



Examining the Relationship between E-Commerce Experience and Repurchase Intention in China: The Mediating Effect of Perceived Value

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates whether consumers' e-commerce experience strengthens repurchase intention in China and whether this relationship operates through perceived value. By modeling the experience–value–intention mechanism, the study clarifies how platform-level experience translates into repeat purchasing intentions in a market characterized by intense competition and low switching frictions. A cross-sectional survey using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) was administered to Chinese online shoppers. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed and 370 were returned (response rate = 82.2%). After screening for incomplete and low-quality responses, 342 valid responses were retained for analysis (effective response rate = 76.0%). The research model was evaluated using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS with 5,000 bootstrap resamples. Results show that e-commerce experience significantly influences perceived value ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$), which subsequently predicts repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.001$). Mediation analysis confirms a significant partial mediating effect, and the model explains 43.8% of the variance in repurchase intention. The study contributes to e-commerce loyalty research by emphasizing that experience-based differentiation primarily drives repeat purchase intention through consumers' value assessments. The findings suggest that improving end-to-end experience (information quality, transaction convenience, fulfillment transparency, and service recovery) should be evaluated by its contribution to perceived value rather than by isolated interface metrics.

Keywords: E-commerce Experience, Perceived Value, Repurchase Intention, Mediation, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling, China

JEL Classifications: D12, L81, M31

1. INTRODUCTION

China has become one of the world's most sophisticated e-commerce arenas, where platform ecosystems integrate marketplace retailing, social commerce, live-stream selling, and on-demand logistics. In such an environment, customer acquisition is no longer the primary challenge for major platforms; sustaining growth increasingly depends on retaining users and converting 1st-time buyers into repeat purchasers. Repurchase intention the consumer's stated likelihood of buying again from the same platform or seller therefore serves as a practical indicator of

relationship continuity and a precursor to longer-term loyalty outcomes. Prior research in electronic commerce suggests that satisfaction and perceived value are central antecedents of e-loyalty and repeat purchasing behavior (Anderson and Srinivasan, 2003). However, the underlying mechanism through which platform-level experience translates into repurchase intention remains insufficiently specified, particularly in highly competitive digital markets.

Compared with offline channels, online shopping reduces geographic constraints and expands choice, but it also increases

the consumer's reliance on digital cues when evaluating service quality and transaction safety. Consumers cannot directly inspect products or interact with employees in a physical setting; instead, they infer reliability from search functionality, information completeness, payment security signals, delivery traceability, and the ease of initiating returns. These touchpoints collectively shape the consumer's experience of the platform and determine whether the platform is perceived as effortless, dependable, and worth returning to.

In the Chinese context, experience quality has become even more consequential because competition is both multi-sided and rapid. Platforms and sellers can imitate visible features quickly, and algorithmic recommendation systems can redirect attention to competing offers within seconds. As a result, repeat purchase behavior may hinge less on a single transaction outcome and more on the consumer's aggregated memory of how smoothly the platform supported decision-making and problem resolution across multiple episodes. From a managerial perspective, this implies that "experience" should be conceptualized as an end-to-end evaluation rather than as a narrow assessment of interface aesthetics or website design.

Although prior research establishes that online experience and service quality are associated with loyalty outcomes, many empirical models treat perceived value as a downstream consequence rather than a central mechanism. Perceived value captures consumers' evaluation of whether the benefits received from the transaction justify the monetary, time, and psychological costs incurred. In online exchanges, the sacrifice component often includes search effort, cognitive load created by complex promotions, uncertainty about delivery and authenticity, and the hassle of returns. Consequently, experience improvements may translate into repurchase intention primarily when they increase the perceived value of the overall exchange.

Another limitation in the existing literature is that the pathway from experience to repurchase is often tested in contexts where platform ecosystems differ substantially from China's mobile-first, content-driven, and promotion-intensive marketplace. In China, consumers face frequent platform campaigns (e.g., time-limited discounts and tiered coupons), dynamic pricing, and fast-changing product availability. These features can elevate perceived complexity and raise the value of friction-reducing design. Accordingly, empirical evidence grounded in the Chinese market can enrich theory by clarifying the psychological processes through which experience shapes repeat purchase intentions under high information density.

