting the sustainable development of the NEV industry. The findings of this study may also inform governmental decision-making

related to user experience infrastructure, industrial incentive design, and NEV consumption promotion policies, providing micro-level evidence in support of carbon peaking and carbon neutrality objectives.

1.3 Research Questions

To systematically elucidate the mechanisms through which brand experience operates in NEV purchase decision-making, and to account for the experiential characteristics exhibited by Xiaomi Auto as a digital ecosystem brand during market introduction and expansion, this study focuses on potential or intended consumers of Xiaomi Auto. Centered on the formation of their psychological responses and behavioral intentions, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: To what extent does brand experience influence perceived value and brand identification among potential consumers of Xiaomi Auto?

RQ2: How does brand experience directly affect purchase intention among potential consumers of Xiaomi Auto?

RQ3: What mediation effects do perceive value and brand identification respectively exert in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention?

By examining these questions, the study seeks to present a systematic account of how brand experience jointly shapes purchase intention through a value evaluation pathway and an identity-based pathway. The analysis aims to provide a clear theoretical framework and practical insights for user cultivation and experience management in the pre-purchase stage of NEV branding.

1.4 Research Objectives

To respond systematically to the foregoing research questions, this study adopts the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework to construct a model explaining how brand experience influences purchase intention among potential or intended consumers of Xiaomi Auto. From dual cognitive and affective pathway perspectives, the study aims to uncover the internal psychological mechanisms through which brand experience drives the formation of purchase intention. The specific research objectives are as follows:

1. To examine the effects of brand experience on perceived value and brand identification among potential consumers of Xiaomi Auto, thereby identifying the mechanisms through which brand experience shapes cognitive evaluation and affective connection in the pre-purchase stage.

2. To analyze the direct effect of brand experience on purchase intention among potential consumers of Xiaomi Auto, in order to assess the effectiveness of experience -driven brand strategies in the context of NEVs as high-involvement products.

3. To test the mediation effects of perceived value and brand identification in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention, thereby clarifying the internal psychological pathways underlying the formation of purchase intention among potential consumers.

By achieving these objectives, the study contributes at the theoretical level by extending the application of brand experience theory to high-technology and high-involvement product contexts and by enriching the explanatory scope of the S–O–R framework for pre-purchase decision-making. At the practical level, the findings offer targeted guidance for experience management, user cognition shaping, and purchase conversion optimization during the market cultivation stage of NEV brands.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Foundations

2.1.1 Experiential Marketing Theory

Traditional marketing theories are largely grounded in the assumption of the "rational economic actor," emphasizing that consumers make decisions primarily through cost–benefit calculations based on functional product attributes, price levels, and information acquisition costs. Within this framework, firms are expected to influence consumer cognition and choice through the effective deployment of the marketing mix. As consumer society has evolved and market offerings have become increasingly homogenized, this function- and information-oriented paradigm has shown growing limitations in explaining actual consumption behavior. In their seminal work on experiential consumption, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) argued that consumers are not fully rational decision-makers. Consumption is also shaped by subjective experiential factors such as pleasure, fantasy, and emotion, which necessitates an experiential view for understanding the consumption process. This perspective provided a critical theoretical foundation for the development of experiential marketing theory.

Building on this line of thought, Schmitt (1999) formally articulated experiential marketing theory, proposing that the logic of economic value creation has gradually shifted from a focus on products and services to a focus on experiences. In an experience-oriented economy, firms design consumption contexts characterized by participation, situational engagement, and memorability. Through these contexts, consumers derive holistic experiences that extend beyond functional utility, with experience itself becoming a salient carrier of value that can be perceived, evaluated, and incorporated into decision-making. The theory emphasizes that consumers are no longer passive recipients of product functions. Instead, they actively participate in experiential processes, and their consumption judgments increasingly depend on subjective perceptions and psychological responses formed across multiple brand encounters.

Schmitt (1999) further proposed five strategic experiential modules—sense, feel, think, act, and relate—highlighting the need for firms to design and integrate consumer experiences as a coherent system. The central proposition of experiential marketing is that consumers do not purchase products or services in isolation. Rather, they engage with a constellation of cognitive, emotional, and social experiences associated with the brand. These experiences emerge not from a single touchpoint but are jointly constructed through product design, communication content, service environments, digital interfaces, and community interactions. Effective experiential marketing requires coordination between rational evaluation and emotional engagement, enabling consumers to achieve functional satisfaction while simultaneously developing positive affective responses and identity connections.

As the theory has evolved, experiential marketing has increasingly intersected with key orientations in contemporary consumer behavior research. On the one hand, it aligns with emotion theory and symbolic consumption perspectives by emphasizing affective arousal and symbolic meaning in consumption behavior (Holbrook, 1999). On the other hand, it resonates with service-dominant logic and value co-creation perspectives, which stress the joint construction of experiential value through firm–consumer interactions (Gentile et al., 2007). Consequently, the traditional linear model centered on “product attributes–attitudes–behavior” has gradually given way to a focus on dynamic processes involving experiential contexts, psychological responses, and behavioral intentions.

At the application level, experiential marketing theory has been widely employed to explain consumer behavior in high-involvement products and complex service settings, particularly those characterized by technological intensity and extended decision cycles. In sectors such as automobiles, technology products, and digital services, reliance on performance parameters or price advantages alone is often insufficient to sustain competitive differentiation. Firms increasingly seek to construct multi-sensory and multi-touchpoint brand experiences through product trials, immersive displays, digital interaction interfaces, and brand community operations. Empirical evidence suggests that integrated experiential design is more effective than isolated informational persuasion in enhancing brand favorability, memorability, and emotional connection, thereby shaping purchase intention (Schmitt, 1999).

From a consumer psychological perspective, experiential marketing theory provides a direct theoretical foundation for the subsequent conceptualization of brand experience. Sensory stimuli, emotional cues, and meaning construction conveyed by brands across different touchpoints are integrated by consumers into an overall brand experience. This holistic experience further influences value evaluation, brand identification, and future behavioral choices. Experience is therefore no longer regarded as an auxiliary element but as a core variable embedded within consumers' psychological processing and decision-making mechanisms.

In summary, experiential marketing theory marks a paradigm shift from a product-centered to an experience-centered perspective. It offers an essential conceptual basis for understanding how brand-related stimuli are transformed into psychological responses and behavioral intentions. Introducing this theory into the context of new energy vehicles, which are characterized by high technological complexity and high consumer involvement, facilitates a holistic understanding of consumer decision-making and provides a theoretical premise for subsequent analyses of brand experience mechanisms within the stimulus–organism–response framework.

2.1.2 Perceived Value Theory

Perceived value has long been regarded as a core construct in consumer behavior research and is widely recognized as a key psychological variable influencing consumer choice and behavioral intention. Based on a systematic review of prior studies, Zeithaml (1988) defined perceived value as consumers' subjective assessment of the overall benefits they receive relative to the costs they incur in an exchange process. This definition moves beyond a price-centered understanding of value and emphasizes that consumer decision-making is grounded in an integrative and context-dependent judgment rather than in isolated economic calculations.

Early research primarily conceptualized perceived value as a rational outcome of benefit–cost comparisons, reflecting consumers' economic evaluations in preference-based decision-making (Grewal et al., 1998). This perspective focused mainly on functional benefits, perceived quality, and monetary costs. As consumer behavior research advanced, scholars increasingly recognized that decision-making is not solely driven by rational computation but is also shaped by emotional experience, symbolic meaning, and social identity. From this standpoint, Holbrook (1999) introduced an experiential view of value,

arguing that perceived value encompasses not only functional and utilitarian components but also more subjective dimensions such as affective enjoyment, aesthetic experience, and symbolic significance. Woodruff (1997) further emphasized that perceived value represents an overall judgment formed by consumers based on the extent to which their goals and expectations are fulfilled, highlighting its situational dependence and dynamic nature.

Research on multidimensional value structures has been particularly influenced by the PERVAL model proposed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001). This model conceptualizes perceived value as comprising functional value, emotional value, social value, and price value, providing a clear and operational framework for subsequent empirical studies. Prior findings suggest that consumers' product evaluations are not determined solely by performance or price but rather reflect an integrative judgment derived from multiple value cues. In high-involvement product contexts such as new energy vehicles, perceived value typically manifests as an overall evaluation encompassing product performance, safety, intelligent experience, brand image, and symbolic meaning.

From a behavioral mechanism perspective, perceived value is widely viewed as a critical psychological link between consumer experience and behavioral intention. Empirical research has consistently identified perceived value as a key antecedent of satisfaction, brand preference, loyalty, and purchase intention (Cronin et al., 2000). In experience-driven market environments, perceived value captures not only consumers' rational evaluations of product or service attributes but also their subjective perceptions of the overall experience provided by the brand. As such, it holds substantial theoretical significance for explaining how brand experience is translated into behavioral intention.

In technology-intensive product contexts such as new energy vehicles, consumers commonly face high levels of uncertainty and information complexity, making their decision processes more reliant on subjective judgment and holistic evaluation. Perceived value is particularly salient in these settings because it integrates multiple cognitive elements, including functional benefits, usage expectations, risk perceptions, and brand-related symbolic meanings. Accordingly, perceived value is often conceptualized as a prototypical "organism" variable within the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework, serving a central mediation function by transforming external experiential stimuli into behavioral intention.

In summary, perceived value theory provides an essential theoretical basis for understanding consumers' evaluative processes in complex product contexts. It also offers critical support for examining how brand experience influences purchase intention through consumers' value judgments. Incorporating perceived value into research on NEV consumer behavior helps to clarify the cognitive pathways formed during psychological processing of experiential stimuli and establishes a solid theoretical foundation for modeling the mechanisms through which brand experience affects purchase intention.

2.1.3 Brand Identification Theory

Brand identification represents a critical psychological mechanism in consumer behavior research and is theoretically rooted in social identity theory (SIT). Proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), social identity theory explains how individuals define their self-concept through perceived affiliation with social groups, organizations, or symbolic objects, and how such identification shapes attitudes and behavioral tendencies. According to this theory, self-concept comprises both personal identity and social identity, with the latter derived from identification with a group or symbolic entity. When an external object reflects values, beliefs, or aspects of an individual's ideal self, it is more likely to be incorporated into self-definition, thereby generating a sense of identification.

In the marketing and branding literature, Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) introduced social identity theory into consumer behavior research by proposing the concept of consumer–brand identification. They argued that consumers' brand choices are not determined solely by functional attributes or rational benefits. More fundamentally, brands serve as symbolic vehicles through which consumers express self-concept, affirm identity, and seek psychological belonging. When a brand is perceived as representing consumers' values, lifestyles, or ideal images, the level of brand identification increases and subsequently influences outcomes such as loyalty, willingness to pay, positive word-of-mouth, and brand engagement. Subsequent studies have further demonstrated that brand identification is not the result of purely cognitive evaluation but emerges from the joint influence of cognition, emotion, and symbolic meaning (Lam et al., 2013).

From a psychological mechanism perspective, brand identification is typically grounded in the perceived congruence between consumers' self-concept and brand image. Ahearne et al. (2005) suggested that brand identification arises when consumers perceive a brand as reflecting "who I am" or "who I aspire to be," indicating symbolic alignment between the brand and the consumer's self-perception. In this sense, brand identification functions as a psychological link connecting internal motivation, emotional experience, and external behavioral response. For product categories with strong symbolic significance, such as new energy vehicles, brands often embody social meanings related to technological innovation, environmental responsibility, and future-oriented lifestyles, making them particularly salient carriers for identity expression and value projection.

As competition in the new energy vehicles market intensifies and functional differentiation among products diminishes, the role of brand identification becomes increasingly prominent. New energy vehicles are not merely transportation tools but are frequently perceived as symbols of value orientation and lifestyle choice. In brand selection, consumers attend not only to performance and economic considerations but also to whether a brand conveys a social image and value stance aligned with their own beliefs. Brands associated with technological advancement, environmental consciousness, or youth-oriented community culture are more likely to evoke identity resonance and facilitate the formation of brand identification (Kim et al., 2020).

From a brand management perspective, brand identification does not emerge from a single encounter but is gradually constructed through sustained brand experience and interaction. Firms translate abstract brand values into tangible and experiential symbols through multiple touchpoints, including product design, brand narratives, communication practices, physical experience spaces, digital interfaces, and user communities. As noted by Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012), immersive experiences, active interaction, and value co-creation processes strengthen emotional connection and symbolic congruence between consumers and brands, thereby reinforcing brand identification.

In summary, social identity theory provides a foundational perspective for understanding how consumers construct identity within brand relationships. Brand identification, as an affective and identity-oriented psychological response, explains how consumers incorporate brands into their self-concept through brand

experience and how this process subsequently shapes attitudes and behavioral intentions. In the context of new energy vehicles, which combine technological complexity with symbolic value, brand identification offers essential theoretical support for examining how brand experience influences purchase intention through an affective pathway and underpins its role as a parallel mediating variable in the present study.

2.1.4 The S–O–R Model and Its Application in Consumer Behavior Research

The stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) model was originally proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) to explain how external environmental stimuli influence behavioral responses through changes in individuals' internal psychological states. The model posits that behavior is not triggered directly by external stimuli. Instead, stimuli first activate an intermediary system composed of cognitive, emotional, and psychological processing, referred to as the organism state. By emphasizing the indirect pathways between stimulus and response, the S–O–R model provides a structured framework for understanding behavior formation in complex contexts.

In consumer behavior research, the S–O–R model has been extensively applied to examine how marketing stimuli shape consumers' psychological processes and behavioral outcomes. It serves as a foundational framework in experiential marketing, services cape research, and brand management. Within this model, stimuli typically include brand image cues, advertising signals, product design features, and online or offline experiential environments. The organism component encompasses consumers' cognitive evaluations, such as perceived value and quality judgments, affective responses such as pleasure and trust, and identity-related psychological states such as brand identification and sense of belonging. Responses are commonly operationalized as observable behavioral outcomes, including purchase intention, satisfaction, loyalty, or word-of-mouth behavior (Eroglu et al., 2003; Jacoby, 2002).

Compared with behavior theories grounded primarily in assumptions of rational decision-making, the S–O–R model places greater emphasis on consumers' internal psychological mechanisms. It focuses not only on whether external stimuli exert influence but also on how such stimuli are perceived, interpreted, and transformed into attitudes and behavioral intentions. This characteristic makes the S–O–R model particularly suitable for consumption settings characterized by multiple touchpoints, staged decision processes, and rich experiential content, allowing for a more precise

explanation of how complex stimuli such as brand experience operate within consumer decision-making.

In research on brand experience, the S–O–R model has been widely employed to explain how multidimensional experiential stimuli activate consumers' cognitive and affective processing. Gentile et al. (2007) noted that brand experience consists of multiple experiential inputs, including sensory, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral stimuli, which engage consumers' internal psychological systems and give rise to layered psychological outcomes such as value judgments, emotional responses, and brand identification. Prior studies indicate that it is these internal psychological reactions, rather than the stimuli themselves, that directly shape attitude formation and behavioral intention, a pattern that is especially pronounced in technology-intensive or innovative product contexts.

In the context of new energy vehicles, which are characterized by high involvement, technological complexity, and strong symbolic meaning, the S–O–R model offers particularly strong explanatory power. Brand experience in this domain extends beyond basic sensory inputs such as test driving or advertising exposure and incorporates more complex psychological experiences, including technological trust, emotional resonance, value congruence, and identification with environmental ideals. Through repeated interactions across multiple touchpoints, consumers develop integrated cognitive evaluations and affective judgments about the brand, which in turn inform their purchase intention. In this setting, perceived value and brand identification function as prototypical organism variables, representing functional–utilitarian evaluation pathways and symbolic–identity-based pathways, respectively.

Based on this theoretical logic, the present study adopts the S–O–R model as its overarching analytical framework and constructs a pathway linking Xiaomi Auto's brand experience, consumers' internal psychological mechanisms, and purchase intention. Within the model, brand experience (BE) is conceptualized as the stimulus (S), perceived value (PV) and brand identification (BI) represent the organism states (O), and purchase intention (PI) serves as the behavioral response (R). This structure reflects the S–O–R model's emphasis on mediation effects while remaining consistent with dominant theoretical orientations in experiential marketing and brand management research.

In summary, the S–O–R model provides a systematic and operational theoretical foundation for the present study. It facilitates an in-depth examination of how Xiaomi Auto's brand experience influences purchase intention through consumers' value evaluation and identity-related psychological processes. By applying this framework, the study offers a more explanatory perspective on the psychological mechanisms underlying purchase decision-making among potential or intended consumers in the new energy vehicles market.

2.2 Research on Brand Experience

2.2.1 Conceptualization of Brand Experience

The concept of experience originated in philosophy and psychology, where it centers on individuals' subjective feelings, cognitive processing, and emotional responses formed through interaction with the external environment (Carù & Cova, 2003; Dewey, 1934/2012). In consumer research, Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) were among the first to introduce the experiential paradigm into the analysis of consumption behavior. They argued that consumption is not solely driven by rational and utilitarian calculation but also involves fantasy, emotion, symbolic meaning, and sensory engagement. This perspective challenged the limitations of traditional information-processing models and laid the theoretical groundwork for subsequent experience-oriented consumer research.

As the experiential perspective gained prominence in marketing, brand research gradually shifted away from the linear logic of "product attributes–attitudes–behavior" toward an emphasis on consumers' holistic experiential processes. Within the framework of experiential marketing theory, Schmitt (1999) proposed that the core of brand competition had moved from functional performance and service provision to experience itself. Firms were encouraged to activate consumers' comprehensive psychological responses through sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and relational cues, positioning brands as experiential carriers that can be perceived, remembered, and identified. Under this view, brands are no longer treated merely as bundles of functional attributes but as symbolic systems embedded in consumers' life contexts, capable of eliciting emotional resonance and meaning construction.

Building on this foundation, Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) offered a systematic definition of brand experience. They conceptualized brand experience as consumers' subjective responses arising from exposure to brand-related stimuli, including brand design, identity cues, communication content, retail environments, and product interactions. These responses encompass four dimensions: sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral. The theoretical contribution of this definition lies in three key aspects. First, it clearly distinguishes brand experience from outcome variables such as attitudes, satisfaction, or loyalty, establishing it as an independent psychological construct. Second, it emphasizes that although brand experience is triggered by external stimuli, its essence lies in subjective responses formed through internal psychological processing. Third, it proposes a clear and operational multidimensional structure that provides a solid basis for empirical measurement.

Despite variations in definitional perspectives, prior research has converged on several shared characteristics of brand experience. First, brand experience is elicited through diverse brand touchpoints, including online communication content, offline settings, service interactions, and technological interfaces. Second, it represents a dynamic psychological process that unfolds across the entire sequence of brand encounters rather than a momentary emotional reaction. Third, brand experience integrates both functional and symbolic elements, deriving not only from product performance but also from brand culture, community atmosphere, and identity symbolism. Fourth, brand experience is inherently subjective and varies across individuals, depending on consumers' existing cognitive structures, affective tendencies, and social identity backgrounds.

Some studies have further elaborated the content of brand experience from different angles. Alba and Hutchinson (1987) emphasized that brand experience reflects consumers' familiarity with a brand and their psychological connection to it, rather than simple product usage. Urquhart and Ross (2002) viewed brand experience as a combined response to functional and emotional benefits. Bennett, Härtel, and McColl-Kennedy (2005) highlighted that brand experience emerges from sustained interaction between brands and consumers and extends throughout the processes of recognition, selection, purchase, and use. Collectively, these perspectives underscore the multilayered psychological structure inherent in brand experience.

Synthesizing existing research, brand experience can be understood as a multidimensional subjective psychological response triggered by brand-related stimuli, encompassing sensory perception, emotional activation, meaning construction, and behavioral motivation. Among the various frameworks, the four-dimensional model proposed by Brakus et al. (2009) has been widely adopted due to its theoretical coherence and measurement robustness, particularly in contexts involving high consumer involvement and complex decision-making. Accordingly, the present study defines brand experience (BE) as the integrated subjective responses formed by consumers through visual, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral stimuli during their interactions with the Xiaomi Auto brand. This definition aligns with dominant theoretical conceptualizations and reflects Xiaomi Auto's brand practices characterized by digital communication and user-centered ecosystems, thereby providing a solid theoretical basis for subsequent model development and quantitative measurement.

