

From Perceived Value to Repurchase Intention: The Mediating Role of Brand Preference among Customers in Gujarat

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ABSTRACT:

In highly competitive consumer markets, understanding the factors that drive repeat purchasing behavior has become critical for scholars and practitioners. Repurchase intention is widely recognized as a key indicator of customer retention and long-term firm performance. Drawing on expectancy–value theory and relational exchange perspectives, this study examines the relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention, with brand preference conceptualized as a mediating variable. Perceived value represents consumers' overall evaluation of benefits received relative to sacrifices made, while brand preference reflects a favourable attitudinal predisposition toward a particular brand. Using a quantitative research design, primary data will be collected from customers in Gujarat through a structured questionnaire employing established measurement scales. Structural equation modelling will test the hypothesized relationships and the mediating role of brand preference. By integrating perceived value, brand preference, and repurchase intention into a single framework, the study seeks to extend existing literature by clarifying how value perceptions translate into repeat purchase intentions. The findings are expected to offer theoretical contributions to consumer behavior research and practical insights for marketers aiming to enhance customer retention through value creation and brand management strategies in regional markets such as Gujarat.

Keywords: Perceived Value; Brand Preference; Repurchase Intention; Consumer Behavior; Customer Retention; Relationship Marketing; Expectancy–Value Theory; Gujarat

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Introduction

Customer retention has become one of the most critical strategic priorities for organizations operating in highly competitive and rapidly changing markets. As product and service offerings become increasingly standardized and competitors can easily imitate pricing and functional features, firms are compelled to focus on building enduring relationships with customers rather than relying solely on transactional exchanges. In this context, repurchase intention has emerged as a central construct in marketing and consumer behaviour research because it reflects customers' future-oriented behavioural commitment toward a brand or firm (Hellier et al., 2003). Repurchase intention refers to a consumer's conscious plan or subjective probability to repurchase a product or service from the same provider in the future. It represents a key outcome variable in relationship marketing, as it is closely associated with customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and long-term profitability. Hellier et al. (2003) conceptualized repurchase intention as a post-consumption evaluative judgment that is influenced by multiple antecedents, including perceived value, satisfaction, and switching costs. Their work highlighted that repurchase intention is not simply an outcome of satisfaction but rather a complex cognitive and affective evaluation process shaped by consumers' overall assessment of an exchange relationship.

Among the various determinants of repurchase intention, perceived value has been consistently identified as one of the most influential factors. Perceived value captures the consumer's overall evaluation of the benefits received relative to the sacrifices made during an exchange (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Unlike narrow constructs such as price fairness or perceived quality, perceived value offers a holistic assessment that integrates functional, emotional, and social considerations. Wu et al. (2014) emphasized that perceived value constitutes the foundation of relational exchanges and plays a pivotal role in determining whether consumers choose to continue or discontinue relationships with firms.

As markets become more customer-centric, perceived value has gained prominence as a strategic lever for differentiation and competitive

advantage. Firms that consistently deliver superior value are more likely to foster favorable consumer evaluations, strengthen relational bonds, and encourage repeat purchasing behavior. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) demonstrated that perceived value is multidimensional in nature, encompassing emotional value, social value, quality or performance value, and price or value-for-money. These dimensions collectively shape consumers' overall judgments and subsequent behavioral intentions. However, perceived value alone may not be sufficient to fully explain repurchase intention. Researchers have increasingly recognized the importance of attitudinal constructs that mediate the relationship between value perceptions and behavioral outcomes. One such construct is brand preference, which reflects a consumer's predisposition to favor one brand over competing alternatives. Brand preference is rooted in attitude theory and expectancy-value models, which suggest that consumers form preferences based on their beliefs about brand attributes and the relative importance of those attributes (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972).