To address these issues, this study develops and tests a parsimonious mediation model linking e-commerce experience (EEX), perceived value (PV), and repurchase intention (RI). The model posits that EEX improves PV and that PV, in turn, increases RI, while allowing for a residual direct effect from EEX to RI. The model is assessed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), a method well suited for predictive and explanatory modeling with latent constructs and for estimating indirect effects via bootstrapping.

The study makes two contributions. First, it offers a mechanism-based explanation for repurchase intention by explicitly modeling perceived value as a mediator between e-commerce experience and repurchase intention. Second, it provides a SmartPLS-consistent reporting template covering measurement quality, discriminant validity, and mediation testing using bootstrapped confidence intervals. By doing so, it supports both theoretical development and transparent reporting practices in PLS-SEM research on platform commerce.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. E-Commerce Experience in Platform Commerce

E-commerce experience refers to a consumer's holistic perception of interacting with an online platform across pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase stages. Contemporary customer experience research emphasizes that experience is co-created across multiple touchpoints and dynamically shapes subsequent behavioral outcomes (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). This perspective reinforces the importance of modeling e-commerce experience as an integrated construct rather than as isolated interface attributes. Early work on online customer experience emphasized the role of interactive environments and cognitive immersion in shaping consumer responses (Novak et al., 2000). Building on this foundation, contemporary platform research extends the experience construct to include transactional efficiency, fulfillment transparency, and service recovery. Conceptually, experience extends beyond isolated measures of website design quality because it captures how digital interfaces, platform policies, and service processes collectively reduce or amplify friction during shopping episodes. In platform commerce, experience is shaped not only by system usability such as search functionality, navigation clarity, and payment flow but also by fulfillment execution and post-purchase service recovery.

Recent empirical research in digital commerce confirms that customer experience quality significantly influences loyalty-related outcomes, particularly in highly competitive platform ecosystems (Hanaysha et al., 2025). A distinctive feature of Chinese e-commerce is the dominance of mobile interfaces combined with content-based recommendation mechanisms, including short videos, livestream commerce, and social sharing. This environment intensifies the importance of experience because consumers often make rapid decisions under heavy information exposure. When platforms reduce cognitive burden through transparent pricing, clear promotional rules, and predictable service policies, consumers are more likely to perceive the platform as supportive and dependable. Conversely, complex promotions or inconsistent service may generate elevated "hassle costs," even when product prices remain competitive.

2.2. Perceived Value as an Evaluative Mechanism

Perceived value is commonly defined as a consumer's overall assessment of utility based on a comparison between benefits received and sacrifices made. Consistent with service quality theory, perceived value is closely associated with subsequent behavioral intentions, including loyalty and repurchase behavior (Zeithaml et al., 1996). In digital settings, this relationship may be amplified

due to increased transparency and comparability across platforms. This evaluation integrates multiple benefit components such as product quality, convenience, and service reliability with multiple cost elements, including price, time, effort, and uncertainty. In e-commerce settings, non-monetary sacrifices are particularly salient because digital transactions often shift effort from physical travel to information search and coordination processes.

Recent studies demonstrate that perceived value remains a central predictor of repurchase intention in online environments (Tan et al., 2024). Perceived value is frequently conceptualized as multidimensional, encompassing functional, emotional, and social dimensions. Recent empirical evidence confirms that digital service quality influences repurchase intention primarily through perceived value and trust mechanisms (Wang et al., 2023), supporting the view that value appraisal operates as a key transmission channel between experience and behavioral intention. In platform commerce, functional and convenience-related aspects are especially influential because consumers compare platforms based on price competitiveness, delivery reliability, and seller governance. Emotional value may arise from confidence and reduced anxiety when platforms provide secure payment systems and transparent dispute resolution.