2.2.2 Dimensional Structure and Measurement of Brand Experience

The dimensional structure of brand experience has long been a central issue in experiential marketing research. Drawing on perspectives from psychology, consumer behavior, and service research, scholars have proposed diverse classification schemes for the components of brand experience, reflecting both the complexity of experiential structures and their sensitivity to context.

Early studies often approached brand experience from a process-oriented perspective, segmenting experience according to stages of consumption or points of contact. For example, Bennett et al. (2005) distinguished between pre-purchase information search and post-purchase usage evaluation from a temporal sequence perspective. Leventhal et al. (2006) introduced a force-based approach, characterizing experience in terms of physical attributes, emotional involvement, and value propositions. Other studies, particularly those situated in service contexts, proposed dimensions such as functional experience, emotional experience, and social experience, or categorized experience from a marketing activity perspective into communication experience, service experience, and relational experience.

As experiential research increasingly focused on psychological processes, scholars began to emphasize the multidimensional psychological structure of brand experience. The five experiential modules proposed by Schmitt (1999)—sense, feel,

think, act, and relate—systematically articulated the layered responses consumers exhibit during brand encounters and have been widely regarded as a milestone in experiential marketing theory. Building on this framework, Brakus et al. (2009) refined the structure through cross-industry empirical research and identified four core dimensions: sensory experience, affective experience, cognitive experience, and behavioral experience. They also developed a corresponding measurement scale. This scale has demonstrated robust reliability and validity across different cultural and product contexts and has become one of the most widely adopted instruments in brand experience research. Some studies have further extended this approach. For instance, Gentile et al. (2007) proposed a six-dimensional model incorporating pragmatic, lifestyle, and relational experiences to accommodate more complex brand interaction settings.

Overall, prior research consistently indicates that brand experience is inherently multidimensional, while its specific dimensional configuration may vary depending on product category, consumption context, and brand characteristics. In the context of new energy vehicles, which involve high consumer involvement and technological intensity, consumers engage not only in rational evaluations of performance and safety but also experience affective and cognitive responses triggered by brand image, technological culture, and usage scenarios. This is particularly evident for digital ecosystem brands such as Xiaomi Auto, where product design, interactive interfaces, digital content, and community culture form a highly integrated system of experiential stimuli. As a result, brand experience in this context exhibits pronounced interconnections among sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions.

Considering model fit, measurement stability, and cross-industry comparability, the present study adopts the four-dimensional brand experience model proposed by Brakus et al. (2009) as its theoretical foundation and measurement framework. Specifically, sensory experience refers to immediate perceptions elicited by brand-related stimuli such as visual or tactile cues. Affective experience captures the emotional responses evoked during brand encounters. Cognitive experience reflects the extent to which a brand stimulates consumers' thinking, curiosity, and cognitive processing. Behavioral experience denotes the degree to which a brand encourages action tendencies or participatory behaviors. This four-dimensional structure effectively encompasses the key experiential elements relevant to new energy vehicle consumption and provides a

clear and operational basis for subsequent analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM).

2.2.3 Antecedents, Outcomes, and Mechanisms of Brand Experience

As a key construct in consumer behavior research, brand experience has attracted extensive attention with respect to its formation processes and behavioral consequences. Existing studies have primarily examined brand experience from three interrelated perspectives: antecedent variables, outcome variables, and underlying mediation mechanisms. Together, these strands provide systematic evidence for understanding the role of brand experience in complex consumption contexts.

Research on antecedents generally suggests that brand experience emerges from an integrated system of stimuli generated by multiple brand touchpoints. Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010) emphasized that the coherence and consistency among elements such as brand name, design, service encounters, and communication content play a critical role in shaping experiential intensity. With the advancement of digital marketing, online touchpoints have become increasingly influential in the formation of brand experience. These include brand videos, virtual test drives, online launch events, interactive interface design, and user community engagement. Such digital stimuli reduce psychological distance between consumers and brands while enhancing experiential immersion (Hamilton & Price, 2019). In the context of new energy vehicles, where technological information is complex and uncertainty is relatively high, consumers rely more heavily on visual presentation and experiential cues. As a result, brand experience in this domain exhibits strong situational dependence (Herziger & Sintov, 2023).

With regard to outcomes, a substantial body of empirical research has demonstrated that brand experience exerts significant effects on consumers' attitudinal responses and behavioral intentions. Brakus et al. (2009) showed that positive brand experience contributes to higher levels of satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. Subsequent studies further confirmed that brand experience strengthens brand preference and brand identification by activating positive emotional memories and psychological connections (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010; Dolbec & Chebat, 2013). At the level of purchase decision-making, prior research indicates that immersive experiences enhance purchase intention by increasing trust and familiarity with the brand (Ha & Perks, 2005; Chen et al., 2024). Studies focusing on the new energy vehicles market have similarly found that even

short-term test-driving experiences can improve consumers' evaluations of product performance and reliability, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase (Herziger & Sintov, 2023).

From a mechanism perspective, scholars widely agree that brand experience does not translate directly into behavioral responses but operates through key psychological mediators. On the one hand, enriched brand experience enhances cognitive processing and emotional responses, which in turn elevates consumers' perceived value of the product or brand (Iglesias et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2021). On the other hand, brand experience reinforces consumers' sense of identity congruence and emotional attachment, facilitating the formation of brand identification. Brand identification has been recognized as a critical psychological mechanism driving long-term relationships and purchase intention (Ishida & Taylor, 2012; Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Through these processes, a relatively clear psychological pathway is established among brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention.

When considered in light of the characteristics of the new energy vehicles industry, these mechanisms become particularly salient. New energy vehicles are associated with high consumer involvement, elevated risk perception, and strong dependence on technological trust. During decision-making, consumers must integrate multiple cues, including sensory experience, confidence in technology, value judgment, and emotional engagement. In this context, brand experience plays a decisive role in shaping cognitive and affective processing. Taking Xiaomi Auto as an example, its digitally driven brand experience system integrates multiple touchpoints—such as live-streamed product launches, digital content dissemination, online customization, and community co-creation—enabling consumers to deepen their understanding of the brand's technology, values, and product philosophy through sustained interaction. This continuous experiential exposure strengthens the linkage between cognition, emotion, and behavior.

In summary, prior research provides both theoretical and empirical support for positioning brand experience as a central psychological nexus linking brand-related stimuli to consumer behavioral responses. The four-dimensional brand experience model proposed by Brakus et al. (2009) effectively captures the core experiential structure of consumers in the new energy vehicles context and aligns well with the multi-touchpoint

interaction patterns characteristic of digital communication environments. Accordingly, the present study adopts this model as its theoretical foundation, places brand experience at the core of the analysis of NEV consumer psychology, and further examines the mechanisms through which brand experience influences purchase intention via perceived value and brand identification. This approach offers a solid basis for the development of subsequent research hypotheses and model construction.

2.3 Research on Perceived Value

2.3.1 Conceptualization of Perceived Value

Perceived value (PV) is a core construct in consumer behavior research and has long been regarded as a key psychological foundation for predicting purchase intention (PI) and decision-making behavior. The concept was systematically articulated by Zeithaml (1988), who defined perceived value as consumers' subjective evaluation formed through weighing the overall benefits obtained against the costs incurred within a specific consumption context. This definition underscores that value is not an inherent attribute of a product or service. Rather, it is a subjective judgment constructed by consumers based on their cognition, emotional experience, and situational cues, highlighting the subjective and context-dependent nature of value assessment.

As research progressed, scholars increasingly recognized that a unidimensional notion of value is insufficient to explain decision-making in complex consumption settings. Perceived value was therefore reconceptualized as a multidimensional construct. Among the most influential contributions is the PERVAL model proposed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001), which conceptualizes perceived value as comprising functional value (quality), functional value (price), emotional value, and social value. This model systematically captures consumers' value judgments across utility evaluation, affective experience, and social identification. Owing to its clear structure, strong operability, and broad applicability across industries, the PERVAL framework has been widely employed in studies of durable goods, technology products, and other high-involvement consumption contexts.

In the context of new energy vehicles (NEVs), perceived value exhibits more complex and dynamic characteristics. On the one hand, technical attributes such as driving range, level of intelligence, and safety performance constitute the foundation of

functional value and directly shape consumers' assessments of product utility. On the other hand, the environmental orientation, technological symbolism, and future-oriented lifestyle meanings associated with NEVs elevate the importance of emotional and social value within consumers' cognitive structures (Wang et al., 2022). In addition, digital brand ecosystems are reshaping value creation processes. Taking Xiaomi Auto as an example, its integration of an established smart ecosystem, strong content dissemination capabilities, and highly engaged user communities extends consumers' value evaluation beyond the vehicle itself to include ecosystem synergy, brand trust, and identity expression (Guo et al., 2024).

In light of these theoretical developments and contextual characteristics, the present study defines perceived value (PV) as consumers' integrated subjective evaluation of functional benefits, emotional satisfaction, social symbolism, and price rationality formed through their exposure to Xiaomi Auto's product performance, technological features, brand communication, and ecosystem-based experiences. This definition emphasizes the multidimensional and integrative nature of perceived value, reflecting how consumers construct overall value judgments of NEVs through the combined influence of rational evaluation and affective meaning-making. It also provides a conceptual foundation for subsequent analysis of the mediation effect of perceived value in the relationship between brand experience (BE) and purchase intention (PI).

2.3.2 Review of Research on the Effect of Perceived Value on Purchase Intention

A substantial body of empirical research indicates that perceived value (PV) is a key psychological determinant of purchase intention (PI), with particularly strong explanatory power in high-involvement and high-uncertainty product contexts such as new energy vehicles (NEVs). Sweeney and Soutar (2001) demonstrated that multidimensional perceived value significantly enhances consumers' purchase intention, with emotional value and social value exerting especially strong motivational effects. These findings suggest that purchase decisions are not driven solely by functional utility assessments but reflect an integrative evaluation that includes emotional gratification and social meaning.

Studies within the NEV domain further emphasize the multifaceted structure and complexity of perceived value. Using structural equation modeling (SEM), Yu et al. (2021) found that functional value and emotional value exert direct positive effects on purchase intention, whereas social value influences purchase decisions indirectly by strengthening psychological mechanisms such as identity-related responses. This evidence indicates that, as products combining advanced technology with social symbolism, NEVs are evaluated not only on the basis of performance attributes but also according to consumers' identification with the lifestyles and social images the products represent.

With the development of digital brand ecosystems, researchers have increasingly reexamined perceived value formation from experiential and community-based perspectives. Zhang and Liu (2023) reported that experiential advantages generated through digital brand content, interactive mechanisms, and user co-creation significantly enhance consumers' overall value perceptions. Such value enhancement extends beyond functional cognition and is reinforced through stronger emotional connection and brand trust, thereby shaping consumers' ongoing evaluations of the brand. Similarly, Zhao et al. (2024) found that when assessing emerging brands such as Xiaomi Auto, consumers tend to integrate brand cultural meaning, digital scenario experience, community belonging, and technological ecosystem considerations into their evaluations. As a result, perceived value exhibits pronounced symbolic and contextual characteristics.

Synthesizing existing findings, perceived value should no longer be regarded as a static outcome of product evaluation. Instead, it represents a dynamic psychological structure constructed through sustained brand interaction. In NEV purchase decision-making, perceived value operates simultaneously at the functional level of utility comparison, the affective level of experiential satisfaction, and the social level of identity expression. Accordingly, perceived value functions as a critical psychological link connecting brand experience (BE) and purchase intention, occupying an indispensable mediating position within consumer decision-making mechanisms.

Within the Xiaomi Auto context examined in this study, this value formation process is particularly evident. Centered on a technology-oriented brand narrative, Xiaomi Auto leverages ecosystem integration and a highly participatory user culture to shape value evaluations characterized by experience-driven assessment, emotional reinforcement, and ecological integration. On this basis, the present study further

examines the mediation effect of perceived value in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention in subsequent model analyses, with the aim of deepening understanding of consumer psychological mechanisms in the NEV market and providing theoretical support for market communication and experience management strategies of digitally native brands.

2.4 Research on Brand Identification

2.4.1 Conceptualization of Brand Identification

The theoretical foundations of brand identification (BI) can be traced to social identity theory and organizational identification theory. Social identity theory posits that individuals seek meaning, psychological stability, and self-definition through affiliation with social groups during social interaction (Turner, 1996). When individuals define a group as "us," their self-concept becomes psychologically aligned with the group's characteristics, values, and image, giving rise to a sense of identification (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

In consumer behavior research, brands are viewed as symbolic "social objects" or quasi-groups through which consumers can express identity, extend the self, and establish social positioning. From a self-concept congruence perspective, Sirgy (1985) argued that consumers tend to prefer brands that are consistent with their self-image, positioning brands as important symbolic carriers of self-representation. This perspective provided a critical psychological basis for subsequent research on brand identification.

As the literature evolved, brand identification came to be conceptualized as a multidimensional psychological structure rather than a simple affective preference. Keller (2001) suggested that brand identification reflects a deep psychological bond between consumers and brands, resulting from consumers' internalization of brand meaning and symbolic value. Lam et al. (2013) further emphasized that brand identification encompasses not only perceived self–brand congruence but also psychological alignment formed through shared values, visions, and group belonging. Subsequent studies, such as Elbedweihy et al. (2016), extended this view by demonstrating that brand identification integrates three core elements: self-concept congruence, value endorsement, and emotional belonging.

Synthesizing these perspectives, the present study defines brand identification (BI) as an internal sense of psychological belonging formed when consumers perceive congruence between their self-concept and brand characteristics and endorse the values and cultural meanings represented by the brand. This definition highlights both the self-constructive nature of brand identification and its value- and identity-oriented significance. It is particularly applicable to the contexts of new energy vehicles (NEVs) and digitally driven brands and provides a theoretical foundation for specifying brand identification as a mediating variable in subsequent models.

2.4.2 Review of Research on the Effect of Brand Identification on Purchase Intention

Brand identification is widely regarded as a key mechanism linking consumers' psychological structures with behavioral responses and has demonstrated strong explanatory power in accounting for purchase intention (PI), brand loyalty, and brand-supportive behaviors. Prior research consistently shows that when consumers perceive a brand as part of their self-concept or ideal self, their attitudinal commitment and behavioral engagement with the brand increase substantially (Schnebelen & Bruhn, 2018; Yoshida et al., 2021).

From the perspective of outcome variables, brand identification has been shown to directly strengthen consumers' purchase intention and their tendency toward repeated choice. Empirical evidence indicates that higher levels of brand identification enhance trust, commitment, and emotional attachment, thereby increasing decision certainty in contexts characterized by elevated uncertainty or high decision costs (Augusto & Torres, 2018; Mao et al., 2020). This effect is particularly salient in high-involvement product categories, where consumers often rely on identity alignment and value congruence to mitigate perceived risk.

Further research has examined the mechanisms through which brand identification influences purchase intention, suggesting that its effects are rarely isolated. Stokburger-Sauer et al. (2012) demonstrated that brand identification functions as a bridge between brand experience, affective responses, and behavioral outcomes, facilitating the transformation of experiential stimuli into stable behavioral tendencies. Similarly, Kuenzel and Halliday (2010) found that self-concept congruence indirectly affects brand loyalty and purchase behavior by strengthening brand identification, highlighting its critical transmission role between cognition and behavior.

With respect to antecedents, the formation of brand identification is generally understood to be driven by multiple factors. Empirical studies have shown that experience quality, perceived value congruence, customer participation, and the clarity of brand cultural expression significantly enhance consumers' levels of brand identification (Chen et al., 2016; Rather et al., 2018). Collectively, these findings indicate that brand identification is a psychological structure gradually constructed through sustained interaction and experience rather than a one-time attitudinal outcome.

In the context of NEV consumption, the role of brand identification becomes even more pronounced. Beyond their technological attributes, NEVs embody social meanings associated with environmental responsibility, technological advancement, and future-oriented lifestyles. When selecting NEV brands, consumers often align the values represented by the brand with their own identity aspirations, amplifying the influence of brand identification in the formation of purchase intention.

For Xiaomi Auto, brand image is jointly shaped by technological culture, ecosystem value, and a highly participatory user community, endowing the brand with substantial identity-signaling potential. On this basis, the present study posits that brand identification plays a critical mediation effect in the relationship between brand experience (BE) and purchase intention. This proposition provides a clear theoretical rationale for subsequent structural modeling and hypothesis development.

2.5 Research on Purchase Intention

2.5.1 Conceptualization of Purchase Intention

Purchase intention (PI) is a core psychological variable in consumer behavior research used to predict actual purchasing behavior. It reflects consumers' subjective assessment of the likelihood of engaging in future purchase actions after integrating product information, situational cues, and individual psychological factors. Dodds et al. (1991) emphasized that purchase intention is not an immediate behavior but a behavioral tendency grounded in value trade-offs and attitude formation, and its strength serves as an effective predictor of subsequent purchasing decisions.

From a marketing management perspective, purchase intention is regarded as a key mediating variable in the process through which attitudes are translated into behavior. Kotler and Keller (2016) noted that purchase intention captures not only consumers'

overall evaluations of brands or products but also their psychological readiness to act under real-world constraints, giving it a degree of stability and measurability.

Within the framework of the theory of planned behavior (TPB), purchase intention occupies an intermediary position between attitude and behavior. It is jointly shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). This perspective underscores that consumers do not move directly from evaluation to action. Instead, purchase intention functions as a necessary psychological mechanism through which attitudes are converted into behavior. Subsequent research further suggests that purchase intention represents an integrative outcome of information processing, value assessment, and risk evaluation, with clear predictive relevance for actual behavior (Chen & Chang, 2012).

In empirical research, purchase intention is typically operationalized as a dependent variable and measured using five- or seven-point Likert scales. Its reliability and validity have been extensively validated across studies. As a result, purchase intention is widely adopted as a central indicator for assessing the behavioral effects of marketing stimuli and psychological variables in research on NEV consumption, technology adoption, and brand decision-making.

2.5.2 Review of Research on Factors Influencing Purchase Intention

Existing studies indicate that purchase intention is shaped by a combination of factors operating at multiple levels. These factors can be broadly categorized into product attributes, brand-related variables, consumer perceptual variables, experiential and situational factors, and social and psychological influences.

1) Product-related factors: Objective product attributes constitute a foundational influence on purchase intention. These include price level (Dodds et al., 1991), product performance and quality (Park et al., 2014), and innovation and technological maturity (Wells et al., 2011). In the context of technology-oriented durable goods such as NEVs, attributes related to intelligence, safety, and technological reliability exert particularly strong effects, as consumers must make decisions under conditions of elevated risk and long-term usage expectations.

2) Brand-related factors: Brand-related variables also play a critical role in the formation of purchase intention. Prior research has shown that brand image (Keller, 1993), brand trust (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), brand awareness (Esch et al., 2006),

and brand affect significantly enhance consumers' purchase propensity. Among these variables, brand identification has received increasing scholarly attention. Bhattacharya and Sen (2003) argued that when consumers perceive a brand as an extension of their self-concept, their psychological investment and behavioral support intensify, leading to higher purchase intention.

3) Consumer perceptual variables: Consumers' subjective evaluations are widely regarded as central psychological mechanisms driving purchase intention. Perceived value (PV), defined as consumers' overall assessment of benefits relative to costs (Zeithaml, 1988), is considered one of the most stable and direct predictors of purchase intention. In addition, perceived risk (Mitchell, 1999) and perceived convenience (Grewal et al., 2003) influence purchasing decisions, particularly in contexts involving new technologies or emerging brands. Recent research further suggests that when products perform strongly in terms of functional, emotional, or social value, consumers are more likely to develop favorable purchase intentions (Rizomyliotis, 2024).

4) Experiential and situational factors: With the rise of the experience economy, brand experience (BE) has become an increasingly important variable in explaining purchase intention. Brakus et al. (2009) demonstrated that multidimensional brand experience enhances consumers' overall brand impressions by strengthening emotional responses and cognitive processing, thereby increasing purchase intention. Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010) further showed that positive brand experience indirectly influences purchase intention through emotional arousal and psychological connection, positioning experience as a key bridge between brand stimuli and behavioral response.

5) Social influence and psychological factors: Social norms, subjective norms, and broader social influence also play significant roles in purchase decision-making (Ajzen, 1991). Self-concept congruence (Sirgy, 1985) enhances the psychological fit between consumers and brands, thereby strengthening purchase intention. Psychological distance affects consumers' acceptance of technological products and their value judgments (Lee, 2024). In addition, demographic variables such as age, gender, and cultural background may exert moderating effects on purchase intention across different contexts (Hanzaee & Andervazh, 2012).