Brand preference plays a crucial role in simplifying consumer decision-making, particularly in markets characterized by information overload and abundant brand choices. When consumers develop a strong preference for a brand, they are more likely to repeatedly choose that brand, even in the presence of competing alternatives. Ebrahim et al. (2016) empirically demonstrated that brand preference serves as a key mechanism through which consumer experiences translate into repurchase intention. Their findings suggest that favorable evaluations and experiences enhance brand preference, which subsequently increases the likelihood of repurchase.

Despite the extensive literature on perceived value and repurchase intention, limited research has explicitly examined the mediating role of brand preference in this relationship, particularly within regional and emerging market contexts. Much of the existing empirical evidence originates from Western economies or online shopping environments, which may not fully capture the dynamics of traditional and mixed consumption contexts prevalent in Indian markets. Gujarat, as one of India's most economically vibrant states, offers a unique setting to explore these relationships due to its diverse consumer base,

increasing brand consciousness, and rapid market development.

Consumers in Gujarat are exposed to a wide range of domestic and international brands across product and service categories. As a result, their purchase decisions are likely influenced not only by functional considerations but also by perceived value and brand-related attitudes. Understanding how perceived value shapes brand preference and, in turn, repurchase intention can provide valuable insights for marketers seeking to build sustainable customer relationships in this region. Accordingly, the present study aims to examine the impact of perceived value on repurchase intention through the mediating role of brand preference among customers in Gujarat using a quantitative research approach.

From a managerial standpoint, understanding these relationships is of considerable importance. Firms operating in competitive consumer markets must allocate resources efficiently to initiatives that enhance customer value and strengthen brand-related attitudes. When perceived value is effectively translated into brand preference, firms can expect greater stability in customer relationships and improved retention outcomes (Hellier et al., 2003). Conversely, failure to manage value perceptions may weaken brand preference and increase consumers' propensity to switch to competing brands, particularly in markets characterized by low switching barriers. The Gujarat market, with its growing exposure to branded offerings and rising consumer expectations, presents a fertile context for examining how these constructs interact.

Moreover, consumer decision-making in such markets is increasingly shaped by comparative evaluations rather than absolute judgments. As consumers evaluate multiple brands offering similar functional benefits, perceived value becomes a key differentiator that shapes brand preference and subsequent repurchase intention (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). Understanding these evaluative processes can contribute to the development of more effective marketing strategies focused on value creation, brand positioning, and relationship building.

Review of Literature

1. Perceived Value

Perceived value has been widely acknowledged as a cornerstone concept in marketing theory and practice. It represents the consumer's overall evaluation of an exchange based on perceptions of what is received versus what is sacrificed (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001). This evaluative process is inherently subjective and varies across individuals, contexts, and consumption situations. Early research on perceived value primarily focused on economic trade-offs, particularly price and quality considerations. However, subsequent studies argued that such narrow conceptualizations fail to capture the richness of consumer experiences and evaluations.

Sweeney and Soutar (2001) made a significant contribution to perceived value research by developing a multidimensional scale that captures emotional, social, quality or performance, and price or value-for-money dimensions. Emotional value refers to the feelings or affective states generated by product consumption, such as pleasure or enjoyment. Social value reflects the extent to which owning or using a product enhances one's social self-concept or social approval. Quality or performance value captures perceptions of reliability, durability, and functional excellence, while price or value-for-money reflects the perceived economic worth of the offering.

Empirical evidence suggests that these dimensions of perceived value exert differential effects on consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions. Sweeney and Soutar (2001) found that emotional and quality values were particularly influential in shaping purchase intentions, while price value played a more context-dependent role. Their findings underscore the importance of adopting a holistic view of perceived value when examining consumer behavior.

From a relational exchange perspective, perceived value is viewed as the foundation upon which long-term consumer-firm relationships are built. Wu et al. (2014) argued that perceived value represents the core relational benefit that motivates consumers to maintain ongoing relationships with service providers. In their study of online shopping contexts, they demonstrated that perceived value

has a direct positive effect on repurchase intention and interacts with transaction cost factors to influence relational continuity.