Because perceived value consolidates multiple experiential cues into a single evaluative judgment, it serves as a plausible mediator between experience and repurchase-related outcomes. Consumers may enjoy a convenient interface but refrain from repurchase if hidden costs undermine perceived value. Conversely, minor inconveniences may be tolerated when overall value is perceived as superior.

2.3. Repurchase Intention in Digital Markets

Repurchase intention reflects a consumer's willingness to buy again from the same platform and is closely linked to loyalty and continuance intention in digital contexts. Prior research in online commerce demonstrates that repurchase intention is shaped by trust and satisfaction mechanisms within institutionalized digital environments (Fang et al., 2014). This perspective highlights the importance of governance reliability and perceived fairness in sustaining repeat purchasing behavior. Repurchase intention has long been conceptualized as a key outcome variable in service and relationship marketing research, often modeled as a function of perceived value and satisfaction (Hellier et al., 2003). Extending this logic to digital platform environments requires examining how experiential cues shape these evaluative judgments. Repurchase decisions are shaped by both rational evaluations and behavioural routines. Consumers compare expected value across alternatives while also benefiting from familiarity with stored payment methods, established trust in logistics systems, and procedural knowledge of platform rules.

Positive confirmation of expectations across transactions reinforces beliefs that future exchanges will be smooth, thereby strengthening repurchase intention. In platform-based markets, repurchase intention is strategically important because it supports network effects and reduces customer acquisition costs. Given that platforms frequently subsidize initial transactions through

promotional incentives, sustained repurchase is essential for long-term profitability.

2.4. An Integrative Perspective: Experience, Value, and Repurchase

Integrating these perspectives suggests a coherent mechanism in which e-commerce experience provides performance cues and emotional signals that shape perceived value, and perceived value subsequently influences repurchase intention. Experience may also exert a direct influence by fostering familiarity and signaling competence.

This framework aligns with the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) logic, where experiential stimuli (platform features and service processes) influence internal evaluations (perceived value), which in turn shape behavioral responses (repurchase intention). Given the high substitutability of platforms in China's e-commerce market, explicitly modeling this mediation pathway is necessary to clarify the relative contributions of direct and value-mediated effects in predicting repurchase intention.

3. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

This study proposes a mediation framework in which e-commerce experience (EEX) influences repurchase intention (RI) both directly and indirectly through perceived value (PV). The hypotheses are grounded in consumer value theory and online service experience perspectives. The central argument is that platform experience shapes the consumer's evaluation of the exchange trade-off, and this evaluation subsequently influences repeat purchasing decisions in competitive digital markets.

3.1. E-Commerce Experience and Perceived Value

E-commerce experience reflects a consumer's overall assessment of how effectively a platform supports shopping activities and manages transaction uncertainty. A smooth and reliable experience reduces cognitive effort, time expenditure, and perceived risk. According to consumer value theory, perceived value is formed through a comparison between benefits received and sacrifices made. When the platform reduces non-monetary sacrifices—such as search effort, ambiguity, or delivery uncertainty—the perceived net utility of the transaction increases.

In digital markets, consumers frequently evaluate platforms not only based on product price but also on convenience, transparency, and governance reliability. A well-designed interface, clear information presentation, and predictable service recovery mechanisms can lower perceived sacrifices and enhance the overall exchange evaluation. Conversely, complicated checkout processes, unclear promotions, or inconsistent service may elevate hassle costs and diminish value perceptions.

Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H₁: E-commerce experience positively influences perceived value.

3.2. Perceived Value and Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention reflects a consumer's willingness to buy again from the same platform. In online markets characterized

by low switching barriers, repurchase decisions depend heavily on whether consumers perceive returning to the same platform as worthwhile. Perceived value functions as an integrated evaluation of benefits relative to sacrifices, and this evaluation serves as a key determinant of behavioral intention.