2.5.3 Contextual Fit in the New Energy Vehicles and Xiaomi Auto Setting

As a product category characterized by high involvement, advanced technology, and elevated uncertainty, new energy vehicles (NEVs) entail purchase decision processes that involve complex cognitive evaluation, affective experience, and assessment of social meaning. Consumers attend not only to functional performance and safety attributes but also to the technological philosophy, value orientation, and lifestyle symbolism conveyed by the brand. Compared with traditional consumer goods, purchase intention in the NEV context is therefore more likely to be jointly shaped by perceived value, brand identification, and experiential factors.

This pattern is particularly salient in the context of Xiaomi Auto. Through sustained technology-oriented narratives, ecosystem integration, and a highly participatory user culture, Xiaomi has constructed a continuous, multi-touchpoint brand experience system. This system enables consumers to develop relatively clear value judgments and brand attitudes even prior to actual product usage. Such ecosystem-based brand experience influences consumers' perceptions of product functionality and price while simultaneously strengthening psychological connections with the brand at emotional and identity levels.

Against this backdrop, conceptualizing brand experience as a key antecedent of perceived value and brand identification, and further examining how these psychological variables influence purchase intention, aligns closely with the characteristics of NEV purchase decision-making and with the brand logic underlying Xiaomi Auto. Accordingly, positioning purchase intention as the final behavioral outcome variable in the present study is theoretically coherent and contextually appropriate, offering strong explanatory relevance at both conceptual and situational levels.

2.6 Theoretical Model and Research Hypotheses

2.6.1 Rationale for Theoretical Model Construction

The Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework provides a systematic theoretical lens for examining the relationship between consumers' psychological processing and behavioral responses. Originally proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), the model emphasizes that external stimuli do not elicit behavior directly. Instead, behavioral responses emerge through individuals' internal cognitive and affective processing. Within consumer behavior and marketing research, the S–O–R framework

has been widely applied to explain how brand cues, environmental experiences, and communication stimuli shape consumers' psychological states and subsequent behavioral intentions (Alam & Noor, 2020). It is particularly well suited to analyzing the effects of experiential stimuli in complex consumption contexts.

In the context of new energy vehicles (NEVs), which are characterized by high involvement, technological complexity, and extended decision cycles, consumers are required to form integrated judgments based on multiple sources of information and experiential cues. Behavioral responses in such settings rely heavily on the processing and integration of internal psychological mechanisms. Introducing the S–O–R framework into NEV consumption research therefore facilitates a systematic examination of how brand experience influences purchase intention through consumers' cognitive evaluations and affective responses.

Within the S–O–R framework, this study conceptualizes the brand experience of Xiaomi Auto as the stimulus component. Specifically, brand experience derives from consumers' perceptions of multiple experiential cues encountered during brand contact, including product design and visual presentation, technological narratives and brand communication content, interactive interfaces and digital experience environments, as well as overall impressions formed through test drives or information exposure. These stimuli simultaneously activate consumers' sensory responses, emotional experiences, and cognitive processing, thereby constituting critical external inputs shaping subsequent psychological judgments.

It is important to note that brand experience in this study is not modeled as a set of independent dimensions but is treated as a higher-order, integrative construct. Drawing on the framework proposed by Brakus et al. (2009), sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral experiences are conceptualized as four first-order dimensions that collectively reflect consumers' overall brand experience. In actual consumption contexts, these experiential dimensions do not operate in isolation but interact and overlap to form a holistic perception of the brand. Accordingly, in the present theoretical model, brand experience is incorporated into the S–O–R framework as a unified stimulus variable represented by multiple experiential components, allowing for a more accurate representation of consumers' overall experience perceptions in the NEV context.

At the organism level, perceived value and brand identification are selected as the core variables representing consumers' internal psychological processing mechanisms. Perceived value captures consumers' subjective evaluations formed through the integrated assessment of product functionality, quality, price, and emotional gratification, and primarily reflects a cognitive evaluative process (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Brand identification, in contrast, emphasizes the extent to which consumers perceive the brand as an extension of their self-concept, reflecting internal connections related to emotional attachment, value resonance, and social identity (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Together, these variables represent two distinct but complementary pathways—cognitive evaluation and identity-based affiliation—through which brand experience may influence behavioral intentions.

At the response level, purchase intention is adopted as the final behavioral outcome variable, capturing consumers' behavioral tendencies following experiential stimuli and internal psychological processing. Given the high involvement and uncertainty associated with NEV purchases, consumers' purchase intentions are typically grounded in systematic value judgments and affective identification. This characteristic further underscores the explanatory relevance and contextual suitability of the S–O–R framework in this research setting.

In summary, grounded in S–O–R theory, this study develops an integrative research model encompassing brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention. Within this model, brand experience functions as a holistic stimulus that directly and indirectly influences purchase intention through consumers' value evaluation and identity-based psychological mechanisms. The proposed theoretical model provides a structured representation of the psychological decision-making process underlying experience-driven consumption in the NEV context. The structure of the theoretical model is presented in Figure 2.1.

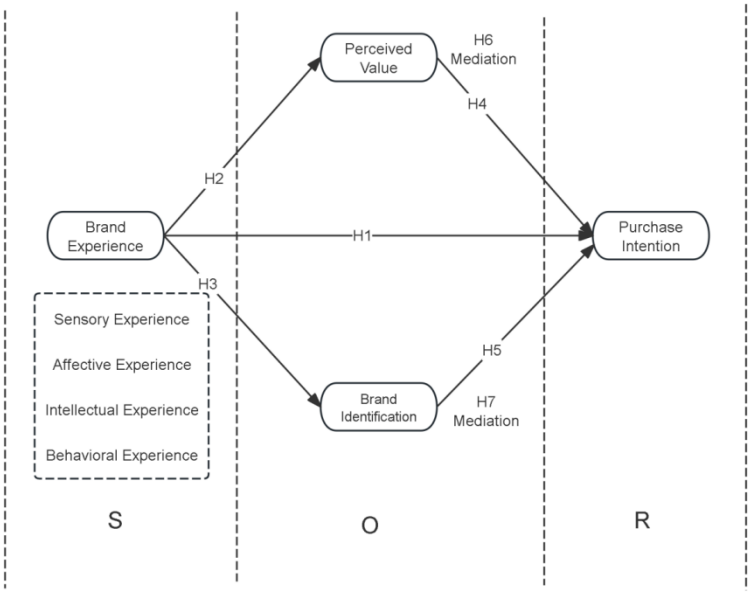


Figure 2. 1 Proposed Research Model and Hypotheses

2.6.2 Research Hypotheses

(1) Stimulus (S): Direct Effects of Brand Experience on Key Variables

Within the S–O–R framework, brand experience (BE) is conceptualized as an external stimulus perceived and integrated by consumers through ongoing interactions with a brand. Prior research consistently suggests that BE is not a single sensory or emotional reaction but an integrated psychological perception composed of sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral components. As such, BE functions as a comprehensive stimulus that exerts substantial influence on consumer attitudes and behavioral responses (Brakus et al., 2009).

A large body of empirical evidence indicates that positive BE significantly enhances consumers' overall product evaluations and emotional responses, thereby strengthening their purchase intention (PI) (Zhuo et al., 2022; Sang et al., 2025). From a value assessment perspective, BE contributes not only to hedonic value perceptions but also reinforces evaluations of functional and utilitarian value, both of which constitute core components of perceived value (PV) (Bae, 2022). Moreover, elements such as brand visual presentation, interactive interfaces, and experiential contexts have been shown to improve consumers' cognitive processing, leading to more favorable overall value assessments and exerting direct or indirect effects on PI (Liu et al., 2025).

From a consumer–brand relationship perspective, BE also serves as a foundational driver of relationship deepening. Prior studies indicate that consistent and sustained BE strengthens emotional connections and cognitive congruence between consumers and brands, facilitating the development of more stable brand attitudes and long-term relationships (Sahin et al., 2024). In technology-related consumption contexts, BE has been found to significantly influence PV, PI, and loyalty-related outcomes (Boozary et al., 2024). Further evidence suggests that brand identification (BI), as a key psychological mechanism of consumer identity construction, is positively shaped by BE and plays a critical role in the formation of repurchase intentions (Acar et al., 2024).

Taken together, these findings suggest that in the context of Xiaomi Auto —characterized by high involvement, technological complexity, and strong experiential orientation—BE, as an integrated stimulus, is likely to exert both direct effects on PI and indirect effects through internal psychological mechanisms such as PV and BI. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

H2: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on perceived value toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

H3: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on brand identification toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

(2) Organism (O): Effects of Perceived Value and Brand Identification on Purchase Intention

Within the S–O–R model, the organism level refers to consumers' internal psychological processing activated by external stimuli. Perceived value and brand identification represent two core psychological mechanisms, corresponding to the cognitive evaluation pathway and the identity-based pathway, respectively, and both play critical roles in the formation of purchase intention.

Perceived value reflects consumers' subjective evaluations derived from weighing perceived benefits against perceived costs and is widely regarded as one of the most stable predictors of purchase intention. Extensive empirical research has demonstrated that higher levels of PV significantly enhance PI, particularly in high-involvement products and digital consumption contexts (Hu, 2024). Further studies indicate that PV not only

directly influences PI but may also function as a mediating mechanism between brand-related stimuli and behavioral responses, thereby driving consumer decision-making (Gu et al., 2025).

Brand identification emphasizes the psychological process through which consumers incorporate a brand into their self-concept, with emotional attachment and identity congruence at its core. Prior research shows that stronger BI significantly increases brand engagement, loyalty, and purchase propensity (Aziz & Ahmed, 2023; Rather et al., 2022). In information-intensive contexts such as high-technology products and NEVs, BI has been found to further promote PI by strengthening emotional attachment and trust (Khan et al., 2021).

Based on these findings and the theoretical framework of the present study, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Perceived value has a significant positive effect on purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

H5: Brand identification has a significant positive effect on purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

(3) Response (R): Mediating Pathways

According to S–O–R theory, external stimuli do not translate directly into behavioral responses but operate through mediating internal psychological processes. In branding contexts, positive BE enhances consumers' functional evaluations, emotional responses, and perceptions of social meaning, thereby increasing PV and ultimately promoting PI (Iglesias et al., 2011; Gu et al., 2025).

At the same time, BE may strengthen consumers' sense of identity affiliation and psychological congruence with the brand, facilitating the formation of BI. Prior studies consistently indicate that the emotional and identity-based connections embedded in BI constitute a critical psychological foundation for the development of stable purchase tendencies (Rather et al., 2022; Aziz & Ahmed, 2023). Accordingly, in the relationship between BE and PI, PV and BI may function as parallel mediators representing cognitive and affective pathways, respectively.

On this basis, the following mediation hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Perceived value mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

H7: Brand identification mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Participants

The target population of this study consists of individuals aged 18 and above in the Chengdu area who exhibit potential purchase intention toward new energy vehicles (NEVs). Young adults were selected as the primary research group because they demonstrate relatively high activity levels in mobility choices, acceptance of technological products, and acquisition of brand-related information. This group is more frequently exposed to NEV-related information and experiential stimuli, which enables them to form clearer perceptions of brand experience (BE) and more structured value judgments.

Chengdu was chosen as the survey location for two main reasons. First, the city has achieved a relatively advanced level of NEV promotion, with dense exposure to public transportation electrification, electric mobility services, commercial exhibitions, and brand communication scenarios. As a result, young consumers in Chengdu are consistently immersed in diversified NEV-related information environments during their daily lives and studies. Second, Chengdu has made rapid progress in areas such as intelligent connected vehicle applications and charging and battery-swapping infrastructure, providing a realistic contextual foundation for potential consumers to develop stable brand cognition, emotional responses, and purchase intention.

Data collection was conducted using a combination of online and offline approaches. A total of 420 questionnaires were collected in the formal survey. After excluding invalid responses, 396 valid questionnaires were retained for analysis. In addition, prior to the formal survey, a pilot test involving 150 questionnaires was conducted to examine the structural adequacy of the measurement scales and the clarity of item wording, thereby providing a methodological basis for the formal data collection. Detailed sample characteristics are reported in Chapter 4.

3.2 Sampling Method and Planned Sample Size

With respect to sampling design, this study adopted a non-probability sampling strategy, primarily relying on convenience sampling supplemented by snowball sampling. This approach is widely used in consumer behavior and branding research, particularly in contexts where the research population consists of potential consumers and where a complete sampling frame is unavailable. In practice, questionnaires were distributed to eligible respondents through universities, enterprises, and commercial venues in Chengdu, as well as through online social platforms. Respondents were encouraged to share the questionnaire with peers who also expressed interest in or attention to NEVs, thereby gradually expanding the sample size and enhancing sample diversity.

Although non-probability sampling entails certain limitations in terms of statistical generalization, it offers a pragmatic balance between feasibility and coverage under conditions where potential NEV consumers are widely dispersed and brand exposure contexts are highly heterogeneous. More importantly, the primary focus of this study lies in examining structural relationships among latent variables and their underlying mechanisms rather than estimating population parameters. From a methodological perspective, this sampling strategy is therefore considered acceptable in structural equation modeling (SEM) research.

Sample size planning was guided by established requirements for SEM analysis. The formal questionnaire included four latent variables—brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention—measured by a total of 25 items. According to commonly cited SEM guidelines, the sample size should be approximately 10–15 times the number of measurement items, yielding a minimum requirement of about 250–375 cases. Considering that this study involves mediation effect testing, which imposes higher demands on parameter stability and statistical power, the target effective sample size was set at no fewer than 400 cases.

In the actual data collection process, 420 questionnaires were distributed. After data cleaning and quality screening, 396 valid responses were retained, resulting in an effective response rate of 94.29%. This sample size closely approximates the planned target and substantially exceeds the conventional minimum requirements for SEM, thereby satisfying the statistical demands of structural model estimation and mediation effect analysis.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis procedure followed standard practices for SEM-based research and was implemented in three main stages: questionnaire development and pilot testing, formal data collection, and model analysis.

First, based on the literature review and theoretical model development, established measurement scales from prior domestic and international studies were selected. These scales were translated and contextually adapted to fit the specific consumption context of NEVs and Xiaomi Auto, resulting in an initial version of the questionnaire. A pilot test involving 150 respondents was then conducted to preliminarily assess internal consistency, structural adequacy, and item clarity. Based on the pilot results, minor revisions were made to item wording, item order, and overall logical structure, leading to the finalized questionnaire used in the formal survey.

During the formal data collection stage, questionnaires were administered both online and offline in the Chengdu area. To ensure data quality, all returned questionnaires were subjected to rigorous screening procedures, including attention checks, consistency checks for reverse-coded items, response time evaluation, and missing value inspection. After data cleaning, 396 valid responses were retained and used as the basis for subsequent statistical analyses and model estimation.

For data analysis, SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0 were employed. Descriptive statistical analysis was first conducted to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample. Reliability analysis was then performed using Cronbach'sαcoefficients to assess internal consistency of the measurement scales. The suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated using the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity. On this basis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted in AMOS to assess the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the latent variables and to examine the overall fit of the measurement model.

After establishing satisfactory reliability and validity of the measurement model, a structural equation model was constructed to test the proposed research hypotheses. In addition, the bootstrap method was applied to examine the mediation effects of perceived value and brand identification in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention. Through this analytical process, the study systematically uncovers the internal psychological mechanisms through which brand experience influences consumers' purchase intention.

3.4 Research Instruments

This study employed a questionnaire survey as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire design was based on well-established measurement scales from prior domestic and international research and followed the translation–back-translation procedure proposed by Brislin (1970) to ensure semantic accuracy and cross-contextual equivalence. Given that new energy vehicles (NEVs) represent high-involvement decision products, consumers tend to rely on clear and concrete psychological cues when evaluating brand experience, value perceptions, and brand-related attitudes. Accordingly, without altering the original theoretical structure of the scales, selected items were contextually adapted to better reflect the specific characteristics of Xiaomi Auto in terms of visual design, technological communication, product ecosystem, and brand dissemination.

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section collected respondents' demographic and background information, including gender, age, educational attainment, occupation, income level, experience with NEVs, and level of familiarity with Xiaomi Auto. These variables were used to describe the sample profile and were included as control variables in subsequent analyses. The second section measured the core constructs of the study, encompassing brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI). This section contained a total of 25 measurement items. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with higher scores indicating higher levels of the corresponding construct.

For the measurement of the core constructs, this study adopted the four-dimensional structure of brand experience proposed by Brakus et al. (2009) as the theoretical foundation. Established scales for perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention were also employed, with minor semantic adjustments to ensure contextual alignment with NEVs and the Xiaomi Auto brand. The sources, structures, and specific measurement items of each scale are described in detail below.

3.4.1 Brand Experience Scale

Brand experience refers to consumers' sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses elicited through encounters with brand-related stimuli (Brakus et al., 2009). In light of the technological attributes of NEVs and the ecosystem-based characteristics

of Xiaomi Auto, this study adopted the four-dimensional brand experience structure proposed by Brakus et al., comprising sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience, and behavioral experience. Each dimension was measured with three items, resulting in a total of 12 items.

In the measurement model specification, brand experience was treated as a second-order latent construct reflected by the four first-order dimensions, capturing consumers' overall perception of BE toward Xiaomi Auto. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The specific measurement items are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1 Brand Experience Scale

Dimension	Item Code	Measurement Item
Sensory Experience	BE1	The Xiaomi Auto brand appeals to my senses.
	BE2	The Xiaomi Auto brand creates strong visual impressions for me.
	BE3	The design elements of the Xiaomi Auto brand are distinctive.
Affective Experience	BE4	The Xiaomi Auto brand makes me feel pleased.
	BE5	The Xiaomi Auto brand influences my emotions.
	BE6	When I encounter the Xiaomi Auto brand, I often experience emotional reactions.
Intellectual Experience	BE7	The Xiaomi Auto brand makes me think.
	BE8	The Xiaomi Auto brand stimulates my curiosity.
	BE9	The Xiaomi Auto brand evokes my imagination and thinking.
Behavioral Experience	BE10	The Xiaomi Auto brand motivates me to take action.
	BE11	The Xiaomi Auto brand influences my daily behavior.
	BE12	Exposure to Xiaomi Auto affects some of my behavioral choices in everyday life.

3.4.2 Perceived Value Scale

Perceived value (PV) is commonly defined as consumers' overall subjective evaluation formed through a comprehensive trade-off between the benefits obtained from a product or service and the costs incurred (Zeithaml, 1988). In prior research, PV has been measured either as a multidimensional construct or as a unidimensional construct reflecting overall value assessment. Among these approaches, the unidimensional perceived value scale proposed by Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991), grounded in price perception and value evaluation models, emphasizes consumers' integrated judgments of value for money, acceptability, and overall worth. This scale has been widely applied in studies of durable goods, including automobiles and electronic products.

Given that purchase decisions for new energy vehicles (NEVs) place greater emphasis on consumers' holistic value judgments rather than isolated functional attributes, this study adopts the perceived value scale developed by Dodds et al. (1991). The scale was translated with semantic equivalence and contextually adapted to the NEV consumption setting, resulting in five measurement items. All items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of overall perceived value toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs. The specific measurement items are presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3. 2 Perceived Value Scale

Item Code	Measurement Item
PV1	Overall, Xiaomi Auto NEVs offer good value for the price.
PV2	Compared with their cost, Xiaomi Auto NEVs provide good overall value.
PV3	Purchasing a Xiaomi Auto NEV would be a worthwhile choice for me.
PV4	Considering what I would receive, the price of Xiaomi Auto NEVs is acceptable.
PV5	Overall, I believe Xiaomi Auto NEVs are a good deal.

Perceived value is commonly defined as consumers' overall subjective evaluation formed through a comprehensive trade-off between the benefits derived from a product or service and the costs incurred (Zeithaml, 1988). Prior research has conceptualized perceived value either as a multidimensional construct or as a unidimensional construct

capturing an overall value assessment. Among these approaches, the unidimensional perceived value scale proposed by Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991), grounded in price perception and value evaluation models, emphasizes consumers' integrated judgments of value for money, acceptability, and overall worth, and has been widely applied in studies of durable goods such as automobiles and electronic products.

3.4.3 Brand Identification Scale

Brand identification (BI) refers to the degree of psychological belonging and perceived oneness that consumers experience with a brand, reflecting the congruence between consumers' self-concept and the brand image and the values it represents (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). Drawing on the Consumer Brand Identification (CBI) framework proposed by Stokburger-Sauer et al., and informed by the empirical application developed by Tuškej et al. (2013), this study translated the relevant items with semantic equivalence and adapted them to the Xiaomi Auto NEV context, resulting in four measurement items.