Zauner et al. (2015) further advanced the conceptual understanding of perceived value by positioning it as a dynamic and evolving construct. They emphasized that perceived value is not static but changes over time as consumers accumulate experiences with a brand or firm. This perspective highlights the importance of examining perceived value in conjunction with attitudinal constructs, such as brand preference, which capture consumers' enduring evaluations and predispositions.

2. Brand Preference

Brand preference is a central construct in consumer behavior research and reflects a consumer's relative inclination toward a specific brand compared to competing alternatives. It is rooted in attitude theory and is closely linked to expectancy–value models of decision-making. Bass and Talarzyk (1972) proposed an attitude-based model of brand preference, suggesting that preferences are formed through consumers' beliefs about brand attributes weighted by the importance of those attributes.

According to this framework, consumers systematically evaluate brands based on salient attributes, and these evaluations collectively shape their overall preference. Bass and Talarzyk (1972) argued that brand preference provides a more direct and reliable predictor of choice behavior than demographic variables, as it captures consumers' evaluative judgments and predispositions.

More recent research has expanded the concept of brand preference to include experiential and affective dimensions. Ebrahim et al. (2016) emphasized the role of consumer experience in shaping brand preference and subsequent repurchase intention. Their empirical findings revealed that positive brand experiences enhance brand preference, which in turn strengthens repurchase intention. This evidence supports the notion that brand preference acts as a critical mediator between consumer perceptions and behavioral outcomes.

Brand preference is particularly relevant in competitive markets where functional differentiation is limited and consumers face an abundance of choices. In such environments, brand preference simplifies decision-making by reducing perceived risk and cognitive effort. Preferred brands enjoy higher consideration, stronger emotional attachment, and greater resistance to switching, making brand preference a powerful driver of repurchase behavior.

3. Repurchase Intention

Repurchase intention is widely used as a proxy for customer loyalty and future purchasing behavior. It reflects the likelihood that a consumer will continue buying from the same brand or firm and is influenced by post-consumption evaluations and relational judgments. Hellier et al. (2003) conceptualized repurchase intention as a multifaceted construct influenced by perceived value, satisfaction, and switching costs. Their structural equation model provided empirical support for the significant role of perceived value in shaping repurchase intention.

Wu et al. (2014) further demonstrated that repurchase intention is influenced by both value-related and cost-related factors in relational exchange contexts. Their findings suggest that consumers' decisions to repurchase are guided by an overall evaluation of relational benefits and sacrifices rather than isolated transactional considerations.

4. Linking Perceived Value, Brand Preference, and Repurchase Intention

The interrelationships among perceived value, brand preference, and repurchase intention have been discussed extensively in the marketing literature, although often in fragmented ways. Integrative frameworks that explicitly link these constructs remain relatively limited. Perceived value is widely regarded as an antecedent to attitudinal responses, which subsequently influence behavioral intentions. Brand preference represents one such attitudinal response that captures consumers' evaluative orientation toward a brand and serves as a bridge between cognitive evaluations and behavioral outcomes (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972).

Consumers who perceive high value in a brand's offerings are more likely to develop favorable beliefs and affective responses toward that brand. These positive evaluations strengthen brand preference, making the brand more salient and attractive in future choice situations. As brand preference intensifies, consumers are more inclined to repurchase, even in the presence of competing alternatives offering comparable features or prices (Ebrahim et al., 2016). This mediating role of brand preference highlights the importance of considering attitudinal mechanisms when examining repurchase intention.

Hellier et al. (2003) emphasized that repurchase intention is shaped by a complex interplay of value perceptions, satisfaction, and relational factors. Their findings suggest that value perceptions alone may not directly translate into repeat purchasing behavior unless they are reinforced by favorable attitudes toward the brand. Similarly, Wu et al. (2014) demonstrated that perceived value operates within a broader relational exchange framework, influencing repurchase intention through both direct and indirect pathways. These insights underscore the relevance of incorporating brand preference as a mediating construct in models of repurchase intention.

The relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention has been consistently supported in the literature. However, scholars have increasingly recognized that this relationship is often mediated by attitudinal constructs such as brand preference. Consumers who perceive high value are more likely to develop favorable attitudes toward a brand, resulting in stronger brand preference. This preference, in turn, increases the likelihood of repurchase by enhancing emotional attachment and reducing uncertainty (Bass & Talarzyk, 1972; Ebrahim et al., 2016).

Hellier et al. (2003) emphasized that attitudinal mechanisms play a critical role in translating value perceptions into behavioral intentions. Their work suggests that examining mediating variables such as brand preference can provide a more nuanced understanding of repurchase behavior

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study integrates expectancy–value theory and relational exchange theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer brand preference formation and maintenance. Expectancy–value theory posits that consumer preferences are shaped through evaluative judgments of brand attributes, with each attribute weighted according to its perceived importance by the consumer (Barone et al., 2000). This cognitive framework emphasizes how consumers' beliefs and evaluations collectively influence their attitudes toward brands, thereby guiding their decision-making processes (Barone et al., 2000; Puth et al., 1999).

Building on this, relational exchange theory offers a complementary perspective by focusing on the ongoing interactions and relational dynamics between consumers and brands (Ilicic & Webster, 2014). It highlights the role of trust, commitment, and mutual obligations that develop over time, which are critical for sustaining long-term brand preference and loyalty. This theory underscores that beyond initial cognitive evaluations, the quality of the consumer-brand relationship significantly impacts continued engagement and preference (Adhikari & Panda, 2019).

Together, these theories provide a dual lens: expectancy–value theory explains the initial formation of brand preference through cognitive assessments, while relational exchange theory elucidates the mechanisms through which these preferences are reinforced and maintained in the context of ongoing consumer-brand exchanges (Dessart, 2017; S.T Wang, 2013). By integrating these frameworks, the study captures both the evaluative and relational dimensions of consumer behavior, offering a robust basis for examining how brand preferences evolve and persist over time.

Research Gap

Despite extensive research on perceived value, brand preference, and repurchase intention, several gaps remain in the existing literature. First, while perceived value has been widely examined as a direct antecedent of repurchase intention, fewer studies have explicitly investigated the mediating role of brand preference in this relationship. As a result, the psychological and attitudinal

mechanisms through which value perceptions influence behavioral intentions remain underexplored, particularly in non-Western contexts.

Second, much of the empirical evidence in this domain originates from Western economies or online shopping contexts, limiting the generalizability of findings to regional markets in emerging economies. Studies such as Wu et al. (2014) focus primarily on online environments, while others adopt broad consumer samples without regional specificity. Consequently, there is a lack of nuanced understanding of how perceived value and brand preference interact to shape repurchase intention in traditional and mixed consumption settings.

Third, Gujarat represents a unique consumer market characterized by rapid economic growth, increasing brand awareness, and diverse consumption patterns. Consumers in this region are exposed to a wide range of branded offerings and are increasingly sophisticated in their evaluations. However, limited research has integrated perceived value, brand preference, and repurchase intention within this specific regional context. Addressing these gaps, the present study proposes a mediational framework to empirically examine these relationships among customers in Gujarat.

Finally, prior research often treats perceived value as a static construct, overlooking its evolving nature across repeated interactions. Zauner et al. (2015) argued that perceived value changes over time as consumers accumulate experiences and reassess benefits and sacrifices. Incorporating brand preference as a mediating construct allows for a more dynamic understanding of how value perceptions are transformed into enduring behavioral intentions such as repurchase intention.

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Statement of the Problem

In highly competitive consumer markets, retaining customers through repeat purchasing has become a major challenge for organizations. Repurchase intention is a key indicator of customer retention; however, the factors that drive consumers' intentions to repurchase are not yet fully understood. Although perceived value is widely recognized as an important determinant of repurchase intention, value perceptions do not always directly translate into repeat purchasing behavior, suggesting the presence of intervening attitudinal mechanisms.