When consumers judge that a platform offers superior net utility—through competitive pricing, reliable fulfillment, and reduced uncertainty—they are more likely to expect favorable outcomes in future transactions. This expectation reduces the motivation to search for alternatives and strengthens repurchase intention. In contrast, when perceived value is low, consumers are more likely to switch platforms despite prior usage.

Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₂: Perceived value positively influences repurchase intention.

3.3. The Direct Effect of Experience on Repurchase Intention

Although perceived value is expected to play a central mediating role, e-commerce experience may also exert a direct influence on repurchase intention. Experience can shape intention through habitual and relational mechanisms that are not fully captured by value evaluations. Repeated positive experiences foster familiarity with platform routines, build trust in governance mechanisms, and reduce anticipated effort in future transactions. These process-based mechanisms may increase the likelihood of repurchase even when value perceptions remain stable.

Given these considerations, experience may influence repurchase both through value-based evaluation and through independent pathways such as familiarity and trust. Therefore, the model includes a direct path from EEX to RI:

H₃: E-commerce experience positively influences repurchase intention.

3.4. The Mediating Role of Perceived Value

Integrating the above arguments suggests that perceived value serves as a psychological mechanism linking experience and repurchase intention. E-commerce experience shapes consumers' evaluation of the exchange trade-off, and this evaluation becomes a primary determinant of repeat purchasing decisions. If the experience enhances perceived value, and perceived value drives repurchase intention, then an indirect pathway should exist from experience to repurchase through value.

At the same time, because experience may also influence repurchase through familiarity and trust, the mediation is expected to be partial rather than full.

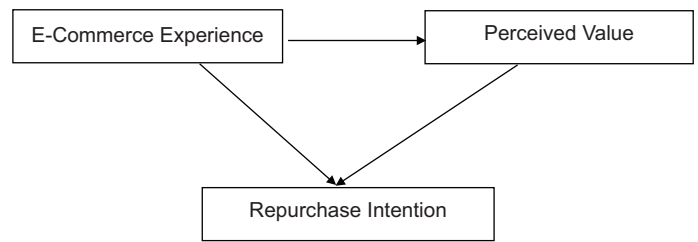
Thus, the final hypothesis is formulated as:

H₄: Perceived value mediates the relationship between e-commerce experience and repurchase intention.

3.5. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded primarily in consumer value theory and is further supported by the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework. Together, these perspectives provide a coherent

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



explanation of how platform experiences translate into repurchase intentions in digital commerce environments.

Consumer value theory conceptualizes value as an overall evaluative judgment formed through a comparison between perceived benefits and perceived sacrifices. In online contexts, perceived sacrifices extend beyond monetary price to include time expenditure, cognitive effort, uncertainty, and the psychological costs associated with managing potential service failures. E-commerce experience directly influences these non-monetary sacrifices by altering the level of effort required to complete transactions and the degree of confidence consumers have in platform governance mechanisms. When experience quality reduces effort and uncertainty, perceived value increases, thereby strengthening behavioral intention.

The proposed model is also consistent with the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) paradigm. Within this perspective, platform experience represents the stimulus, perceived value functions as the organism reflecting internal evaluation, and repurchase intention constitutes the behavioral response. This structure clarifies the psychological process through which external platform characteristics influence future purchasing decisions. Rather than assuming a direct deterministic relationship between experience and behavior, the S–O–R logic emphasizes the mediating role of evaluative cognition.

In addition, continuance theory from information systems research suggests that sustained usage and repeat purchasing are shaped by post-use evaluations that confirm or disconfirm prior expectations. Perceived value captures this post-purchase assessment in a concise form and therefore serves as an appropriate mediator linking experience and repurchase intention. By integrating consumer value theory, S–O–R logic, and continuance reasoning, the framework offers a structured theoretical foundation for examining both the direct and indirect effects of e-commerce experience on repurchase intention. Figure 1 presents the proposed EEX–PV–RI mediation framework.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional research design using a structured questionnaire to examine the relationships among e-commerce experience (EEX), perceived value (PV), and repurchase intention (RI). A cross-sectional approach is appropriate for investigating relationships among perceptual constructs measured at a single point in time, particularly when the objective is to test an explanatory mediation mechanism rather than to establish

longitudinal causal inference. The unit of analysis was the individual consumer's evaluation of a recent online shopping experience.