The scale focuses on consumers' perceptions of self–brand congruence and was measured using a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating a higher level of brand identification with Xiaomi Auto. The specific measurement items are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3. 3 Brand Identification Scale

Variable	Item Code	Measurement Item
Brand Identification	BI1	I feel that the brand image of Xiaomi Auto is consistent with my self-image.
	BI2	I feel that people who purchase Xiaomi Auto are similar to me.
	BI3	Purchasing Xiaomi Auto products helps me express my personality.
	BI4	I feel a strong sense of connection with the Xiaomi Auto brand.

3.4.4 Purchase Intention Scale

Purchase intention (PI) is commonly defined as consumers' subjective likelihood and behavioral tendency to purchase a particular product in a given context (Dodds et al.,

1991; Spears & Singh, 2004). Building on the purchase likelihood framework proposed by Dodds et al. (1991) and the brand purchase intention scale developed by Spears and Singh (2004), this study translated the relevant items with semantic equivalence and adapted them to the NEV consumption context, resulting in four measurement items.

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating stronger intention to purchase Xiaomi Auto in the future. The specific measurement items are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3. 4 Brand Identification Scale

Variable	Item Code	Measurement Item
Purchase Intention	PI1	I intend to purchase Xiaomi Auto in the future.
	PI2	If I need a new energy vehicle, I would give priority to Xiaomi Auto.
	PI3	If conditions permit, I would purchase products from Xiaomi Auto.
	PI4	If friends ask for advice on purchasing new energy vehicles, I would recommend Xiaomi Auto.

3.5 Pilot Test

To ensure that the formal questionnaire met the research requirements in terms of structural design, item wording, and measurement reliability, a pilot test was conducted prior to the main survey. A total of 150 valid questionnaires were collected, all of which met the predefined inclusion criteria. Compared with pilot sample sizes of 30–50 suggested in some methodological guidelines (Hair et al., 2010), this study employed a larger pilot sample of 150 cases given the relatively large number of items and the complexity of the latent variable structure. The expanded pilot sample enhanced the stability of reliability estimates and improved the testability of the underlying factor structure. A larger pilot sample also contributed to more robust Cronbach's α estimates and a more representative inter-item correlation matrix, thereby providing a stronger empirical basis for subsequent factor structure validation.

During the pilot phase, preliminary analyses were conducted on all items measuring the four latent constructs: brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI). The primary objectives of the pilot test were to assess respondents' comprehension of item semantics, evaluate internal consistency of the scales, and preliminarily examine the stability of the latent structure across constructs. It should be noted that, because BE was conceptualized in this study as a second-order latent construct composed of sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral experiences, the pilot test focused primarily on overall scale reliability and item comprehensibility. The specific dimensional structure and the adequacy of the measurement model were examined in subsequent confirmatory factor analysis. The pilot results provided an essential basis for instrument refinement, minor item adjustments, and model validation in the formal survey stage.

3.5.1 Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency of the pilot questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's α coefficients. Methodological standards generally consider α values above 0.70 to indicate acceptable reliability, while values exceeding 0.80 suggest good internal consistency (Hair et al., 2019). The reliability results for the four core constructs are reported in Table 3.5

Table 3. 5 Reliability Results from the Pilot Test

Study Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's α
Brand Experience (BE)	12	0.890
Perceived Value (PV)	5	0.877
Brand Identification (BI)	4	0.881
Purchase Intention (PI)	4	0.894

The results indicate that the BE scale achieved a Cronbach's α of 0.890, reflecting a high degree of internal consistency among its items. The PV scale yielded an α of 0.877, also indicating good reliability. The BI scale demonstrated an α of 0.881, suggesting a stable internal structure, while the PI scale produced the highest α value at 0.894, further confirming the robustness of its measurement quality. Overall, all four

constructs exhibited Cronbach's α coefficients well above the conventional threshold of 0.70, indicating that the questionnaire demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency at the pilot stage and was suitable for validity assessment and subsequent formal data collection.



CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

4.1.1 Sample Profile

A total of 396 valid responses were retained for analysis. To ensure clarity in sample composition and to support subsequent statistical procedures, descriptive statistics were first conducted on respondents' demographic characteristics. The variables included gender, age, educational attainment, monthly income, intention to purchase new energy vehicles (NEVs) within the next year, and ownership of Xiaomi ecosystem products. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1 Descriptive Statistics of Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	194	49.0
	Female	202	51.0
Age	18–25	87	21.9
	26–35	123	31.1
	36–45	121	30.6
	46–55	36	9.1
	56 and above	29	7.3
Education	High school or below	54	13.6
	High school/technical secondary	63	15.9
	Associate degree	97	24.5
	Bachelor's degree	134	33.8
	Master's degree or above	48	12.1

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Sample Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Monthly income (RMB)	Below 3,000	116	29.3
	3,000–4,999	22	5.6
	5,000–7,999	53	13.4
	8,000–11,999	127	32.1
	12,000 and above	78	19.7
Intention to purchase NEVs within one year	Yes	217	54.8
	No	64	16.2
	Uncertain	115	29.0
Ownership of Xiaomi ecosystem products	Yes	249	62.9
	No	147	37.1
Total		396	100

Regarding age, respondents were primarily concentrated in the 26–35 (31.1%) and 36–45 (30.6%) age groups, followed by those aged 18–25 (21.9%). Overall, the sample consisted mainly of young and middle-aged adults, a group that typically exhibits relatively stable income expectations and strong decision-making capacity in consumption. This age composition aligns closely with the target population of potential NEV consumers.

In terms of gender distribution, males accounted for 49.0% of the sample and females for 51.0%, indicating a balanced gender structure that helps reduce potential bias in model estimation attributable to gender differences.

With respect to educational attainment, 45.9% of respondents held a bachelor's degree or higher, including 33.8% with a bachelor's degree and 12.1% with a master's degree or above. An additional 24.5% had an associate degree. The generally high educational level of the sample is conducive to accurate comprehension of questionnaire items and informed judgments on abstract psychological constructs, thereby enhancing the reliability of the measurement data.

Monthly income was mainly distributed across the 8,000–11,999 RMB range (32.1%) and below 3,000 RMB (29.3%), indicating notable variation in income levels within the sample. This diversity reflects the heterogeneous economic stages of potential NEV consumers in the market.

In terms of purchase intention, 54.8% of respondents reported an intention to purchase NEVs within the next year, while 29.0% expressed uncertainty and 16.2% indicated no current intention to purchase. These figures suggest substantial market attention and latent demand for NEVs within the sample.

Additionally, 62.9% of respondents reported owning Xiaomi ecosystem products, indicating strong brand penetration and ecosystem engagement among participants. This provides a relevant contextual basis for examining the relationships among brand experience (BE), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI).

Overall, the sample demonstrates a reasonable and diverse demographic structure, providing a solid empirical foundation for subsequent structural equation modeling analyses.

4.1.2 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

To further examine respondents' overall evaluations of the four latent variables —brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI)—descriptive statistics were conducted for all measurement items, including means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis. The results are reported in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2 Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items

Item	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
BE1	1	5	3.35	1.114	-0.229	-0.905
BE2	1	5	3.45	1.161	-0.347	-0.907
BE3	1	5	3.40	1.137	-0.314	-0.851
BE4	1	5	3.45	1.127	-0.262	-0.980
BE5	1	5	3.41	1.147	-0.308	-0.869
BE6	1	5	3.42	1.156	-0.398	-0.755
BE7	1	5	3.38	1.097	-0.193	-0.927
BE8	1	5	3.39	1.127	-0.307	-0.855
BE9	1	5	3.34	1.170	-0.220	-0.957
BE10	1	5	3.36	1.160	-0.370	-0.699
BE11	1	5	3.32	1.202	-0.291	-0.921

Table 4.2 (Continued)

Item	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
BE12	1	5	3.36	1.204	-0.319	-0.939
PV1	1	5	3.38	1.124	-0.244	-0.944
PV2	1	5	3.25	1.111	-0.089	-0.988
PV3	1	5	3.35	1.155	-0.215	-1.028
PV4	1	5	3.34	1.072	-0.193	-0.807
PV5	1	5	3.34	1.107	-0.210	-0.892
BI1	1	5	3.29	1.147	-0.116	-1.041
BI2	1	5	3.43	1.113	-0.225	-0.980
BI3	1	5	3.40	1.118	-0.244	-0.879
BI4	1	5	3.40	1.113	-0.171	-0.999
PI1	1	5	3.39	1.172	-0.268	-1.026
PI2	1	5	3.39	1.161	-0.397	-0.831
PI3	1	5	3.40	1.078	-0.359	-0.739
PI4	1	5	3.33	1.112	-0.209	-0.995

In terms of dispersion, standard deviations were primarily distributed between 1.07 and 1.20, indicating a moderate degree of variability in respondents' perceptions and attitudes. This variability reflects heterogeneity in consumer evaluations of NEVs, particularly Xiaomi Auto, and supports the effective estimation of latent variable relationships in structural equation modeling.

Across all items, mean values ranged from 3.25 to 3.45, slightly above the theoretical midpoint of the five-point scale. This pattern suggests that respondents held generally positive evaluations of Xiaomi Auto in terms of brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention. Such a distribution provides an appropriate empirical basis for subsequent structural analyses of relationships among the variables.

Regarding distributional properties, all items exhibited negative skewness values, ranging from −0.089 to −0.398, indicating a slight left-skewed distribution with a greater concentration of higher evaluations. Kurtosis values ranged from −1.041 to −0.699, suggesting relatively flat distributions without pronounced peaks or heavy tails (Masatlioglu et al., 2023).

Overall, the measurement items demonstrated stable patterns in central tendency, dispersion, and distributional form, with no substantial deviations from common statistical assumptions. These characteristics indicate that the data are suitable for subsequent confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling (SEM).

4.1.3 Correlation Analysis Among Variables

To further examine the linear associations among the study variables, Pearson bivariate correlation analyses were conducted for brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI). The results are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4. 3 Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

Variable	BE_ mean	PV_ mean	BI_ mean	PI_ mean
BE_ mean	1			
PV_ mean	0.517**	1		
BI_ mean	0.444**	0.468**	1	
PI_ mean	0.501**	0.484**	0.448**	1

Note: ** $p < 0.01$.

As shown in Table 4.3, brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention were all significantly and positively correlated, with coefficients ranging from 0.444 to 0.517. These correlations fall within a moderate range, indicating meaningful associations among the latent variables while remaining consistent with theoretical expectations.

Specifically, brand experience exhibited a relatively strong positive correlation with perceived value ($r = 0.517$), suggesting that more favorable evaluations of brand experience were associated with higher levels of value perception. Brand experience was also positively correlated with brand identification ($r = 0.444$) and purchase intention ($r = 0.501$), indicating parallel variation between experiential evaluations and consumers' psychological identification and behavioral intentions.

In addition, perceived value showed significant positive correlations with brand identification ($r = 0.468$) and purchase intention ($r = 0.484$), while brand identification was positively related to purchase intention ($r = 0.448$). These results further demonstrate stable statistical associations between consumers' value judgments, identity-related evaluations, and behavioral intentions.

Overall, none of the correlations reached excessively high levels, and no evidence of multicollinearity was observed. The correlation results suggest that the variables are related yet empirically distinguishable, providing a necessary statistical foundation for subsequent confirmatory factor analysis and hypothesis testing within the structural equation modeling framework.

4.1.4 Assessment of Common Method Bias

Because all variables in this study were collected through self-reported questionnaires administered at a single point in time, the data may be subject to the risk of common method bias (CMB), which could artificially inflate the observed relationships among variables. Although procedural remedies were implemented during questionnaire design—such as anonymous participation and randomization of item order to mitigate this risk, a statistical assessment was conducted to further ensure the rigor of the empirical results.

Specifically, Harman's single-factor test was employed. All measurement items associated with the core latent variables were entered into an exploratory factor analysis without rotation, and the variance explained by the first unrotated factor was examined. The results indicated that five factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, and the first factor accounted for 38.42% of the total variance, which is below the commonly accepted threshold of 40%.

This finding suggests that no single factor dominates the variance structure of the data and that common method bias is unlikely to pose a serious threat in this study. Accordingly, the data quality is considered adequate for subsequent hypothesis testing and structural equation modeling analyses (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

4.2 Reliability Analysis

To assess the internal consistency of the measurement instruments used in the formal survey, reliability analyses were conducted for the four latent variables—brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI). Cronbach's alpha coefficients, corrected item–total correlations (CITC), and Cronbach's alpha values if an item were deleted were computed for each scale. The results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. 4 Reliability Analysis of Measurement Scales

Construct	Item	Initial CITC	Cronbach's α if Item Deleted	R^2	Cronbach's α
Brand Experience (BE)	BE1	0.335	0.925	0.642	0.926
	BE2	0.351	0.925	0.556	
	BE3	0.304	0.926	0.642	
	BE4	0.336	0.925	0.643	
	BE5	0.312	0.926	0.556	
	BE6	0.33	0.925	0.642	
	BE7	0.358	0.924	0.521	
	BE8	0.327	0.925	0.521	
	BE9	0.299	0.926	0.629	
	BE10	0.37	0.924	0.569	
	BE11	0.323	0.925	0.758	
	BE12	0.319	0.926	0.624	
Perceived Value (PV)	PV1	0.366	0.925	0.618	0.926
	PV2	0.172	0.927	0.592	
	PV3	0.71	0.922	0.595	
	PV4	0.21	0.927	0.554	
	PV5	0.24	0.926	0.521	
Brand Identification (BI)	BI1	0.335	0.925	0.581	0.926
	BI2	0.41	0.924	0.648	
	BI3	0.425	0.924	0.592	
	BI4	0.398	0.924	0.593	
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.38	0.925	0.651	0.926
	PI2	0.355	0.925	0.684	
	PI3	0.405	0.924	0.599	
	PI4	0.389	0.924	0.624	

At the scale level, all four constructs exhibited Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.926, which substantially exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). This indicates a high degree of internal consistency across the measurement instruments and suggests stable response patterns among the items within each latent variable.

For the BE scale, the CITC values of the 12 items ranged from 0.299 to 0.370, all of which meet acceptable standards, indicating consistent associations between individual items and the overall scale score. Moreover, the Cronbach's alpha values obtained after deleting any single item remained within a narrow range (0.924–0.926), showing no meaningful improvement in reliability. This pattern suggests that each item contributes positively to the overall scale and that the structure of the BE scale is robust, with no justification for item removal.

Within the PV scale, the five items yielded CITC values ranging from 0.172 to 0.710. Although PV3 demonstrated the strongest item–total correlation and PV2 and PV4 showed relatively lower CITC values, removing these items did not lead to an increase in overall reliability, as the resulting Cronbach's alpha values remained between 0.922 and 0.927. Given the theoretical emphasis on the holistic nature of perceived value and the need to preserve content validity, all PV items were retained.

The BI and PI scales also demonstrated satisfactory reliability. CITC values for BI items ranged from 0.335 to 0.425, while those for PI items ranged from 0.355 to 0.405, all exceeding recommended thresholds. In both cases, deleting any item did not increase the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, further confirming the internal coherence and stability of these scales.

In addition, the R^2 values reported in Table 10 indicate the proportion of variance in each item explained by its corresponding latent construct. These values ranged from 0.521 to 0.758, suggesting that the items provide adequate representation of their intended constructs. This finding also offers preliminary support for the subsequent evaluation of the measurement model in confirmatory factor analysis.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the BE, PV, BI, and PI scales used in the formal survey exhibit strong internal consistency and stable item performance. No item deletion was warranted, and the measurement instruments show satisfactory reliability, providing a solid foundation for subsequent validity assessment, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling.

4.3 Validity Assessment

After establishing satisfactory internal consistency, the study further assessed the suitability of the measurement items for factor analysis by conducting the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity for each latent construct—brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI). Given that these constructs are theoretically distinct and differ in the number of measurement items, the tests were performed separately for each construct to ensure a more precise evaluation of factorability. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 4. 5 KMO and Bartlett's Tests for Measurement Scales

Statistic	BE	PV	BI	PI
KMO measure of sampling adequacy	0.885	0.895	0.896	0.892
Bartlett's test (Approx. χ^2)	2334.37	2193.17	1035.92	1124.53
Degrees of freedom	66	10	6	6
Significance (p)	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001

The KMO values for BE (0.885), PV (0.895), BI (0.896), and PI (0.892) all exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating good to very good sampling adequacy and compact correlation structures among items (Hair et al., 2019). These results suggest that the data are appropriate for latent factor extraction.

Bartlett's tests of sphericity are statistically significant for all four constructs ($p < 0.001$), rejecting the null hypothesis that the correlation matrices are identity matrices. This confirms the presence of sufficient inter-item correlations to support factor analysis.

Overall, the KMO and Bartlett's test results demonstrate that the item structures of all latent variables exhibit adequate factorability, providing the necessary statistical foundation for subsequent confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and further assessments of convergent and discriminant validity.

4.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

4.4.1 Measurement Model and Model Fit

To examine whether the measurement structures of brand experience (BE), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI) are consistent with the theoretical specifications, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using AMOS 24.0 based on the formal sample. The CFA was employed to assess both the structural validity of the measurement model and its overall goodness of fit. Figure 2 presents the measurement model, illustrating the relationships among latent constructs, dimensional factors, and observed indicators, along with the standardized factor loadings for each item.

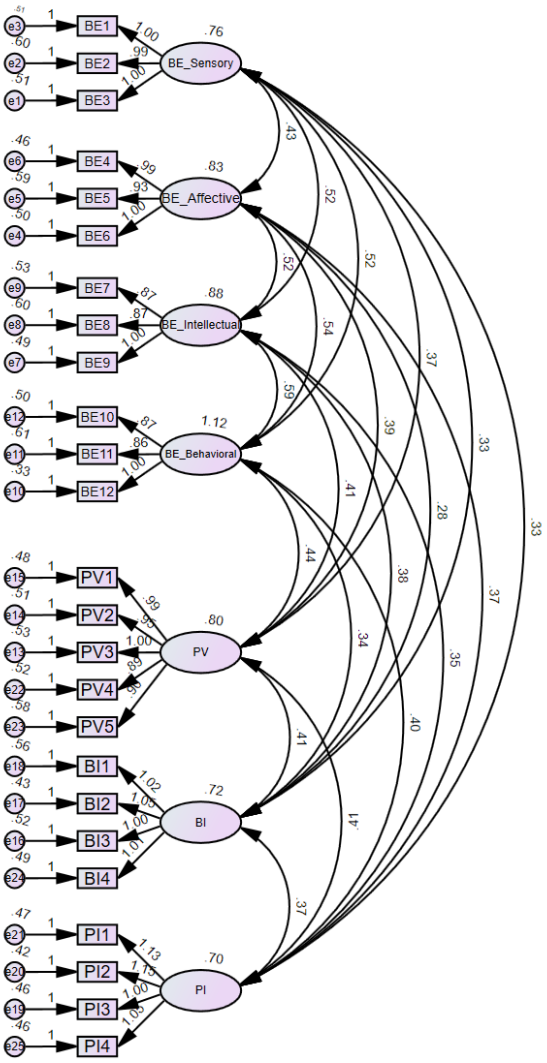


Figure 4. 1 Measurement Model

In the specified measurement model, brand experience (BE) was conceptualized as a second-order latent construct composed of four first-order dimensions: sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience, and behavioral experience. Each first-order dimension was measured by three observed indicators, with sensory experience corresponding to BE1–BE3, affective experience to BE4–BE6, intellectual experience to BE7–BE9, and behavioral experience to BE10–BE12, resulting in a total of twelve observed indicators for BE. Perceived value (PV) was measured using five observed items (PV1–PV5), while brand identification (BI) and purchase intention (PI) were each measured by four observed items (BI1–BI4 and PI1–PI4, respectively). In the model, observed variables were specified to load on their corresponding first-order latent constructs or directly on latent constructs, and the second-order construct BE was modeled with unidirectional paths to its four first-order dimensions to represent the hierarchical structure of brand experience.

In addition, covariances were specified among the latent constructs to capture their interrelationships and to account for shared variance at the construct level. Overall, the standardized factor loadings of the observed indicators on their respective constructs reached acceptable levels, indicating that the measurement items adequately represent the intended latent constructs and provide a reliable foundation for subsequent structural model testing.