Brand preference represents a critical attitudinal construct that may explain how perceived value influences repurchase intention. While previous studies have examined perceived value, brand preference, and repurchase intention independently, limited research has empirically tested brand preference as a mediating variable linking perceived value to repurchase intention. Moreover, existing evidence is largely drawn from Western or online contexts, offering limited insight into regional consumer markets in emerging economies.

In the context of Gujarat, where consumers are increasingly exposed to diverse branded offerings, there is insufficient empirical understanding of how perceived value shapes brand preference and subsequent repurchase intention. This study addresses this gap by examining the mediating role of brand preference in the relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention among customers in Gujarat.

Research Objectives

The present study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the influence of perceived value on brand preference among customers in Gujarat.
2. To analyze the effect of brand preference on repurchase intention.
3. To assess the direct relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention.
4. To investigate the mediating role of brand preference in the relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention.

Conceptual Model

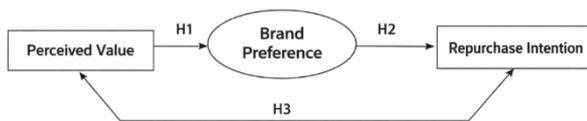


Fig 1. *Conceptual Model*

The conceptual model emphasizes the pivotal role of perceived value as a primary determinant shaping consumers' brand preference and their intention to repurchase. Perceived value, which encompasses the consumer's overall assessment of the utility and benefits derived from a product relative to its cost, directly enhances brand preference by fostering positive attitudes and emotional connections toward the brand. This enhanced preference, in turn, increases the likelihood that consumers will choose the brand again, thereby strengthening repurchase intention. The model also posits a direct pathway from perceived value to repurchase intention, suggesting that consumers who perceive high value in a

product are more inclined to repurchase regardless of other factors.

Furthermore, brand preference functions as a mediating variable in the relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention, indicating that the influence of perceived value on the decision to repurchase is partially channelled through the consumer's established preference for the brand. This mediating effect aligns with prior theoretical frameworks and empirical findings (Hellier et al., 2003; Ebrahim et al., 2016; Wu et al., 2014), which collectively highlight that while perceived value is crucial, its impact on repurchase behavior is significantly strengthened when it translates into a favourable brand preference. This layered relationship underscores the importance for marketers to not only enhance the perceived value of their offerings but also to cultivate strong brand preferences to secure customer loyalty and repeat purchases.

Research Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative research design to empirically test the proposed hypotheses. Quantitative methods are particularly suitable for examining causal relationships among latent constructs and for testing mediation effects within a structural framework (Hellier et al., 2003). Primary data will be collected from 650 customers in Gujarat using a structured questionnaire designed to capture respondents' perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral intentions.

The questionnaire will consist of multiple sections corresponding to the key constructs in the study. Perceived value will be measured using the multidimensional scale developed by Sweeney and Soutar (2001), which captures emotional, social, quality, and price-related dimensions of value. This scale has been widely validated and is suitable for capturing holistic value perceptions across different consumption contexts. Brand preference items will be adapted from attitude-based models proposed by Bass and Talarzyk (1972) and extended by Ebrahim et al. (2016), ensuring that both cognitive and affective components of preference are adequately represented. Repurchase intention will be measured using items adapted from Hellier et al. (2003) and Wu et al. (2014), which assess consumers' likelihood of continuing to purchase from the same brand in the future. These items capture the forward-looking nature of

repurchase intention and its relevance to relationship continuity. Responses will be recorded using a Likert-type scale to facilitate statistical analysis.

Data analysis will be conducted using structural equation modeling to examine the hypothesized relationships and assess the mediating role of brand preference. Structural equation modeling allows for the simultaneous estimation of multiple relationships among latent constructs and provides a rigorous framework for testing mediation effects. This methodological approach is consistent with prior studies examining perceived value and repurchase intention (Hellier et al., 2003; Wu et al., 2014).

Hypothesis

H1: Perceived value has a significant positive effect on brand preference.

H2: Brand preference has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention.