All constructs were specified as reflective latent variables. Reflective specification is appropriate because the indicators are conceptualized as manifestations of an underlying perception and are therefore expected to covary. The questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which is commonly used in consumer behaviour research to capture attitudinal evaluations.

4.2. Population, Sampling, and Data Collection

4.2.1. Population

The target population comprised consumers in China who had recently purchased products through an e-commerce platform. The focus on recent purchasers ensures that responses are grounded in concrete transactional experiences rather than abstract or hypothetical evaluations. Respondents were instructed to answer all questionnaire items with reference to their most recent online purchase on a major platform, including marketplace applications, social commerce platforms, or branded online stores.

4.2.2. Sampling

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was employed due to the exploratory and prediction-oriented nature of the study. Online distribution channels and community networks were used to reach respondents who met the screening criteria. This approach is commonly adopted in consumer behavior research where access to a complete sampling frame is not available and where the objective is to test structural relationships among latent constructs.

4.2.3. Data collection

A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed, of which 370 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 82.2%. Following data screening procedures—including the removal of cases with substantial missing data, uniform response patterns, and failed attention-check items—342 valid responses were retained for analysis. This yielded an effective response rate of 76.0%. All statistical analyses reported in this study are based on the final sample size of $n = 342$.

The final sample size is adequate for partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM), which is suitable for prediction-oriented models involving mediation analysis. Given that the maximum

number of structural paths directed at a single endogenous construct in the proposed model is two, the sample exceeds recommended minimum thresholds for variance-based SEM and provides sufficient statistical power for estimating the hypothesized relationships.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Measurement Model Assessment

The reflective measurement model was evaluated in terms of indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity following established PLS-SEM guidelines (Hair et al., 2022).

5.1.1. Indicator reliability

Indicator reliability was assessed using outer loadings and bootstrapped t-values. As shown in Table 1, most items loaded strongly on their intended constructs, with loadings ranging from 0.792 to 0.880. All loadings were statistically significant at $P < 0.001$.

One indicator (EEX4) exhibited a loading of 0.688, slightly below the commonly recommended threshold of 0.70. However, the item was retained because it exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold (approximately 0.65), remained statistically significant ($t = 9.412$, $P < 0.001$), and contributed to content validity by capturing fulfillment transparency. Retaining the item did not adversely affect composite reliability or AVE values. Overall, the indicator reliability criteria were satisfied (Table 1).

5.1.2. Internal consistency reliability

Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.865 to 0.889 indicating satisfactory reliability without suggesting redundancy among items. Composite reliability values ranged from 0.909 to 0.916, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 and remaining below 0.95, which confirms strong internal consistency while avoiding item duplication concerns. Thus, internal consistency reliability was established for all constructs.

5.1.3. Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity was examined using both the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) and the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

Table 1: Reliability and convergent validity

Construct/Indicator	Outer loading	t-value	P-value	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
EEX/EEX1	0.842	29.842	<0.001	0.876	0.909	0.668
EEX2	0.875	37.515	<0.001			
EEX3	0.810	23.006	<0.001			
EEX4	0.688	9.412	<0.001			
EEX5	0.858	31.274	<0.001			
PV/PV1	0.825	26.917	<0.001	0.889	0.916	0.687
PV2	0.865	34.201	<0.001			
PV3	0.813	24.108	<0.001			
PV4	0.792	21.556	<0.001			
PV5	0.848	29.667	<0.001			
RI/RI1	0.880	42.113	<0.001	0.865	0.910	0.717
RI2	0.830	27.880	<0.001			
RI3	0.810	22.641	<0.001			
RI4	0.865	36.900	<0.001			

HTMT values ranged from 0.734 to 0.821, remaining below the conservative 0.85 threshold and indicating satisfactory construct distinctiveness (Henseler et al., 2015). The Fornell-Larcker matrix further confirmed discriminant validity, as the square roots of AVE for e-commerce experience (0.817), perceived value (0.829), and repurchase intention (0.847) exceeded the corresponding inter-construct correlations (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). These findings suggest that the constructs are related yet empirically distinct, supporting meaningful structural interpretation in the subsequent analysis (Table 2a and b).