Table 4. 6 Measurement Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Recommended criteria	< 3.00	< 0.08	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90
Model results	1.132	0.018	0.945	0.930	0.945	0.992	0.993

The overall fit results indicate that the measurement model demonstrates an excellent level of fit. As shown in Table 4.6, the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) is 1.132, well below the recommended threshold of 3.00, suggesting an appropriate balance between model complexity and sample data. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is 0.018, substantially lower than the conventional cutoff of 0.08, indicating minimal approximation error in reproducing the sample covariance matrix. All remaining fit indices also meet or exceed commonly accepted standards, including GFI = 0.945, AGFI = 0.930, NFI = 0.945, TLI = 0.992, and CFI = 0.993.

Taken together, these results demonstrate a high degree of consistency between the measurement model and the observed data, confirming that the latent structure of the research variables is well captured and providing a solid basis for subsequent structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis.

4.4.2 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed using standardized factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Established criteria suggest that standardized factor loadings should exceed 0.70, CR values should be greater than 0.70, and AVE values should be above 0.50 to indicate that latent constructs adequately explain the variance of their indicators (Hair et al., 2019).

The CFA results show that all observed indicators load significantly on their respective latent constructs ($p < 0.001$), with standardized loadings ranging from 0.724 to 0.879. All loadings surpass the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the items effectively represent their intended constructs and demonstrate satisfactory indicator reliability.

With respect to composite reliability, the CR values of all first-order latent constructs range from 0.80 to 0.87, exceeding the recommended criterion of 0.70 and indicating strong internal consistency. In addition, the AVE values for all constructs are greater than 0.50, suggesting that each latent construct explains more than half of the variance in its observed indicators. Together, these results confirm that convergent validity is acceptable across the measurement model.

It should be noted that in this study, brand experience (BE) is specified as a second-order latent construct composed of four first-order dimensions: sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral experience. Accordingly, the CR and AVE values reported in Table 4.7 primarily evaluate the convergent validity of the first-order BE dimensions as well as the other latent constructs. Further analysis indicates that the standardized loadings of the four first-order BE dimensions on the second-order BE construct range from 0.81 to 0.92 ($p < 0.001$). The second-order BE construct demonstrates an AVE of 0.68 and a CR of 0.89, indicating that the four dimensions reliably and effectively capture the underlying concept of brand experience. These results provide robust measurement support for treating brand experience as a second-order construct in subsequent structural equation modeling.

Overall, the measurement model exhibits strong convergent validity at the level of first-order latent constructs, with a high degree of indicator convergence, thereby establishing a reliable foundation for subsequent discriminant validity testing and structural path analysis.

Table 4. 7 Convergent Validity Assessment

Latent construct	Indicators	Standardized loadings	CR	AVE
Sensory brand experience	BE1–BE3	0.744–0.774	0.81	0.59
Affective brand experience	BE4–BE6	0.742–0.799	0.82	0.61
Intellectual brand experience	BE7–BE9	0.725–0.802	0.80	0.58
Behavioral brand experience	BE10–BE12	0.761–0.879	0.85	0.66
Perceived value	PV1–PV5	0.724–0.786	0.87	0.57
Brand identification	BI1–BI4	0.760–0.806	0.85	0.59
Purchase intention	PI1–PI4	0.776–0.827	0.86	0.61

4.4.3 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, which compares the square root of the AVE for each latent construct with its correlations with other constructs. Discriminant validity is supported when the square root of AVE exceeds the corresponding inter-construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4. 8 Discriminant Validity Assessment

Latent construct	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
1 Sensory brand experience	0.762						
2 Affective brand experience	0.538	0.781					
3 Intellectual brand experience	0.633	0.608	0.800				
4 Behavioral brand experience	0.566	0.560	0.596	0.748			
5 Perceived value	0.479	0.481	0.486	0.466	0.775		
6 Brand identification	0.444	0.367	0.471	0.374	0.541	0.768	
7 Purchase intention	0.455	0.483	0.453	0.450	0.556	0.517	0.787

Note: Diagonal elements represent the square roots of AVE; off-diagonal elements represent inter-construct correlations.

As shown in Table 4.8, the square root of AVE for each latent construct (diagonal values) is greater than the corresponding correlations with other constructs in the same row or column, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity. Although the four first-order dimensions of brand experience exhibit moderate correlations with one another, the square roots of their AVE values remain higher than the inter-dimension correlations, suggesting that these dimensions maintain clear conceptual boundaries while remaining theoretically related.

Given that brand experience (BE) is modeled as a second-order construct, discriminant validity was primarily assessed at the level of the first-order dimensions to verify their distinctiveness and their appropriateness as components of the higher-order construct. The results indicate that the four BE dimensions, as well as perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention, all meet the Fornell–Larcker criterion, demonstrating the absence of substantial conceptual overlap among the latent variables.

Moreover, the direction and magnitude of the correlations among constructs are consistent with theoretical expectations. Specifically, the dimensions of brand experience show positive associations with perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention, while perceived value and brand identification are also strongly related to purchase intention. These patterns further support the theoretical coherence of the proposed research model.

In summary, the measurement model demonstrates adequate discriminant validity at the first-order construct level, providing a reliable measurement foundation for incorporating the second-order brand experience construct and for testing the hypothesized structural relationships in subsequent analyses.

4.5 Structural Equation Modeling

After validating the measurement model and confirming that all latent variables exhibit satisfactory reliability and validity, a structural equation model (SEM) was constructed to examine the mechanisms through which brand experience (BE) influences purchase intention (PI) via perceived value (PV) and brand identification (BI). Building on the established measurement structure, the structural model specifies causal relationships among latent variables to test the proposed hypotheses and to clarify the underlying mechanisms linking brand experience to consumer purchase intention.

4.5.1 Overall Model Fit of the Structural Model

Following the successful confirmatory factor analysis, the structural model was developed using the same measurement framework. Direct paths were specified from brand experience (BE) to perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI), along with direct effects of perceived value and brand identification on purchase intention. Compared with the measurement model, the freely estimated correlations among latent variables were replaced by theoretically driven causal paths, such that the resulting model fit reflects the explanatory power of the hypothesized theoretical structure.

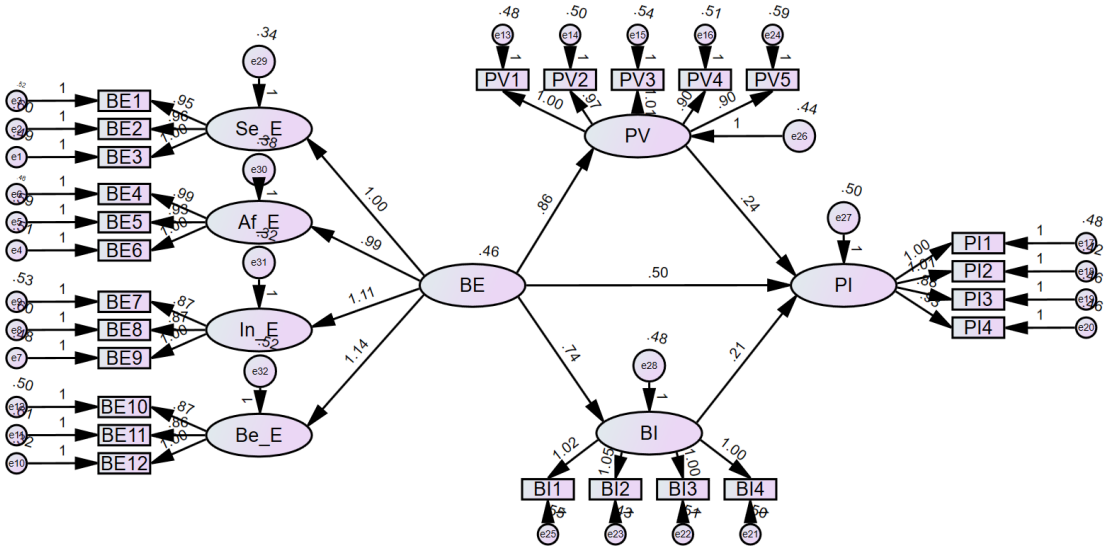


Figure 4. 2 AMOS output of Path Diagram for the structural model

As illustrated in Figure 4.2, brand experience is modeled as a second-order latent construct composed of four first-order dimensions—sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral experience—while perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention are specified as first-order latent variables measured by their respective indicators. All path directions are consistent with the proposed research hypotheses.

Table 4. 9 Structural Model Fit Metrics

Fit index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Recommended threshold	< 3.00	< 0.08	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90
Model result	1.201	0.021	0.915	0.903	0.918	0.984	0.985

As shown in Table 4.9, the structural model demonstrates an excellent overall fit. The chi-square to degrees-of-freedom ratio (χ^2/df = 1.201) is well below the recommended threshold, indicating an appropriate balance between model complexity and data representation. The RMSEA value of 0.021 suggests minimal approximation error. Other fit indices, including GFI (0.915), AGFI (0.903), NFI (0.918), TLI (0.984), and CFI (0.985), all meet or exceed conventional standards. Collectively, these results indicate that the structural model retains a high level of fit after imposing theoretical constraints, supporting its statistical adequacy and theoretical plausibility.

4.5.2 Structural Path Analysis

Given the satisfactory overall model fit, the hypothesized structural paths were further examined. Table 4.10 reports the unstandardized estimates, standardized coefficients (β), standard errors (S.E.), critical ratios (C.R.), and significance levels for the main paths in the structural model.

Table 4. 10 Structural Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	β	S.E.	C.R.	p	Result
H1	BE → PV	0.860	0.660	0.095	9.044	< 0.001	Supported
H2	BE → BI	0.742	0.589	0.090	8.264	< 0.001	Supported
H3	PV → PI	0.238	0.223	0.076	3.130	0.002	Supported
H4	BI → PI	0.214	0.195	0.071	3.013	0.003	Supported
H5	BE → PI	0.497	0.358	0.122	4.064	< 0.001	Supported

The results indicate that brand experience has a significant positive effect on perceived value ($\beta = 0.660$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that a more favorable brand experience substantially enhances consumers' value perceptions of Xiaomi Auto NEVs. Brand experience also exerts a significant positive influence on brand identification ($\beta = 0.589$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that experiential interactions with the brand strengthen consumers' psychological identification with Xiaomi Auto.

With respect to the outcome variable, perceived value shows a significant positive effect on purchase intention (β = 0.223, p = 0.002), while brand identification also positively predicts purchase intention (β = 0.195, p = 0.003). These findings suggest that both rational value assessments and psychological identification play important roles in shaping consumers' intentions to purchase NEVs.

Importantly, when perceived value and brand identification are included simultaneously as mediators, the direct effect of brand experience on purchase intention remains significant (β = 0.358, p < 0.001). This indicates that brand experience influences purchase intention not only indirectly through mediating mechanisms but also through a direct pathway.

Overall, all hypothesized paths in the structural model reach statistical significance, providing empirical support for the proposed relationships.

4.5.3 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Brand Experience on Purchase Intention

To further clarify the mechanisms through which brand experience affects purchase intention, an effects decomposition analysis was conducted. Based on the SEM estimates, Table 4.11 summarizes the direct, indirect, and total effects associated with brand experience.

Table 4. 11 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Brand Experience on Purchase Intention

Path	Effect type	Estimate	S.E.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Interpretation
BE → PV	Direct	0.660	0.073	0.521	0.798	Significant
BE → BI	Direct	0.589	0.071	0.453	0.732	Significant
PV → PI	Direct	0.223	0.071	0.082	0.365	Significant
BI → PI	Direct	0.195	0.065	0.071	0.326	Significant
BE → PI	Direct	0.358	0.088	0.185	0.528	Significant
BE → PV → PI	Indirect	0.147	0.052	0.056	0.259	Significant
BE → BI → PI	Indirect	0.115	0.041	0.043	0.203	Significant
BE → PI (Total)	Total	0.620	0.076	0.473	0.768	Significant

The results show that brand experience exerts significant positive effects on both perceived value and brand identification. The direct effect of brand experience on purchase intention is significant (Estimate = 0.358), with a bias-corrected 95% confidence interval of [0.185, 0.528], which does not include zero.

Regarding indirect effects, the mediation effect through perceived value (BE → PV → PI) is 0.147, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.056, 0.259], while the mediation effect through brand identification (BE → BI → PI) is 0.115, with a 95% confidence interval of [0.043, 0.203]. As the confidence intervals for both indirect paths exclude zero, the mediation effects are statistically significant.

Because the direct effect of brand experience on purchase intention remains significant after accounting for both mediators, perceived value and brand identification function as partial mediators in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention. These findings provide robust empirical support for the proposed dual mediation mechanism, demonstrating that brand experience influences purchase intention through both cognitive value evaluation and psychological identification pathways.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

Building on the theoretical model and empirical tests presented earlier, this chapter provides a systematic discussion and theoretical interpretation of the main findings in light of the stated research objectives. The focus is on clarifying the internal mechanisms through which brand experience influences NEV consumers' purchase intention via perceived value and brand identification, as well as on articulating the practical relevance of these mechanisms. Prior research has shown that brand experience is not only a core instrument of brand management but also a critical driver of subsequent behavioral intentions by activating consumers' psychological responses, value perceptions, and identity-related processes (Paramita et al., 2021). In contrast to the preceding empirical sections, which emphasized hypothesis testing and model verification, this chapter integrates the findings with relevant theories and recent empirical evidence to provide an explanatory synthesis and an overarching response to the research objectives.

Specifically, the discussion proceeds in three steps. First, it examines the direct effect of brand experience on NEV purchase intention, the mediation mechanisms involved, and the overall logic of influence. Second, it distills the theoretical contributions of the study to brand experience research, consumer behavior literature, and the NEV context, and derives corresponding managerial implications. Finally, it reflects on the limitations of the study and outlines directions for future research. Through this structure, the chapter aims to deepen understanding of NEV consumption decision-making, clarify the role and boundary conditions of brand experience in the context of emerging technology-oriented brands, and provide a reference for subsequent academic research and managerial practice.

5.1 Response to Research Objectives

This study investigates the role of brand experience in NEV consumption decisions, with particular attention to whether and how brand experience shapes purchase intention through consumers' psychological processing. Based on the results of structural equation modeling, the research objectives are addressed in a systematic manner and the findings are integrated at an overall level. The results indicate that, in the NEV context characterized by high involvement and technological complexity, brand experience exerts a significant guiding influence on consumer behavior and affects decision-making through multiple psychological mechanisms. All three research objectives are effectively addressed. This pattern is consistent with recent developments in brand experience research, which increasingly move beyond outcome-based attitudes toward explaining underlying decision mechanisms (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Hwang & Kandampully, 2022).

5.1.1 Direct Effect of Brand Experience on NEV Purchase Intention

The first research objective examines whether brand experience directly influences consumers' purchase intention toward NEVs. The findings demonstrate a significant and stable positive effect of brand experience on purchase intention, indicating that consumers' overall experiential impressions formed through interactions with a brand can be directly translated into a favorable inclination to purchase that brand's NEVs.

This result suggests that even in product categories characterized by high price, high perceived risk, and high informational complexity, such as NEVs, consumer decision-making is not driven solely by rational calculation or systematic comparison of technical attributes. Subjective experiential factors play a substantial role. Recent consumer behavior studies have shown that under conditions of uncertainty and high cognitive load, consumers tend to rely on holistic experiential cues and affective heuristics to reduce decision costs (Hilken et al., 2019; Pentina et al., 2020). Positive brand experience helps establish an affirmative emotional tone and an initial evaluative framework, thereby alleviating psychological uncertainty associated with new technologies and new brands and increasing consumers' willingness to try and adopt NEVs.

This effect is particularly pronounced in contexts where technology brands enter the automotive sector. In the case of Xiaomi Auto, consumers often develop an overall experiential impression through multiple touchpoints—such as brand launch events,

demonstrations of smart ecosystem integration, and offline experience spaces—before acquiring detailed knowledge of vehicle performance or technical specifications. The positive experiential foundation built on familiarity, technological appeal, and consistency facilitates the transfer of pre-existing brand favorability to NEV products, thereby directly enhancing purchase intention. These findings indicate that brand experience in the NEV context is not merely an outcome of long-term brand building but can also function as a proximal trigger of purchase intention.

From a theoretical perspective, this result aligns with the emerging view that experience serves as a direct input into decision-making processes. Brand experience does not only shape attitudinal evaluations but can also enter the formation of behavioral intentions as a key driver of purchase decisions (Rather et al., 2022). By confirming this direct effect in a high-involvement product category, the present study responds to the first research objective and extends the applicability of the direct influence pathway of brand experience.

5.1.2 Mediation Effects of Perceived Value and Brand Identification

The second research objective aims to uncover the internal psychological mechanisms through which brand experience affects NEV purchase intention, with particular emphasis on the mediation effects of perceived value and brand identification. The results indicate that brand experience influences purchase intention not only through a direct pathway but also indirectly by enhancing consumers' perceived value and strengthening their brand identification.

On the cognitive side, brand experience significantly enhances consumers' overall perceived value of NEVs. Recent research suggests that perceived value extends beyond price–function trade-offs to encompass functional, emotional, and symbolic dimensions (Leroi-Werelds, 2019; Gallarza et al., 2020). When consumers experience smooth, enjoyable, and technologically sophisticated interactions with a brand, they are more likely to form an overall judgment that the product is "worth purchasing." In the NEV context, where consumers must simultaneously consider price, driving range, safety, and technological reliability, perceived value serves as a central cognitive basis for rational evaluation. By providing clear and positive experiential cues, brand experience facilitates judgments of "value for money" or even "value exceeding expectations," thereby increasing purchase intention.

On the affective side, brand experience also fosters stronger psychological ties between consumers and the brand by activating emotional connections and identity-related processes. Research on brand identification indicates that when consumers perceive a brand's values, innovation philosophy, or lifestyle propositions during the experience process, they are more likely to incorporate the brand into their self-concept, leading to stronger attitudinal and behavioral preferences (Japutra et al., 2021; Acar et al., 2024). This mechanism is particularly salient in the context of technology brands entering the automotive market. For Xiaomi Auto, long-standing brand propositions such as technological inclusiveness, user participation, and ecosystem co-creation are repeatedly reinforced through experiential interactions. As a result, purchasing behavior for some consumers reflects not only functional choice but also identity expression and value alignment.

Taken together, perceived value and brand identification represent the cognitive and affective pathways through which brand experience shapes purchase intention. Their joint mediation confirms the multi-path nature of brand experience effects and illustrates how experiential inputs are transformed into purchase intention through distinct psychological processes in the NEV context. These findings provide a clear response to the second research objective concerning mediation mechanisms.

5.1.3 Overall Mechanism of Brand Experience Influencing NEV Purchase Intention

The third research objective seeks to integrate brand experience, consumer psychological responses, and purchase intention into a comprehensive explanatory framework. The results reveal that the influence of brand experience on purchase intention follows a multi-path structure in which direct and indirect effects coexist, forming a coherent and logically consistent mechanism.

At the overall level, brand experience functions as a comprehensive stimulus perceived during brand interactions and simultaneously activates cognitive and affective responses. Consumers use experiential cues to evaluate the value of the product and brand, forming judgments of perceived value. At the same time, emotional arousal and symbolic meaning construction during the experience process facilitate the development of brand identification. These internal psychological responses subsequently shape attitudes and behavioral tendencies toward NEVs, reinforcing and stabilizing purchase

intention. Recent studies similarly suggest that in high-involvement consumption decisions, cognitive evaluations and affective identification jointly contribute to the formation of behavioral intentions rather than operating in isolation (Khan et al., 2020; Hollebeek et al., 2022).

From the perspective of the stimulus–organism–response (SOR) framework, the model developed in this study reflects a clear and typical causal logic. Brand experience serves as the external stimulus, perceived value and brand identification represent internal organismic states, and purchase intention constitutes the behavioral response. Although the SOR framework has been widely applied in studies of brand experience and consumer behavior, prior research has focused primarily on retail, service, or digital platform contexts (Islam & Rahman, 2019; Rather et al., 2022). By applying this framework to the NEV context and examining technology brands entering the automotive industry, the present study extends the applicability of SOR theory to high-technology product domains.