H3: Perceived value has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention.

H4: Brand preference mediates the relationship between perceived value and repurchase intention.

Data Analysis

The following are the results from the SEM analysis:

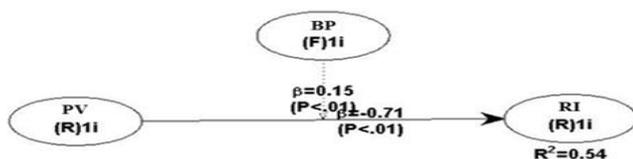


Fig 2: Results of the proposed study from SEM Analysis

Table 1 Model fit and quality indices

Average path coefficient (APC)	0.431	P<0.001	
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.543	P<0.001	
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.541	P<0.001	
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.005	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	accepted
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	2.052	acceptable if <= 5, ideally <= 3.3	accepted
Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)	0.737	small >= 0.1, medium >= 0.25, large >= 0.36	large
Sympton's paradox ratio (SPR)	1.000	acceptable if >= 0.7, ideally = 1	accepted
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000	acceptable if >= 0.9, ideally = 1	accepted
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000	acceptable if >= 0.7	accepted
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	0.500	acceptable if >= 0.7	Not accepted

Three variables, including life satisfaction, organizational commitment, and occupational stress, were compared using PLS-SEM in this study. Here, the route model with two phases—for instance, measurement and structural model assessment—is evaluated using PLS-SEM. Here, the variables' validity and dependability are assessed at this step. The second stage involves analyzing potential links between variables by evaluating structural models. Average path coefficient (APC), average R-squared (ARS), and average variance inflation factor (AFVIF) are three of the primary model fit metrics determined by WarpPLS.

The average path coefficient (APC), average R-squared (ARS), and average R-squared adjustment (AARS) p-values must all equal or be less than 0.05 for the model to be approved. It is advised that the average whole collinearity VIF index and the average VIF block (AVIF) have values of 3.3 or less [33]. The following threshold is applied in this instance for Tenenhaus goodness of fit (GoF), an index that indicates the explanatory capacity of the model: small if it is equal to or larger than 0.1, medium if it is equal to or greater than 0.25, and big if it is equal to or greater than 0.36. The product of the average communality index and the average residential score is called GoF.

The calculation of these fit indices involves taking the average of three elements: the model's R-squared values, variance inflation factors, and path coefficients (absolute values). The software additionally offers each of these separately. By resampling, the P values for ARS and APC are determined. The fact that these indices are

determined using different parameters is taken into consideration and corrected for, which has the effect of biasing the results and reducing the variance, which is related to the central limit theorem.

Even if additional latent variables are only tangentially related to the latent variables already present in the model, their inclusion will typically result in a rise in the ARS. Nevertheless, as the path coefficients connected to the new latent variables will be low, it will typically result in a drop in APC. As a result, the APC and ARS will balance one another out and only rise in tandem if the latent variables that are included in the model improve its overall capacity for prediction and explanation. In this case, the p value of 0.05 is not exceeded by the APC (0.431) or the ARS (0.543).

If more latent variables are introduced to the model in a way that increases multicollinearity—which could happen if new latent variables are added that have meanings that overlap with those of already-existing latent variables—the AFVIF index will rise. In general, it is not advantageous to have many latent variables measuring the same thing in the same model; instead, those variables should be consolidated into a single latent variable. As such, the AFVIF provides a new dimension to a thorough evaluation of the overall predictive and explanatory quality of a model.

The average complete collinearity VIF (AFVIF) in this case is 2.052, and it is acceptable if AFVIF \leq 5, while it is best if \leq 3.3. The model quality and appropriateness index fall within an acceptable range, as indicated by the findings displayed in Table 1.