5.2. Structural Model Assessment

5.2.1. Collinearity assessment

Before interpreting the structural relationships, collinearity diagnostics were examined to ensure that path estimates were not biased by redundant predictors. Variance inflation factor (VIF) values for the predictors of repurchase intention were below conservative thresholds (all VIF <3.0), indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern. The absence of excessive collinearity supports stable estimation of path coefficients and meaningful interpretation of direct and indirect effects.

5.2.2. Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

Structural path coefficients were estimated using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples and two-tailed tests. As reported in Table 3, e-commerce experience has a positive and significant effect on perceived value ($\beta = 0.520$, $t = 12.500$, $P < 0.001$), supporting H_1 . Perceived value also has a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.550$, $t = 11.200$, $P < 0.001$), supporting H_2 . In addition, e-commerce experience retains a

positive and significant direct effect on repurchase intention ($\beta = 0.180$, $t = 3.150$, $P = 0.002$), supporting H_3 . All hypothesized paths are statistically significant and consistent with theoretical expectations. Figure 2 presents the structural model with standardized coefficients and R^2 values.

5.2.3. Coefficient of determination (R^2) and effect size (f^2)

The explanatory power of the model was evaluated using R^2 values. E-commerce experience explains 27.0% of the variance in perceived value ($R^2 = 0.270$), indicating moderate explanatory strength. Repurchase intention is explained by e-commerce experience and perceived value with $R^2 = 0.438$, suggesting that the model accounts for a substantial proportion of variance in consumer repurchase behavior.

Effect sizes (f^2) were examined to assess the relative contribution of each predictor. The effect of e-commerce experience on perceived value is large ($f^2 = 0.370$), while perceived value exerts a large effect on repurchase intention ($f^2 = 0.393$). In contrast, e-commerce experience shows a small incremental effect on repurchase intention once perceived value is included ($f^2 = 0.041$). This pattern is consistent with a mediated mechanism in which perceived value carries the primary explanatory weight (Table 4).

5.2.4. Predictive relevance (Q^2)

Predictive relevance was assessed using Stone-Geisser's Q^2 obtained via blindfolding. Both endogenous constructs produced positive Q^2 values (perceived value: $Q^2 = 0.186$; repurchase intention: $Q^2 = 0.278$), indicating that the model demonstrates predictive relevance. These findings suggest that the structural model has out-of-sample predictive capability rather than merely explaining in-sample variance.

5.2.5. Mediation analysis

The mediating role of perceived value was evaluated through the bootstrapped indirect effect. The indirect effect of e-commerce experience on repurchase intention via perceived value is $\beta = 0.286$, with a 95% confidence interval that does not include zero, supporting H_4 . The indirect effect equals the product of the constituent paths ($0.520 \times 0.550 = 0.286$), and the total effect equals the sum of the direct and indirect effects ($0.180 + 0.286 = 0.466$).

Because both the indirect and direct effects remain statistically significant and share the same sign, the mediation pattern is consistent with complementary partial mediation. This indicates that e-commerce experience influences repurchase intention both indirectly through perceived value and directly through additional mechanisms such as familiarity and reduced anticipated effort.