In summary, by systematically addressing the three research objectives, this study demonstrates the multi-level role of brand experience in NEV consumption decisions. Brand experience operates both as a direct driver of purchase intention and as an indirect influence through perceived value and brand identification. These findings provide a solid foundation for the subsequent discussion of theoretical contributions and managerial implications.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Through a systematic empirical examination of the mechanisms by which brand experience influences purchase intention toward new energy vehicles (NEVs), this study offers several theoretical contributions to the literature on brand experience, consumer behavior, and NEV consumption. In contrast to prior studies that have largely focused on isolated variable relationships or traditional product contexts, the present research advances theory through its choice of research setting, integration of theoretical frameworks, and clarification of underlying mechanisms.

5.2.1 Extending the Applicability of Brand Experience Theory to High-Involvement, High-Technology Products

First, this study extends the applicability of brand experience theory to the context of NEVs, which are characterized by high involvement and substantial technological complexity. Existing research on brand experience has predominantly examined fast-moving consumer goods, services, or retail environments, with an emphasis on outcomes such as satisfaction, loyalty, or word-of-mouth behavior. Empirical investigations focusing on durable goods—and particularly on NEVs as an emerging, high-risk product category—remain relatively limited. Recent scholarship has called for testing brand experience theory in decision contexts involving high cognitive load and high decision costs to determine whether its explanatory power remains robust (Hollebeek et al., 2022).

The findings of this study demonstrate that even in the NEV context, where consumers place strong emphasis on technical specifications, safety, and economic considerations, brand experience continues to exert a significant influence on purchase intention. From a theoretical standpoint, this suggests that brand experience is not confined to emotionally driven or low-involvement consumption scenarios but remains influential in complex decision-making processes. This result provides an important contextual extension of brand experience theory, indicating that experiential factors do not diminish in relevance as product technological sophistication increases. On the contrary, their role may become more salient under conditions of heightened uncertainty.

When considered within the context of technology brands entering the automotive sector, this contribution is further reinforced. Consumers' evaluations of NEVs are not formed solely within the conventional "automotive brand" paradigm but are often embedded in a broader assessment of the technology brand's experiential ecosystem. In the case of Xiaomi Auto, for example, consumers frequently draw on accumulated experiences with smartphones, smart home systems, and related ecosystems. This integration of prior experiential memories strengthens the theoretical position of brand experience in high-technology product decision-making.

5.2.2 Enriching Explanations of the Mechanisms Linking Brand Experience to Consumer Behavior

Second, by introducing perceived value and brand identification as mediating variables, this study deepens theoretical explanations of how brand experience influences consumer behavior. Although prior research has established that brand experience can affect purchase intention or loyalty, many studies have emphasized single-path mechanisms or focused primarily on affective mediation. More recent work has called for a multidimensional psychological processing perspective to explain how experiential inputs are translated into concrete behavioral intentions (Rather et al., 2022).

The empirical results of this study indicate that brand experience does not operate through a single psychological channel. Instead, it simultaneously activates consumers' rational evaluative processes and affective identification processes. Perceived value captures consumers' cognitive judgments regarding whether a product is worth purchasing, whereas brand identification reflects the emotional and identity-based connection between consumers and the brand. This dual-path mechanism reveals the internal complexity of the experience–behavior relationship and addresses limitations in earlier research that tended to oversimplify this linkage.

From a theoretical perspective, the study moves beyond a unidimensional "emotion–behavior" logic and proposes a composite framework in which cognitive and affective processes operate in parallel. This extension provides a conceptual foundation for developing more fine-grained models of brand experience effects and offers important insights into consumer decision-making in high-involvement product categories such as NEVs.

5.2.3 Extending the Application of Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) Theory in Brand Experience Research

Third, this study contributes to the extension of stimulus–organism–response (SOR) theory within the domain of brand experience and consumer behavior. Traditionally, SOR theory has been used to explain how environmental stimuli, service atmospheres, or digital interfaces influence consumer emotions and behaviors. Its systematic application to brand-level experiential stimuli remains relatively limited. Although some recent studies have incorporated brand-related variables into the SOR framework, they have largely focused on brand interaction or brand community contexts (Islam & Rahman, 2019).

By conceptualizing brand experience as an integrated external stimulus and positioning perceived value and brand identification as key internal psychological states, this study constructs a clear SOR pathway linking experience to purchase intention. The results demonstrate that this framework effectively explains the role of brand experience in NEV consumption decisions. This finding suggests that SOR theory is not restricted to short-term or situational consumer responses but is also suitable for explaining brand experience, which represents a cumulative and enduring form of psychological stimulation.

This theoretical extension is particularly relevant in the context of technology brands entering the automotive industry. Consumers' responses to brands such as Xiaomi are shaped not by isolated stimuli but by long-term accumulations of brand experience. By validating the explanatory power of SOR theory in this complex setting, the study enriches its application within brand and consumer behavior research.

5.2.4 Contributing to Research on NEV Consumer Psychology and Decision-Making

Finally, this study offers targeted contributions to research on NEV consumption by focusing on underlying consumer psychological mechanisms. Existing studies on NEVs have largely emphasized policy incentives, environmental attitudes, technology acceptance, or economic considerations, while paying relatively limited attention to brand experience and its psychological effects. As the NEV market gradually transitions from policy-driven to market-driven growth, scholars have increasingly highlighted the importance of consumer psychological factors in shaping purchase decisions (Wang et al., 2023).

The findings of this study indicate that NEV consumers are influenced not only by objective performance attributes but also by subjective value judgments and identity-related processes triggered by brand experience. This perspective introduces a new micro-level explanation of NEV consumption, conceptualizing consumer decisions as the joint outcome of rational evaluation and experiential engagement. In the context of technology brands entering the automotive sector, the mechanisms of trust transfer and identity extension embedded in brand experience provide important theoretical insights into how new market entrants gain consumer acceptance.

5.3 Practical Implications

Based on the systematic analysis of the relationships among brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention toward new energy vehicles (NEVs), this study offers targeted practical implications for NEV firms, particularly technology brands entering the automotive industry. The findings suggest that competition in the NEV market is no longer confined to product specifications or pricing strategies. Instead, it is increasingly shaped by brand experience as a central competitive lever, operating through consumers' psychological mechanisms.

5.3.1 Positioning Brand Experience as the Core Driver of NEV Marketing and Brand Management

The results indicate that brand experience exerts a significant direct effect on purchase intention, highlighting the need for firms to move beyond traditional competition centered on technical performance or price. As NEV products have become increasingly similar in terms of driving range, safety, and intelligent configurations, parameter-based differentiation alone is insufficient to sustain competitive advantage. Experience-based differentiation has therefore emerged as a critical factor shaping consumer choice (Hwang & Kandampully, 2022).

In practice, NEV firms should adopt a systematic approach to managing brand experience across key consumer touchpoints, including online information search, brand launch events, offline experience spaces, test drives, and after-sales services. By delivering experiences that are consistent, seamless, and characterized by both technological sophistication and emotional resonance, firms can reduce consumers' uncertainty toward new technologies and strengthen overall trust in the brand.

Xiaomi Auto provides an illustrative example. Through integrated product launches, experiential store design, and demonstrations of its "human–vehicle–home" intelligent ecosystem, the brand consistently reinforces a coherent experiential logic. As a result, consumers often develop a high level of psychological acceptance even before engaging in detailed rational comparisons. This experience-oriented brand management approach closely aligns with the study's finding that brand experience directly influences purchase intention and offers a replicable pathway for other NEV brands.

5.3.2 Strengthening Perceived Value Through Experience Design to Enhance Rational Decision Confidence

The study further reveals that perceived value plays a key mediation effect in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention, indicating that consumers continue to place strong emphasis on rational judgments regarding whether an NEV is worth purchasing. Accordingly, while cultivating brand experience, firms should integrate experiential design with value communication to support consumers' value evaluations.

Specifically, firms can facilitate rational assessment by providing intuitive demonstrations of product functions, transparent disclosure of information, and clear explanations of usage and ownership costs within the experiential process. Prior research suggests that when consumers can clearly understand functional benefits and long-term value during the experience, their purchase intention increases significantly (Gallarza et al., 2020). Brand experience should therefore extend beyond emotional stimulation or atmospheric design and function as an effective vehicle for conveying value-related information.

This implication is particularly salient for technology brands entering the automotive sector. Brands such as Xiaomi Auto often reinforce perceived value through experiential strategies that emphasize high configurations, reasonable pricing, and ecosystem integration, leading consumers to form judgments of technological advancement and cost-effectiveness. This experience-driven enhancement of perceived value represents a concrete manifestation of the mediation mechanism identified in the empirical results.

5.3.3 Leveraging Brand Experience to Cultivate Brand Identification and Foster Long-Term Consumer Relationships

The findings also demonstrate that brand identification constitutes an important affective mechanism through which brand experience influences purchase intention. This suggests that NEV firms should not limit their focus to short-term sales conversion but should instead invest in sustained experiential strategies that nurture consumers' identity-based and emotional connections with the brand. Prior studies have shown that when consumers incorporate a brand into their self-concept, purchase behavior is more likely to evolve into long-term support and positive word-of-mouth (Japutra et al., 2021).

In practice, firms can cultivate brand identification by articulating clear and consistent value propositions, enabling consumers to perceive the lifestyle, values, or innovation ethos represented by the brand during the experience. For technology brands entering the automotive industry, existing brand culture and user communities serve as important foundations for building brand identification. Xiaomi Auto, for instance, has long emphasized participation, fan culture, and co-creation, providing consumers with identity resources that extend beyond the product itself and allowing vehicle purchase to function as a form of value alignment and self-expression.

The results suggest that NEV firms can strengthen consumers' sense of belonging through community engagement, co-creation initiatives, and ongoing brand interaction experiences, thereby establishing more resilient brand–consumer relationships in a highly competitive market.

5.3.4 Integrated Implications for Technology Brands Entering the Automotive Industry

By focusing on technology brands' entry into the NEV industry, this study yields practical insights with direct relevance for cross-industry expansion strategies. The findings indicate that consumers do not evaluate products solely based on whether a brand possesses a traditional automotive manufacturing background. Instead, they infer brand competence and credibility from accumulated brand experience. This has important implications for brand extension practices.

Specifically, technology brands entering the automotive sector should prioritize the continuity and transformation of existing brand experience assets rather than pursuing a complete rebranding. By extending experiential strengths in intelligence, user friendliness, and ecosystem integration to NEV products and services, firms can shorten consumers' adaptation periods and reduce cognitive discontinuities associated with cross-industry entry. Prior research similarly suggests that experiential continuity is a key determinant of cross-category brand acceptance (Aaker & Keller, 2020; Acar et al., 2024).

From this perspective, Xiaomi Auto's strategy of extending established technology brand experience into automotive products closely corresponds with the empirical conclusions of this study. The findings also imply that other technology firms seeking entry into high-barrier industries such as NEVs should regard brand experience as a critical bridge for successful expansion.

Overall, the practical implications of this study underscore the importance of placing brand experience at the center of consumer decision management in the NEV market. Through systematic experience design that simultaneously shapes perceived value and brand identification, firms can not only enhance purchase intention but also lay the foundation for sustainable, long-term brand competitiveness. These insights offer meaningful guidance for technology brands entering the automotive industry and for the continued development of the NEV sector.

5.4 Research Limitations

Although this study adopted a systematic and rigorous approach in constructing the theoretical framework and conducting empirical analysis, and provided an in-depth examination of the mechanisms through which brand experience influences NEV consumers' purchase intention, several limitations remain unavoidable. These limitations mainly relate to the research design, data sources, sample scope, and model specification. Clarifying them is necessary for a more cautious and comprehensive interpretation of the findings.

5.4.1 Limitations Related to Research Design

First, this study employed a cross-sectional survey design, in which all research variables were measured at a single point in time. While structural equation modeling allows for effective testing of hypothesized relationships under a well-defined theoretical framework, cross-sectional data impose inherent constraints on strict causal inference. Consumers' brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention may evolve over time as information accumulates or market conditions change, yet such dynamic processes could not be captured in the present design.

In the context of NEVs, where technological innovation is rapid and market conditions shift frequently, consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions are particularly likely to exhibit stage-specific variation. Accordingly, the relationships identified in this study should be interpreted as structural associations observed at a specific time point rather than as definitive representations of long-term causal processes.

5.4.2 Limitations of Data Sources and Measurement Approach

Second, the data were primarily collected through self-reported questionnaires. Although all measurement scales were adapted from well-established studies and

demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity, self-reported data remain susceptible to common method bias, social desirability effects, and individual subjective judgment biases. For example, respondents' evaluations of brand experience or purchase intention may be influenced by temporary emotional states, pre-existing brand impressions, or tendencies toward socially desirable responses, which could affect measurement accuracy.

In addition, this study focused on purchase intention as the dependent variable and did not incorporate actual purchase behavior or objective behavioral data for validation. While purchase intention is widely regarded as a strong antecedent of actual behavior, a gap may still exist between intention and behavior in the NEV context, given the high involvement and substantial decision costs associated with such products. Consequently, caution is required when generalizing the findings to real purchase behavior.

5.4.3 Limitations of Sample Scope and Research Context

Third, the sample mainly consisted of potential consumers who possessed a certain level of awareness of, or interest in, technology brand–based NEVs. This sampling strategy ensured that respondents were capable of evaluating brand experience meaningfully, but it may also have resulted in relative homogeneity in terms of brand familiarity and technology acceptance. Such homogeneity could limit the generalizability of the findings to broader consumer segments. Consumers with low brand awareness or a more reserved attitude toward NEVs may rely on different decision-making mechanisms, which were not explicitly examined in this study.

Moreover, the research was conducted within the specific context of technology brands entering the NEV market. The conclusions are therefore, to some extent, shaped by this contextual background. Whether similar structural relationships among brand experience, perceived value, and brand identification hold for traditional automotive brands or other types of emerging brands remains an open question for future investigation.

5.4.4 Limitations in Variable Selection and Model Specification

Finally, with respect to variable selection and model specification, this study centered on brand experience as the core independent variable and incorporated perceived value and brand identification as parallel mediators to explain the formation of purchase intention. Although the proposed model demonstrated strong explanatory power both theoretically and empirically, NEV consumer decision-making is inherently complex and may also be influenced by additional psychological or contextual factors,

such as perceived risk, brand trust, social influence, or policy incentives, which were not included in the current framework.

Furthermore, brand experience was treated as an overall construct rather than examining the differential effects of its specific experiential dimensions. This approach helped maintain model parsimony and alignment with the research objectives, but it may have obscured potential variations in how different experience dimensions contribute to perceived value and brand identification. A more fine-grained analysis of the internal structure of brand experience could offer deeper insights into consumer decision processes in future research.

5.5 Directions for Future Research

Building on the empirical findings regarding the mechanisms through which brand experience influences NEV consumers' purchase intention, and in light of the limitations discussed above, future research can further advance this line of inquiry across several dimensions, including research design, sample and context extension, model enrichment, and methodological integration. Such efforts would enhance explanatory power, generalizability, and practical relevance.

5.5.1 Adopting Longitudinal Designs to Strengthen Causal Inference

To address the limitations of cross-sectional data for causal inference, future studies may adopt longitudinal designs or panel-based tracking approaches to examine dynamic changes in brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention. Repeated measurements of the same respondents across multiple time points would allow researchers to identify how the influence of brand experience varies across different stages of consumer decision-making and how underlying psychological mechanisms evolve over time.

In the NEV context, where technological updates are frequent and competitive conditions change rapidly, consumers' brand perceptions and attitudes are likely to adjust continuously in response to actual usage experience or external information cues. Longitudinal research would help determine whether brand experience exerts a sustained influence on purchase intention over time or whether its effects extend to subsequent outcomes such as brand loyalty and repurchase intention, thereby providing stronger causal evidence for theoretical explanations.

5.5.2 Expanding Samples and Comparative Research Contexts

Future research may also broaden the sample scope and research contexts. On the one hand, studies could include consumers from different regions, cultural backgrounds, or stages of NEV market development. Cross-regional or cross-cultural comparisons would enable an assessment of the stability and applicability of the proposed model across diverse social and market environments. On the other hand, technology brands and traditional automotive brands could be examined within a unified analytical framework to compare differences in the mechanisms through which brand experience operates across brand types.

In addition, future studies may distinguish among consumer groups at different stages of the decision process, such as potential consumers, first-time buyers, and repeat purchasers, to examine the relative importance of brand experience at each stage. Such comparative analyses would clarify the dynamic role of brand experience across the consumer decision lifecycle and provide more targeted theoretical guidance for differentiated marketing strategies in the NEV industry.

5.5.3 Incorporating Additional Psychological and Contextual Variables

With respect to model specification, future research may enrich the explanatory framework by incorporating additional psychological or contextual variables relevant to purchase decision-making. Factors such as perceived risk, brand trust, social influence, environmental values, or policy incentives may also play meaningful roles in shaping NEV purchase intention. By introducing moderating variables or multiple mediation structures, researchers can further explore how different psychological mechanisms interact in the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

Moreover, future studies may adopt a more fine-grained approach to brand experience by disaggregating it into specific experiential dimensions and examining the differential effects of sensory, affective, and cognitive experiences on perceived value and brand identification. Such analyses would deepen understanding of the internal mechanisms of brand experience and offer more actionable insights for firms in allocating experiential resources.

5.5.4 Employing Multi-Method Approaches to Enhance Robustness

Methodologically, future research may benefit from multi-method designs to improve the robustness and depth of findings. For example, qualitative methods such as

in-depth interviews, focus groups, or case studies could be combined with quantitative survey data to capture consumers' subjective experiences, cognitive processes, and emotional responses in greater detail.

In addition, incorporating actual behavioral data or secondary data sources—such as test-drive records, purchase conversion rates, or user usage data—would allow for cross-validation of survey-based findings. Integrating multiple data sources can help mitigate biases associated with self-reported measures and strengthen the credibility of conclusions in real-world consumption contexts.

5.5.5 Advancing Brand Experience Research through Theoretical Integration

At the theoretical level, future research may further integrate the Stimulus–Organism–Response (SOR) framework with other consumer behavior theories, such as the theory of planned behavior, social cognitive theory, or brand relationship theory, to construct more comprehensive explanatory models. A multi-theoretical perspective would enable researchers to explain how brand experience influences consumer attitudes and behaviors at different levels, offering a more systematic understanding of NEV purchase decisions.

In particular, within the emerging context of technology brands entering the automotive industry, theoretical integration can help uncover the complex psychological processes consumers experience when confronted with new technologies, new brands, and high-involvement decisions. Such efforts would support the continued development of brand experience research in emerging industries and extend its relevance to evolving market realities.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire (English)

APPENDIX A: Questionnaire (English Version)

Questionnaire on Brand Experience and Purchase Intention of Xiaomi Auto

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire aims to understand your actual perceptions and behavioral tendencies when experiencing the Xiaomi Auto brand, in order to examine the relationships among brand experience, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention.

This survey is anonymous. All data will be used for academic research purposes only and will not be used for any commercial purpose. Your personal information will remain strictly confidential. Please answer the questions based on your true feelings. There are no right or wrong answers, and please avoid duplicate responses. The questionnaire takes approximately 3–5 minutes to complete.

Thank you very much for your support and cooperation.

Part I. Demographic Information

Your gender [Single choice]

○ A. Male ○ B. Female

Your age [Single choice]

○ A. 18–25 ○ B. 26–35 ○ C. 36–45 ○ D. 46–55 ○ E. 56 and above

Your highest level of education [Single choice]

○ A. Below high school

○ B. High school / vocational secondary school

○ C. Associate degree

○ D. Bachelor’s degree○ E. Master’s degree or above

Your monthly income (RMB) [Single choice]

○ A. Below 3,000

○ B. 3,000–4,999

○ C. 5,000–7,999

○ D. 8,000–11,999

○ E. 12,000 and above

Your occupation [Single choice]

○ A. Student

○ B. Corporate employee

○ C. Government or public institution staff

○ D. Self-employed / freelancer

○ E. Other

How familiar are you with the Xiaomi Auto brand? [Single choice]

○ A. Very familiar

○ B. Somewhat familiar

○ C. Have heard of it but not familiar

○ D. Have never heard of it

Do you have experience using new energy vehicles (NEVs)? [Single choice]

○ A. Yes, currently using

○ B. Used before

○ C. Never used

Are you considering purchasing a new energy vehicle within the next year? [Single choice]

○ A. Yes

○ B. No

○ C. Not sure

Part II. Brand Experience–Related Items

This section aims to understand your perceptions and attitudes toward the Xiaomi Auto brand. Please select the option that best reflects your true feelings based on your knowledge and experience of the brand.

There are no “correct” or “incorrect” answers. Please respond according to your first impression.

Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree

No.	Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	The Xiaomi Auto brand appeals to my senses.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The Xiaomi Auto brand leaves a strong visual impression on me.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The design elements of the Xiaomi Auto brand are distinctive.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The Xiaomi Auto brand evokes positive emotions in me.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Interacting with the Xiaomi Auto brand affects my mood.	1	2	3	4	5
6	When I see or experience Xiaomi Auto, I often have emotional reactions.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The Xiaomi Auto brand stimulates my thinking.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Xiaomi Auto arouses my curiosity.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The Xiaomi Auto brand motivates me to further explore or think about its technology and design.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The Xiaomi Auto brand encourages me to engage in practical actions related to automobiles.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The Xiaomi Auto brand gives me a sense of action orientation.	1	2	3	4	5
12	The Xiaomi Auto brand prompts me to engage in brand-related behaviors (e.g., searching for information or test driving).	1	2	3	4	5
13	Overall, I believe Xiaomi new energy vehicles have high perceived value.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Considering its current price, I believe Xiaomi new energy vehicles are economical.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I believe purchasing a Xiaomi new energy vehicle is a worthwhile choice.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I think the price of Xiaomi new energy vehicles is acceptable.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I consider Xiaomi new energy vehicles to be good value for money.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I feel that the brand image of Xiaomi Auto is consistent with my self-image.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I believe that customers who purchase Xiaomi Auto are similar to me.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Purchasing Xiaomi Auto helps me express my personality.	1	2	3	4	5
21	I feel a strong sense of connection with the Xiaomi Auto brand.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I intend to purchase Xiaomi Auto in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
23	If I need a new energy vehicle, I would prioritize Xiaomi Auto.	1	2	3	4	5

No.	Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
24	If conditions permit, I would purchase Xiaomi Auto products.	1	2	3	4	5
25	If friends ask for advice on purchasing new energy vehicles, I would recommend Xiaomi Auto.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

小米汽车品牌体验与购买意愿调查问卷

尊敬的受访者：

您好！本问卷旨在了解您在体验小米新能源汽车品牌时的真实感受与行为倾向，以便我们深入探讨品牌体验、感知价值、品牌认同与购买意愿之间的关系。

本问卷采用匿名形式，所有数据仅用于学术研究，调查结果不会用于商业用途，亦不会透露您的个人隐私。请您根据实际感受填写，无需担心对错，也请勿重复填写。本问卷大约需要 3－5 分钟完成。非常感谢您的支持与配合！

第一部分 基本信息

1. 您的性别［单选题］

○A、男

○B、女

2. 您的年龄［单选题］

○A、18-25 岁

○B、26-35 岁

○C、 36－45 岁

○D 46－55 岁

○E 56 岁及以上

3. 您的受教育程度［单选题］

○A、高中以下

○B、高中/中专

○C、专科

○D、本科

○E、硕士及以上

4. 您的月收入（元）［单选题］

〇A、3000 以下

〇B、3000-4999

〇C、5000-7999

〇D、8000-11999

〇E、12000 及以上

5. 您的职业［单选题］

〇A、学生

〇B、企业员工

〇C、政府及事业单位人员

〇D、自由职业

〇E、其他

6. 您是否了解小米汽车品牌？［单选题］

〇A、非常了解

〇B、有所了解

〇C、听说过但不了解

〇D、从未听说

7. 您是否有新能源汽车使用经验?［单选题］

〇A、是，目前正在使用

〇B、曾经使用过

〇C、从未使用

8. 您是否考虑在未来一年内购买新能源汽车？［单选题］

〇A、是

〇B、否

〇C、不确定

第二部分 品牌体验相关问项

本部分旨在了解您对小米汽车品牌的实际感受与态度，请根据您对该品牌的了解和体验，选择最符合您真实感受的选项。

每一道题都没有“正确”或“错误”之分，请您依据第一直觉作答。请使用以下 5 点量表进行选择：1 = 非常不同意，2 = 不同意，3 = 一般，4 = 同意，5 = 非常同意

序号	题目	非常不同意	不同意	一般	同意	非常同意
1	小米汽车品牌能吸引我的感官。	1	2	3	4	5
2	小米汽车品牌给我很强的视觉印象。	1	2	3	4	5
3	小米汽车品牌的设计元素非常独特。	1	2	3	4	5
4	小米汽车品牌会让我产生积极的情绪。	1	2	3	4	5
5	接触小米汽车品牌会影响我的心情。	1	2	3	4	5
6	当我看到或体验小米汽车时，我常常会有情绪反应。	1	2	3	4	5
7	小米汽车品牌会让我产生思考。	1	2	3	4	5
8	小米汽车激发了我的好奇心。	1	2	3	4	5
9	小米汽车品牌会引发我进一步了解或思考技术与设计。	1	2	3	4	5
10	小米汽车品牌让我产生与汽车有关的一些实际行动。	1	2	3	4	5
11	小米汽车品牌给我一种行动导向的感受。	1	2	3	4	5
12	小米汽车品牌会促使我进行与品牌相关的行为（如查阅信息、试驾等）。	1	2	3	4	5
13	总体而言，我认为小米新能源汽车具有较高价值。	1	2	3	4	5
14	以其目前价格来看，我认为小米新能源汽车很经济。	1	2	3	4	5
15	我认为购买小米新能源汽车是一笔划算的选择。	1	2	3	4	5
16	我觉得小米新能源汽车的价格是可以接受的。	1	2	3	4	5
17	我认为小米新能源汽车是一笔物有所值的购买。	1	2	3	4	5
18	我觉得小米汽车的品牌形象与我的自我形象一致。	1	2	3	4	5
19	我觉得购买小米汽车的顾客群体与我相似。	1	2	3	4	5
20	购买小米汽车能够帮助我表达我的个性。	1	2	3	4	5

序号	题目	非常不同意	不同意	一般	同意	非常同意
21	我感觉自己与小米汽车品牌有很强的联系。	1	2	3	4	5
22	我打算在未来购买小米汽车。	1	2	3	4	5
23	如果需要新能源汽车，我会优先考虑小米汽车。	1	2	3	4	5
24	如果条件允许，我会购买小米汽车的产品。	1	2	3	4	5
25	如果朋友咨询新能源汽车购买建议，我会推荐小米汽车。	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

Article

APPENDIX C: Article

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From Experience to Intention: How Brand Experience Drives New Energy Vehicles (NEVs) Purchase Intention via Perceived Value and Brand Identification

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Abstract: This study examines how brand experience influences consumers' purchase intention toward new energy vehicles (NEVs) in the context of Xiaomi Auto, and tests the mediating roles of perceived value and brand identification. Survey data were collected from 396 adult potential NEV consumers in Chengdu, China using a combined online–offline approach, and analyzed via confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling with bootstrapping. Results indicate that brand experience significantly increases perceived value ($\beta = 0.660$, $p < .001$) and brand identification ($\beta = 0.589$, $p < .001$). Both perceived value ($\beta = 0.223$, $p = .002$) and brand identification ($\beta = 0.195$, $p = .003$) positively predict purchase intention, while brand experience also retains a significant direct effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.358$, $p < .001$). Bootstrapping confirms two significant indirect effects via perceived value ($\beta = 0.147$, 95% CI [0.056, 0.259]) and brand identification ($\beta = 0.115$, 95% CI [0.043, 0.203]), indicating partial mediation. The findings highlight that experience-centered branding shapes NEV purchase intention through both value-based evaluation and identity-based connection, offering actionable guidance for ecosystem brands designing multi-touchpoint experiences to convert consumer

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attention into purchase intention.

Keywords: Brand Experience; Perceived Value; Brand Identification; Purchase Intention; New Energy Vehicles; Xiaomi Auto; S–O–R Framework

1. Introduction

The global transition toward low-carbon mobility has accelerated the strategic repositioning of the automotive industry, with new energy vehicles (NEVs) becoming a central arena where environmental commitments, industrial upgrading, and consumer markets intersect (Li, 2025). In China, NEVs have been elevated from an emerging technology sector to a key pillar supporting transportation decarbonization and high-quality development, guided by national plans that emphasize innovation-driven growth and the modernization of the industrial system (Liu & Xie, 2025). As the market expands and penetration increases, the competitive landscape is shifting from policy-led diffusion to demand-driven competition, in which brands must persuade consumers not only through technical performance but also through psychologically compelling value propositions (Harahap et al., 2024).

In this new stage, purchase decisions for NEVs are becoming less explainable by traditional "attribute-centric" logic alone (e.g., price, range, and safety). NEVs especially smart electric vehicles are high-involvement, technology-intensive, and symbolically loaded products (Zhang et al., 2024). Consumers' evaluations are therefore shaped by a broader decision ecology that includes experiential impressions, emotional resonance, and identity signaling formed across multiple brand touchpoints (Zha et al., 2022). Experience economy theory suggests that when functional attributes become increasingly comparable, competitive differentiation shifts toward orchestrated experiences that are memorable and meaning-rich (Pine & Gilmore, 2013). In branding research, brand experience has been conceptualized as a multidimensional set of sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral responses elicited by brand-related stimuli such as product design, marketing communications, interaction environments, and usage scenarios (Li & Chung, 2025; Zha et al., 2025). Empirical evidence across industries indicates that favorable brand experiences can meaningfully shape consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions (Sang & Cuong, 2025; Tahir et al., 2024), suggesting that experience may operate as a strategic "conversion engine" in markets where rational evaluation and emotional judgment co-exist.

This experience-based perspective is particularly relevant for digitally native brands entering the NEV market. Xiaomi Auto offers a timely context because it represents a technology ecosystem brand extending into automobiles with an explicit strategy to build an integrated "human–vehicle–home" intelligent experience system (Huang, 2025). As a newcomer with strong attention and visibility, Xiaomi Auto's early-stage market diffusion depends heavily on

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how potential consumers form perceptions and meanings before actual ownership and long-term usage (Wang, 2025). Compared with existing owners whose brand attitudes may have stabilized through repeated use, potential consumers are still constructing their cognitive and emotional evaluations through brand communications, product reveal events, showroom encounters, digital content, community participation, and imagined usage scenarios (Rao et al., 2024). This makes the pre-purchase stage an analytically valuable window for uncovering how brand experience translates into purchase intention.

Despite the growing importance of experience-driven competition, the mechanism through which brand experience shapes purchase intention in the NEV context remains under-explored—especially for high-involvement, high-uncertainty products with long decision cycles. Prior studies have confirmed positive associations between brand experience and behavioral intentions in various settings, but evidence is more concentrated in low-involvement consumption or service contexts (Castro-González et al., 2025; Na et al., 2023), while less is known about (a) how experience is psychologically processed in durable technology products and (b) how experience operates among potential consumers during market entry. In NEVs, consumers must translate experiential cues into judgments about whether the product is "worth it" (value evaluation), while also deciding whether the brand aligns with their self-concept, lifestyle aspirations, and symbolic preferences (identity connection) (Tran & Nguyen, 2022). These dual mechanisms—cognitive evaluation and identity-based resonance—are theoretically plausible, yet they are rarely examined together in a parsimonious integrated model within the NEV setting.

To address this gap, the present study adopts the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework to theorize how brand experience influences NEV purchase intention through internal psychological processes. Under this framework, brand experience is conceptualized as an external stimulus (S) that activates consumers' organism states (O), which then shape behavioral response (R). Specifically, we model two parallel organism pathways: perceived value (a cognitive-evaluative pathway) and brand identification (an affective/identity pathway). This dual-path structure reflects the idea that brand experience may simultaneously enhance consumers' overall benefit–cost judgments and strengthen psychological affiliation with the brand—both of which can increase purchase intention. By integrating these mediators, the study provides a clearer explanation of how experience-driven branding can convert attention into intention in the early diffusion stage of an NEV brand.

Empirically, this study focuses on potential consumers in Chengdu, a city with relatively strong NEV exposure and supportive infrastructure contexts that facilitate repeated contact with NEV information and brand touchpoints. Using survey data and structural equation modeling, we test (1) whether

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brand experience directly enhances purchase intention, (2) whether brand experience increases perceived value and brand identification, and (3) whether perceived value and brand identification mediate the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

This research offers several contributions. First, it extends brand experience theory to a high-involvement, technology-intensive durable product category, highlighting how experiential perceptions can matter even before ownership. Second, it advances mechanism-based explanation by jointly examining value evaluation and identity connection as parallel mediating processes, clarifying the internal "translation" of experience into intention. Third, by situating the analysis in the context of a digitally native ecosystem brand entering the automotive market, it provides insight into how multi-touchpoint digital experiences and ecosystem narratives may shape early-stage consumer psychology in NEVs.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. The next section reviews the relevant literature and develops the hypotheses based on experiential marketing, perceived value theory, brand identification theory, and the S–O–R framework. The subsequent section describes the research design, measures, and analytical approach. The results section reports the measurement and structural model findings, followed by a discussion of theoretical and managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

Brand experience (BE) refers to consumers' internal responses evoked by brand-related stimuli across touchpoints, including product design, brand communications, retail environments, and interactions, typically involving sensory, affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Pina & Dias, 2021). This perspective builds on experiential marketing and the broader experience economy view that value creation increasingly shifts from functional utility to holistic experience. In technology-intensive and high-involvement categories, experience is not a decorative add-on but a diagnostic cue that helps consumers interpret innovation, reduce uncertainty, and form coherent brand impressions under information complexity.

Existing studies indicate that BE is especially influential when consumers face: (a) high perceived risk and long decision cycles, (b) multi-attribute trade-offs, and (c) symbolic meanings associated with technology, lifestyle, and identity (Alyahya et al., 2023; Baghel, 2023). New energy vehicles (NEVs) meet these conditions, as purchase decisions often require consumers to integrate functional performance, intelligent features, cost considerations, and the brand's innovation narrative (Wei et al., 2024). For digital-native ecosystem brands such as Xiaomi Auto, experience is constructed not only through product or test-drive encounters but also through digitally mediated touchpoints (e.g., online launches, interactive content, brand communities), which can shape consumers' perceptions before ownership (Chen, 2025).

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Perceived value (PV) is commonly defined as consumers' overall assessment of benefits relative to costs, representing a subjective, context-dependent judgment rather than an objective attribute (Blut et al., 2023). Beyond the classic benefit–cost view, research increasingly emphasizes the multidimensionality of PV, typically including functional value (quality/performance), price/value-for-money, emotional value, and social value. This multidimensional structure is highly relevant for NEVs, where consumers simultaneously evaluate technological usefulness (e.g., intelligence and safety), economic rationality (e.g., price and long-term cost), and experiential/affective benefits (e.g., enjoyment, confidence), as well as social-symbolic outcomes (e.g., being "tech-forward" or "environmentally responsible").

In experience-driven markets, PV is also a key psychological "translation" mechanism: brand stimuli and experiential encounters become behaviorally meaningful when consumers interpret them as "worth it (Lian et al., 2025)." Thus, PV is frequently conceptualized as a proximal predictor of purchase intention and a mediator linking upstream experiential cues to downstream behavioral tendencies.

Brand identification (BI) originates from social identity logic: individuals may incorporate symbolic objects (including brands) into their self-concept when they perceive value congruence, self–brand fit, or aspirational alignment (Gaustad & Warlop, 2025). Consumer–brand identification reflects a perceived oneness with a brand and a sense of belonging, through which consumers express "who I am" or "who I want to be (Moorlock et al., 2023)."

BI is particularly salient in NEV consumption because NEVs often carry symbolic meanings beyond transportation—such as innovation orientation, sustainability values, and future lifestyle imagination (Wang & Tian, 2023). For emerging technology brands, identification may also develop via community culture, participatory narratives, and ecosystem affiliation (Méndez-Lazarte et al., 2025). Xiaomi's established fan culture and "ecosystem" logic can provide identity resources that transform pre-purchase engagement into psychological attachment (Zhao & Yi, 2023).

The stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework posits that external stimuli do not directly determine behavior; rather, stimuli influence internal organismic states (cognitive and affective processes), which then shape behavioral responses (Hochreiter et al., 2023). In consumer research, this framework is widely used to explain how marketing and experience cues influence psychological evaluations and behavioral intentions (Jayadi et al., 2022). In the NEV context, brand experience functions as a multidimensional external stimulus, while PV and BI represent two complementary organismic mechanisms: a cognitive evaluation pathway (PV) and an identity/affective pathway (BI). Purchase intention (PI) represents the response outcome. This mapping aligns with your study's logic of examining how BE shapes PI through value

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judgment and identity connection.

Brand experience provides consumers with concrete and emotionally salient cues that improve brand accessibility in memory, enhance confidence in decision-making, and increase the perceived attractiveness of the brand (Husain et al., 2022). In high-involvement categories, positive experiences—whether from immersive offline encounters or coherent digital touchpoints—can strengthen consumers' willingness to consider the brand as a serious option (Muthaffar et al., 2024). Therefore:

H1: Brand experience positively influences purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs.

Brand experience can enhance consumers' value judgments by making functional benefits more "felt" (e.g., intuitiveness of intelligent features), reducing uncertainty, and increasing perceived value-for-money through compelling demonstrations and narratives (DelVecchio et al., 2024). When experience provides clarity, enjoyment, and confidence, consumers are more likely to judge the product as worthwhile (Rocklage et al., 2025). Thus:

H2: Brand experience positively influences perceived value.

Perceived value is a direct antecedent of purchase intention because it summarizes consumers' overall trade-off judgment (Gandhi et al., 2023). When consumers believe the NEV delivers superior functional, emotional, and social value relative to cost, they become more willing to purchase (Hu et al., 2025). Accordingly:

H3: Perceived value positively influences purchase intention.

Brand experience can also foster identification by communicating brand personality and values, enabling consumers to perceive self–brand congruence and symbolic fit (Acar et al., 2024). Experiences that emphasize innovation ethos, lifestyle meaning, and community participation encourage consumers to see the brand as representing "people like me" or "who I aspire to be." Therefore:

H4: Brand experience positively influences brand identification.

When consumers identify with a brand, they develop stronger psychological commitment, trust, and a tendency to support the brand, which increases purchase intention—especially in uncertain, high-cost decisions such as vehicle purchase (Irshad et al., 2024). Hence:

H5: Brand identification positively influences purchase intention.

In S–O–R logic, BE (stimulus) shapes PI (response) largely through organismic mechanisms. PV represents a cognitive evaluation route—experience increases "worth," which drives intention. BI represents an identity route—experience increases "oneness," which also drives intention. Therefore:

H6: Perceived value mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

H7: Brand identification mediates the relationship between brand experience and purchase intention.

In summary, prior research supports (a) brand experience as a critical driver of behavioral intentions (Li et al., 2023), (b) perceived value as a key evaluative mechanism translating experience into

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action (Tang & Son, 2025), and (c) brand identification as an identity-based mechanism linking brand meaning to consumer commitment (Zhang & Liu, 2022). However, in NEV settings—especially for digitally native ecosystem entrants such as Xiaomi Auto—evidence remains limited regarding how pre-purchase experience cues jointly activate these two organismic mechanisms. By integrating perceived value and brand identification as parallel mediators within an S–O–R framework, this study offers a parsimonious explanation of experience-driven purchase intention formation among potential NEV consumers.

3. Methodology

This study surveyed adult consumers (aged 18 and above) in Chengdu, China who exhibited potential purchase intention toward new energy vehicles (NEVs), with Xiaomi Auto used as the focal brand context. Data were collected through a combined online–offline questionnaire approach. A pilot test (n = 150) was conducted to refine item wording and improve clarity prior to the main study. In the formal survey, 420 questionnaires were returned; after data screening, 396 valid responses were retained (effective response rate: 94.29%). A non-probability sampling strategy was employed, primarily convenience sampling supplemented by snowball recruitment via universities, firms, commercial settings, and online platforms.

All constructs were measured using established multi-item scales adapted to the NEV/Xiaomi Auto context, and a translation–back-translation procedure was applied to ensure semantic equivalence. The questionnaire comprised 25 items covering four core constructs—brand experience (BE; four-dimensional), perceived value (PV), brand identification (BI), and purchase intention (PI)—measured on five-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 24.0: descriptive statistics and reliability (Cronbach's α) were first examined, followed by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess convergent and discriminant validity and overall measurement-model fit. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was then used to test the hypothesized relationships, and bootstrapping was applied to evaluate the mediating effects of PV and BI. To assess common method bias, Harman's single-factor test was performed; the first factor accounted for less than 40% of the total variance, suggesting that common method bias was unlikely to pose a serious threat.