Figure 2: Structural model with standardized path coefficients and R^2 values

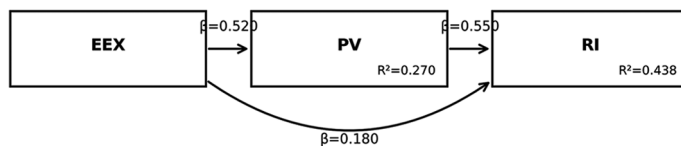


Table 2a: HTMT discriminant validity

	EEX	PV	RI
E-commerce experience (EEX)			
Perceived value (PV)	0.734		
Repurchase intention (RI)	0.756	0.821	

Table 2b: Fornell-Larcker criterion

	EEX	PV	RI
E-commerce experience (EEX)	0.817	0.520	0.466
Perceived value (PV)	0.520	0.829	0.644
Repurchase intention (RI)	0.466	0.644	0.847

Table 3: Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

Hypotheses	Original sample (β)	Standard deviation	T statistics	P-values	95% CI (LL)	95% CI (UL)
H_1 : EEX $\rightarrow$ PV	0.520	0.042	12.500	<0.001	0.438	0.602
H_2 : PV $\rightarrow$ RI	0.550	0.049	11.200	<0.001	0.454	0.646
H_3 : EEX $\rightarrow$ RI	0.180	0.057	3.150	0.002	0.068	0.292
H_4 : EEX $\rightarrow$ PV $\rightarrow$ RI (Indirect)	0.286	0.042	6.800	<0.001	0.204	0.368

Table 4: Structural model quality (f^2 , R^2 , Q^2)

Construct	F-square PV	F-square RI	R-square	R-square adjusted	Q-square
E-commerce experience (EEX)	0.370	0.041			
Perceived value (PV)		0.393	0.270	0.268	0.186
Repurchase intention (RI)			0.438	0.434	0.278

6. DISCUSSION

This study examined how e-commerce experience influences repurchase intention in China and whether perceived value functions as the primary mediating mechanism. The findings confirm that perceived value serves as the central pathway linking experience to repurchase intention. E-commerce experience significantly enhances perceived value, and perceived value strongly predicts repurchase intention. Moreover, the direct effect of experience on repurchase intention remains significant, indicating complementary partial mediation.

The strong effect of experience on perceived value suggests that consumers convert experiential cues such as navigational ease, transparency, and service reliability into an overall exchange evaluation. In digital environments, non-monetary sacrifices including cognitive effort, time, and uncertainty play a crucial role in shaping value perceptions. When platforms reduce these hidden costs, consumers perceive the transaction as more worthwhile. Thus, experience quality operates as a mechanism for value construction rather than merely as an operational feature.

The substantial influence of perceived value on repurchase intention reflects the competitive dynamics of China's e-commerce market. Given the low switching barriers and cross-platform seller overlap, consumers are likely to base continuity decisions on comparative net utility rather than on inertia alone. Repurchase intention therefore appears to be driven primarily by sustained value evaluation.

The persistence of a significant direct effect from experience to repurchase intention suggests additional process-based mechanisms beyond value appraisal. Familiarity with platform routines may reduce anticipated future effort, while consistently positive experiences may signal platform competence and governance reliability. These mechanisms complement value-based evaluation and reinforce behavioural continuity.

6.1. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the literature in three main ways.

First, it conceptualizes e-commerce experience as a holistic construct encompassing search, transaction, fulfillment, and service recovery stages. This extends prior interface-centric approaches by recognizing the multi-touchpoint nature of digital platform evaluation.

Second, by modelling perceived value as a mediator, the study clarifies the psychological mechanism linking experience and repurchase intention. Rather than assuming a direct experiential impact, the findings demonstrate that experience primarily

operates through exchange-based appraisal. This supports and extends consumer value theory within competitive digital marketplaces.

Third, the complementary partial mediation pattern suggests that repurchase intention formation involves both evaluative and process-based drivers. Integrating value-based appraisal with familiarity and relational signalling mechanisms provides a more nuanced understanding of continuity behaviour in digital environments.