4. Results

Table1 shows the sample (N = 396) was gender-balanced, with 49.0% male (n = 194) and 51.0% female (n = 202). Respondents were predominantly young to middle-aged: 26–35 (31.1%, n = 123) and 36–45 (30.6%, n = 121) constituted the largest groups, followed by 18–25 (21.9%, n = 87), while those aged 46–55 (9.1%, n = 36) and 56+ (7.3%, n = 29) were less represented. In terms of education, the sample was relatively well educated, with 33.8% holding a bachelor's degree (n = 134) and 24.5% an associate degree (n = 97), whereas

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13.6% reported high school or below (n = 54) and 12.1% a master's degree or above (n = 48). Monthly income was concentrated at the lower and upper-middle ranges: 32.1% earned RMB 8,000–11,999 (n = 127) and 29.3% earned below RMB 3,000 (n = 116), with 19.7% earning RMB 12,000+ (n = 78). Importantly, more than half of the respondents intended to purchase an NEV within one year (54.8%, n = 217), and a substantial proportion already owned Xiaomi ecosystem products (62.9%, n = 249), indicating that the sample was highly relevant for examining purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto within the broader Xiaomi ecosystem context.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	194	49.0
	Female	202	51.0
Age	18–25	87	21.9
	26–35	123	31.1
	36–45	121	30.6
	46–55	36	9.1
	56 and above	29	7.3
Education	High school or below	54	13.6
	High school/technical secondary	63	15.9
	Associate degree	97	24.5
	Bachelor's degree	134	33.8
	Master's degree or above	48	12.1
Monthly income (RMB)	Below 3,000	116	29.3
	3,000–4,999	22	5.6
	5,000–7,999	53	13.4
	8,000–11,999	127	32.1
	12,000 and above	78	19.7
Intention to purchase NEVs within one year	Yes	217	54.8
	No	64	16.2
	Uncertain	115	29.0
Ownership of Xiaomi ecosystem products	Yes	249	62.9
	No	147	37.1
Total		396	100

Table 2 presents the item-level descriptive statistics indicate that respondents provided full-range responses across all indicators (Min = 1, Max = 5), suggesting adequate variability and no apparent floor or ceiling effects. Mean scores were generally moderate, clustering around the mid-point of the scale (approximately 3.25–3.45), which implies a neutral-to-slightly-positive evaluation of brand experience (BE items: M ≈ 3.32–3.45), perceived value (PV items: M ≈ 3.25–3.38), brand identification (BI items: M ≈ 3.29–3.43), and purchase intention (PI items: M ≈

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3.33–3.40). Standard deviations were consistently around 1.07–1.20, reflecting substantial dispersion and meaningful individual differences. Skewness values were small and negative (roughly −0.09 to −0.40), indicating a slight tendency toward higher agreement, while kurtosis values were negative (about −0.70 to −1.04), suggesting relatively flat (platykurtic) distributions rather than sharply peaked responses.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Measurement Items

Item	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
BE1	1	5	3.35	1.114	-0.229	-0.905
BE2	1	5	3.45	1.161	-0.347	-0.907
BE3	1	5	3.40	1.137	-0.314	-0.851
BE4	1	5	3.45	1.127	-0.262	-0.980
BE5	1	5	3.41	1.147	-0.308	-0.869
BE6	1	5	3.42	1.156	-0.398	-0.755
BE7	1	5	3.38	1.097	-0.193	-0.927
BE8	1	5	3.39	1.127	-0.307	-0.855
BE9	1	5	3.34	1.170	-0.220	-0.957
BE10	1	5	3.36	1.160	-0.370	-0.699
BE11	1	5	3.32	1.202	-0.291	-0.921
BE12	1	5	3.36	1.204	-0.319	-0.939
PV1	1	5	3.38	1.124	-0.244	-0.944
PV2	1	5	3.25	1.111	-0.089	-0.988
PV3	1	5	3.35	1.155	-0.215	-1.028
PV4	1	5	3.34	1.072	-0.193	-0.807
PV5	1	5	3.34	1.107	-0.210	-0.892
BI1	1	5	3.29	1.147	-0.116	-1.041
BI2	1	5	3.43	1.113	-0.225	-0.980
BI3	1	5	3.40	1.118	-0.244	-0.879
BI4	1	5	3.40	1.113	-0.171	-0.999
PI1	1	5	3.39	1.172	-0.268	-1.026
PI2	1	5	3.39	1.161	-0.397	-0.831
PI3	1	5	3.40	1.078	-0.359	-0.739
PI4	1	5	3.33	1.112	-0.209	-0.995

Table 3 describes the Pearson correlation matrix among the study variables. Brand experience (BE) is positively and significantly associated with perceived value (PV) ($r = 0.517$, $p < .01$), brand identification (BI) ($r = 0.444$, $p < .01$), and purchase intention (PI) ($r = 0.501$, $p < .01$), indicating that more favorable brand experiences tend to coincide with higher value perceptions, stronger identification, and greater intention to purchase. PV is also positively related to BI ($r = 0.468$, $p < .01$) and PI ($r = 0.484$, $p < .01$), suggesting that consumers who perceive higher overall value are more likely to identify with the brand and express stronger purchase intention. Likewise, BI shows a significant positive correlation with PI ($r = 0.448$, $p < .01$), implying that stronger consumer–brand identification corresponds to higher purchase intention. Overall, the moderate correlation magnitudes ($r \approx 0.44$–0.52) support the theoretical linkages while remaining below

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common multicollinearity thresholds, providing initial evidence consistent with the proposed model.

Table 3 Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

Variable	BE_mean	PV_mean	BI_mean	PI_mean
BE_mean	1			
PV_mean	0.517**	1		
BI_mean	0.444**	0.468**	1	
PI_mean	0.501**	0.484**	0.448**	1

Note: ** $p < 0.01$.

Table 4 reports the item analysis and internal consistency results for all constructs. Overall reliability is excellent: the Cronbach's α values are consistently high (α = 0.926) across the scales, and the "α if item deleted" statistics remain very similar (approximately 0.922–0.927), indicating that removing any single item would not meaningfully improve reliability and that the item set is stable. The corrected item–total correlations (CITC) are generally acceptable for most indicators, suggesting that items contribute to their respective constructs; meanwhile, the reported R^2 values are moderate to high (roughly 0.52–0.76), implying that each item shares substantial variance with its underlying construct.

Table 4 Reliability Analysis of Measurement Scales

Construct	Item	Initial CITC	Cronbach's α if Item Deleted	R^2	Cronbach's α
Brand Experience (BE)	BE1	0.335	0.925	0.642	0.926
	BE2	0.351	0.925	0.556	
	BE3	0.304	0.926	0.642	
	BE4	0.336	0.925	0.643	
	BE5	0.312	0.926	0.556	
	BE6	0.33	0.925	0.642	
	BE7	0.358	0.924	0.521	
	BE8	0.327	0.925	0.521	
	BE9	0.299	0.926	0.629	
	BE10	0.37	0.924	0.569	
	BE11	0.323	0.925	0.758	
	BE12	0.319	0.926	0.624	
Perceived Value (PV)	PV1	0.366	0.925	0.618	0.926
	PV2	0.172	0.927	0.592	
	PV3	0.71	0.922	0.595	
	PV4	0.21	0.927	0.554	
	PV5	0.24	0.926	0.521	
Brand Identification (BI)	BI1	0.335	0.925	0.581	0.926
	BI2	0.41	0.924	0.648	
	BI3	0.425	0.924	0.592	
	BI4	0.398	0.924	0.593	

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Construct	Item	Initial CITC	Cronbach's α if Item Deleted	R^2	Cronbach's α
Purchase Intention (PI)	PI1	0.38	0.925	0.651	0.926
	PI2	0.355	0.925	0.684	
	PI3	0.405	0.924	0.599	
	PI4	0.389	0.924	0.624	

Table 5 shows the results of the KMO and Bartlett's tests for each construct. The KMO values are high for all scales (0.885–0.896), indicating strong sampling adequacy and suggesting that the correlation patterns among items are sufficiently compact to justify factor analysis. In addition, Bartlett's tests of sphericity are all statistically significant ($p < .001$), with large chi-square statistics ($\chi^2 = 2334.37$ for BE; 2193.17 for PV; 1035.92 for BI; 1124.53 for PI), indicating that the item correlation matrices significantly depart from an identity matrix.

Table 5 KMO and Bartlett's Tests for Measurement Scales

Statistic	BE	PV	BI	PI
KMO measure of sampling adequacy	0.885	0.895	0.896	0.892
Bartlett's test (Approx. χ^2)	2334.37	2193.17	1035.92	1124.53
Degrees of freedom	66	10	6	6
Significance (p)	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001	< 0.001

Table 6 reports the overall goodness-of-fit statistics for the measurement model. All fit indices meet—and in most cases substantially exceed—the recommended thresholds, indicating an excellent model fit. Specifically, the χ^2/df ratio is 1.132 (< 3.00), suggesting minimal discrepancy between the observed and model-implied covariance matrices. The RMSEA is 0.018 (< 0.08), reflecting very close approximate fit. In addition, the incremental and absolute fit indices are all strong (GFI = 0.945; AGFI = 0.930; NFI = 0.945; TLI = 0.992; CFI = 0.993), each exceeding the 0.90 criterion. Collectively, these results provide robust evidence that the proposed measurement structure fits the data well, supporting the adequacy of the model for subsequent structural analyses.

Table 6 Measurement Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Recommended criteria	< 3.00	< 0.08	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90
Model results	1.132	0.018	0.945	0.930	0.945	0.992	0.993

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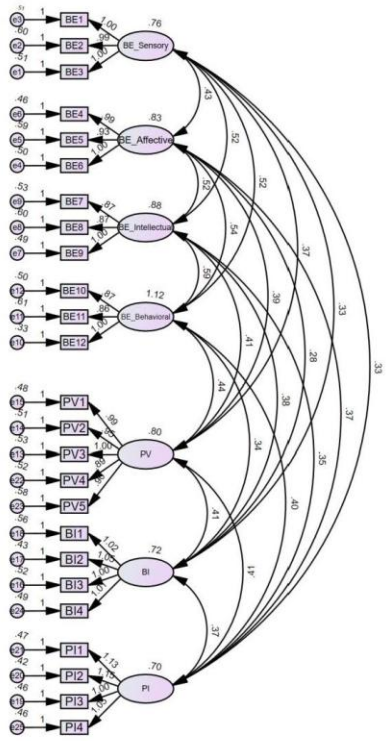


Figure 1 Measurement Model

Table 7 presents the convergent validity results for the measurement model. All indicators exhibit strong standardized factor loadings, ranging from 0.724 to 0.879, exceeding the commonly recommended threshold (≥ 0.70) and indicating that the items reliably represent their intended constructs. Composite reliability (CR) values are consistently high (0.80–0.87), surpassing the 0.70 criterion and demonstrating satisfactory internal consistency at the construct level. In addition, average variance extracted (AVE) values range from 0.57 to 0.66, all above the 0.50 benchmark, suggesting that each latent construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. Collectively, these results provide robust evidence of convergent validity for the four brand experience dimensions, perceived value, brand identification, and purchase intention, supporting the adequacy of the measurement model for subsequent structural testing.

Table 7 Convergent Validity Assessment

Latent construct	Indicators	Standardized loadings	CR	AVE
Sensory brand experience	BE1–BE3	0.744–0.774	0.81	0.59
Affective brand experience	BE4–BE6	0.742–0.799	0.82	0.61
Intellectual brand experience	BE7–BE9	0.725–0.802	0.80	0.58

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Behavioral brand experience	BE10–BE12	0.761–0.879	0.85	0.66
Perceived value	PV1–PV5	0.724–0.786	0.87	0.57
Brand identification	BI1–BI4	0.760–0.806	0.85	0.59
Purchase intention	PI1–PI4	0.776–0.827	0.86	0.61

Table 8 reports discriminant validity using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The diagonal elements (0.748–0.800) represent the square roots of AVE for each latent construct, while the off-diagonal elements are the inter-construct correlations. For discriminant validity to hold, the square root of AVE for each construct should exceed its correlations with other constructs. As shown, each construct's √AVE is higher than its highest correlation with any other construct—for example, sensory brand experience (√AVE = 0.762) exceeds its strongest correlation with intellectual brand experience (r = 0.633), and perceived value (√AVE = 0.775) exceeds its correlations with purchase intention (r = 0.556) and brand identification (r = 0.541). Similarly, purchase intention (√AVE = 0.787) is greater than its strongest association with perceived value (r = 0.556). Overall, these results provide clear evidence of satisfactory discriminant validity, indicating that the constructs are empirically distinct and can be meaningfully analyzed in the subsequent structural model.

Table 8 Discriminant Validity Assessment

Latent construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Sensory brand experience	0.762						
2 Affective brand experience	0.538	0.781					
3 Intellectual brand experience	0.633	0.608	0.800				
4 Behavioral brand experience	0.566	0.560	0.596	0.748			
5 Perceived value	0.479	0.481	0.486	0.466	0.775		
6 Brand identification	0.444	0.367	0.471	0.374	0.541	0.768	
7 Purchase intention	0.455	0.483	0.453	0.450	0.556	0.517	0.787

Note: Diagonal elements represent the square roots of AVE; off-diagonal elements represent inter-construct correlations.

Table 9 shows the goodness-of-fit statistics for the structural model. All indices satisfy the recommended thresholds, indicating that the proposed structural relationships fit the data well. Specifically, the χ^2/df ratio is 1.201 (< 3.00), suggesting a small discrepancy between the observed and model-implied covariance matrices. The RMSEA is 0.021 (< 0.08), demonstrating a close approximate fit. In addition, the absolute and incremental fit indices are consistently above 0.90 (GFI = 0.915; AGFI = 0.903; NFI = 0.918; TLI = 0.984; CFI = 0.985), providing further evidence of strong model fit. Collectively, these results support the adequacy of the hypothesized structural model for interpreting path estimates and mediation effects.

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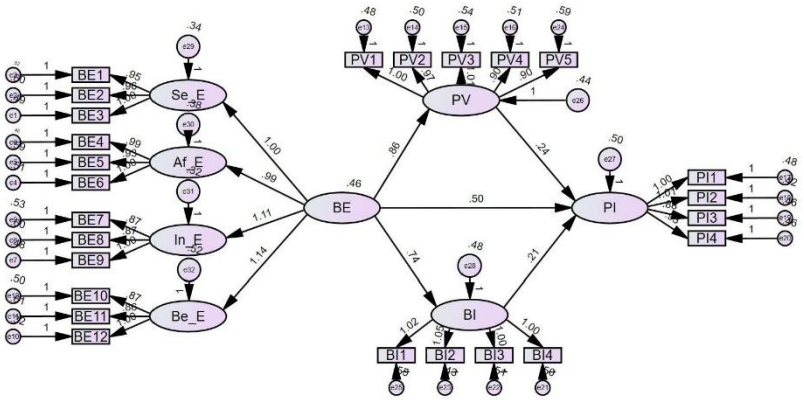


Figure 2 AMOS output of Path Diagram for the structural model

Table 9 Structural Model Fit Metrics

Fit index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI
Recommended threshold	< 3.00	< 0.08	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90
Model result	1.201	0.021	0.915	0.903	0.918	0.984	0.985

Table 10 presents the SEM path estimates for hypothesis testing. All hypothesized direct effects are statistically significant and in the expected positive direction. Brand experience exerts strong effects on both perceived value (BE → PV: β = 0.660, p < .001) and brand identification (BE → BI: β = 0.589, p < .001), suggesting that richer brand experiences simultaneously strengthen consumers' value evaluations and identity-based connection with the brand. Both mechanisms, in turn, positively predict purchase intention (PV → PI: β = 0.223, p = .002; BI → PI: β = 0.195, p = .003), indicating that consumers are more willing to purchase when they perceive higher overall value and feel stronger identification. Notably, brand experience also retains a significant direct effect on purchase intention (BE → PI: β = 0.358, p < .001), implying partial mediation: beyond its indirect influence via perceived value and brand identification, brand experience independently enhances consumers' purchase intention.

Table 10 Structural Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	β	S.E.	C.R.	p	Result
H1	BE → PV	0.860	0.660	0.095	9.044	< 0.001	Supported
H2	BE → BI	0.742	0.589	0.090	8.264	< 0.001	Supported
H3	PV → PI	0.238	0.223	0.076	3.130	0.002	Supported
H4	BI → PI	0.214	0.195	0.071	3.013	0.003	Supported
H5	BE → PI	0.497	0.358	0.122	4.064	< 0.001	Supported

Table 11 summarizes the bootstrap results for direct, indirect, and total

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effects. All direct paths are statistically significant, as the 95% confidence intervals (CIs) do not include zero: brand experience positively predicts perceived value (BE → PV: β = 0.660, 95% CI [0.521, 0.798]) and brand identification (BE → BI: β = 0.589, 95% CI [0.453, 0.732]), and both perceived value and brand identification significantly enhance purchase intention (PV → PI: β = 0.223, 95% CI [0.082, 0.365]; BI → PI: β = 0.195, 95% CI [0.071, 0.326]). Importantly, brand experience also has a significant direct effect on purchase intention (BE → PI: β = 0.358, 95% CI [0.185, 0.528]). In addition, two parallel indirect effects are supported: BE increases purchase intention through perceived value (BE → PV → PI: β = 0.147, 95% CI [0.056, 0.259]) and through brand identification (BE → BI → PI: β = 0.115, 95% CI [0.043, 0.203]). Because both indirect paths and the direct effect remain significant, the findings indicate partial mediation, meaning brand experience influences purchase intention both directly and via value-based and identity-based mechanisms. Consistent with this, the total effect of brand experience on purchase intention is substantial and significant (β = 0.620, 95% CI [0.473, 0.768]).

Table 11 Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects of Brand Experience on Purchase Intention

Path	Effect type	Estimate	S.E.	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	Interpretation
BE → PV	Direct	0.660	0.073	0.521	0.798	Significant
BE → BI	Direct	0.589	0.071	0.453	0.732	Significant
PV → PI	Direct	0.223	0.071	0.082	0.365	Significant
BI → PI	Direct	0.195	0.065	0.071	0.326	Significant
BE → PI	Direct	0.358	0.088	0.185	0.528	Significant
BE → PV → PI	Indirect	0.147	0.052	0.056	0.259	Significant
BE → BI → PI	Indirect	0.115	0.041	0.043	0.203	Significant
BE → PI (Total)	Total	0.620	0.076	0.473	0.768	Significant

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings provide consistent support for the proposed S–O–R framework in the NEV context. Brand experience exerts strong positive effects on perceived value (β = 0.660, p < .001) and brand identification (β = 0.589, p < .001), indicating that experiential stimuli simultaneously activate consumers' cognitive evaluations and identity-based connections. Both perceived value (β = 0.223, p = .002) and brand identification (β = 0.195, p = .003) significantly increase purchase intention, while brand experience also retains a direct effect on purchase intention (β = 0.358, p < .001). Bootstrap results further confirm two significant indirect effects—via perceived value (β = 0.147, 95% CI [0.056, 0.259]) and via brand identification (β = 0.115, 95% CI [0.043, 0.203])—indicating partial mediation and suggesting that brand experience

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influences intention through both value-based and identity-based routes.

The study contributes to the literature by extending brand experience research to technology-intensive durable goods and by clarifying a dual-mechanism explanation of how experience converts into purchase intention. Practically, the results imply that Xiaomi Auto and NEV marketers should treat experience design as a strategic lever: (i) enhance multi-touchpoint experiences (e.g., test drives, showrooms, digital demonstrations) that make intelligent features tangible; (ii) explicitly translate experience into value perceptions through clear cost–benefit cues and usage scenarios; and (iii) strengthen brand identification by leveraging ecosystem/community strategies (e.g., owner communities, co-creation, and innovation-lifestyle narratives). Future research may improve generalizability by using multi-city or cross-brand samples, and strengthen causal inference through longitudinal or experimental designs while incorporating additional mediators (e.g., trust, perceived innovativeness) and moderators (e.g., technology readiness, price sensitivity).

Overall, this study demonstrates that brand experience is a central driver of consumers' purchase intention toward Xiaomi Auto NEVs, operating both directly and indirectly through perceived value and brand identification. By integrating cognitive and identity pathways within an S–O–R framework, the research offers a parsimonious explanation of experience-driven intention formation in the emerging NEV market and provides actionable guidance for experience-centered branding strategies.

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