6.2. Practical Implications

The findings offer several practical implications for digital platform operators and ecosystem stakeholders. First, experience-related investments should be evaluated based on their ability to enhance perceived value rather than solely on short-term satisfaction indicators. Improvements in search efficiency, pricing transparency, logistics visibility, and service recovery responsiveness reduce perceived effort and uncertainty, thereby strengthening consumers' evaluation of the overall benefits–sacrifices trade-off.

Second, in highly competitive markets such as China, where price competition is intense and switching barriers are low, perceived value functions as a strategic differentiator. Platforms should therefore prioritize experience designs that systematically lower non-monetary costs, including cognitive load and procedural friction. Small reductions in perceived hassle can materially increase value perceptions and improve repurchase likelihood.

Third, the presence of a residual direct experience effect suggests that consistency and predictability in platform processes are also critical. Stable interface layouts, transparent promotional rules, and reliable after-sales policies foster familiarity and reduce anticipated future effort. These process-based advantages may strengthen repeat purchasing behavior even when competitors offer comparable pricing.

Finally, platforms may benefit from implementing structured mechanisms to monitor perceived value directly. Periodic value-based assessments or behavioral analytics that capture friction-related indicators can provide actionable insights into whether experiential improvements are effectively translating into sustained customer relationships.

6.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

6.3.1. Limitations

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional research design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among e-commerce experience, perceived value, and repurchase intention. Although the structural model

is theoretically grounded and statistically robust, longitudinal or experimental designs would provide stronger evidence regarding causal sequencing.

Second, the model adopts a parsimonious structure that includes only one mediating variable. While perceived value was supported as a central mechanism, additional constructs such as satisfaction, trust, perceived risk, or habit were not incorporated. The omission of these variables may partly explain the residual direct effect of e-commerce experience on repurchase intention.

Third, all constructs were measured using self-reported survey data collected at a single point in time. This approach may introduce common method bias and subjective evaluation bias. Although statistical diagnostics suggest acceptable measurement validity, integrating behavioural data would strengthen inference.

Finally, the sample focuses on Chinese consumers and does not differentiate between specific platform types. Given the diversity of China's e-commerce ecosystem, contextual variation may exist that is not captured in the current design.

6.3.2. Future research directions

Future research can extend this study in several directions. Longitudinal studies could investigate how cumulative platform experiences shape perceived value over time and how such evaluations translate into actual repurchase behavior rather than intention alone. Experimental designs may also test how specific experiential manipulations influence value perceptions.

Subsequent studies could incorporate additional mediators and moderators to refine the explanatory mechanism. Variables such as trust, satisfaction, habit formation, perceived risk, and switching costs may further clarify the complementary pathways identified in this research.

Moreover, comparative or multi-group analyses across different platform formats such as traditional marketplaces, social commerce, and live-stream platforms could provide deeper insight into contextual differences in the experience–value–repurchase relationship. Cross-country comparisons may also reveal whether the dominance of value-based evaluation holds in markets with different competitive structures.

Finally, future research could integrate survey data with behavioural metrics such as transaction frequency, retention rates, and clickstream data to enhance predictive validity and practical relevance.

7. CONCLUSION

This study investigated how e-commerce experience influences repurchase intention in China and examined the mediating role of perceived value in this relationship. Using a PLS-SEM framework with empirical data from 342 consumers, the findings demonstrate that perceived value serves as the primary mechanism linking experience and repurchase intention. While e-commerce

experience directly affects repurchase intention, its strongest influence operates through enhancing consumers' evaluation of the benefits sacrifices trade-off.

The results highlight the central role of value-based appraisal in competitive digital marketplaces characterized by low switching barriers and high substitutability. In such environments, consumers appear to sustain platform relationships not merely because of operational convenience but because experience improvements meaningfully enhance perceived value. The complementary partial mediation pattern suggests that both evaluative and process-based mechanisms jointly shape continuity behaviour.

Overall, this study provides an integrated framework for understanding repurchase intention formation in platform-based commerce. By positioning perceived value as the key psychological transmission mechanism, the research offers a coherent explanation of how experiential design translates into sustained customer relationships in China's dynamic e-commerce ecosystem.

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