Table 2 Composite reliability coefficients

PV	BP	RI	BP*PV
1	1	1	1

Table 3 Cronbach's alpha coefficients

PV	BP	RI	BP*PV
1	1	1	1

Table 4 Average variances extracted

PV	BP	RI	BP*PV
1	1	1	1

The convergent and discriminant validity outcomes

of reliability and validity were examined to evaluate the measurement model. The assessment of construction dependability enables the consistency of reflective items or sets of things with respect to the desired measurement to be evaluated. Construction dependability is typically evaluated using the Cronbach and alpha composites' reliability.

For reliability to be considered good, both the Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) scores need to be at least 0.7. The variables of Perceived Value (PV), Brand Preference (BP), and Repurchase Intention (RI) all match the requirements for the validity of research construction, according to the findings. The measurements for construct validity and reliability are displayed in Tables 2 and 3.

Convergent validity, on the other hand, assesses the caliber of item sets or question formulations in research instruments. This indicates that the questionnaire filler understands each item or question statement in the same way that the item creator or question statement intended. The load must be equal to or more than 0.5, and the p-value for each item must be equal to or lower than 0.05, while the correlation between the items and construction is higher to attain an appropriate degree of convergent validity.

Table 5 Correlations among l.vs. with sq. rts. of AVEs

	PV	BP	RI	BP*PV
PV	1	-0.611	-0.69	-0.033
BP	-0.611	1	0.749	0.046
RI	-0.69	0.749	1	0.072
BP*PV	-0.033	0.046	0.072	1

Note: Square roots of average variances extracted (AVEs) shown on diagonal.

All of the variables' item loading in Table 4 exceeds the required 0.5 level and is statistically significant. Furthermore, mean variance extracted, or AVE, calculates the variance of each item construct in relation to the measurement error. Every latent variable's AVE exceeds the suggested acceptable validity threshold of 0.5. Acceptable validity is met by the AVE coefficient. The Square Root of the Correlation Coefficient and the AVE Coefficient of the corresponding observations are displayed in Table 5.

The correlation between variables is shown in Table 5 using the square root AVE coefficient to assess the instrument's discriminant validity. If, upon answering the provided questionnaire, the respondent does not find any statements about any of the latent variables perplexing, then discriminant validity has been measured. Furthermore, it is examined if, for instance, statements about one variable are not mistaken for statements about other variables. The AVE square root of any variable ought to be higher than any correlation that the variable may have. The steps used in this investigation have discriminant validity, as demonstrated by the results.

A model to assess the significance of the moderating effect is presented in Figure 1, Testing Model. There is a substantial correlation ($\beta = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$) between Perceived Value (PV) and Brand Preference (BP). According to data analysis, Perceived Value (PV) was strongly impacted by Brand Preference (BP) ($\beta = 0.71$, $p < 0.001$). The positive path coefficient suggests that employees' Perceived Value is significantly impacted by the level of Brand Preference they experience in their firms. The Tenenhaus GoF, $GoF = 0.737$, indicates that there is a large route effect from Brand Preference (BP) to Perceived Value (PV) (little ≥ 0.1 , medium ≥ 0.25 , big ≥ 0.36). The path is therefore supported.

Furthermore, there was a significant correlation ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.01$) between Repurchase Intention (RI) and Perceived Value (PV) through Brand Preference (BP). The data analysis revealed that Brand Preference (BP) considerably mitigated the significant impact of Perceived Value (PV) on Repurchase Intention (RI) ($\beta = 0.15$, $p < 0.001$). The positive path coefficient shows that employees' Repurchase Intention is significantly impacted by their level of Brand Preference, whereas Brand Preference to that value is only slightly impacted. Additionally, the model's total R-squared is 0.54, indicating a reasonable level of model fit.

Discussions

Building on the results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, the study reveals that perceived value serves as a powerful antecedent to brand preference, as indicated by the significant

path coefficient of 0.71. This finding suggests that when customers in Gujarat evaluate the holistic benefits of a product—including its quality, emotional appeal, and social value—against the costs, they develop a strong attitudinal bias toward that specific brand. This cognitive and affective process aligns with expectancy–value theory, confirming that value perceptions are the foundation upon which brand-related attitudes are built in this regional market.

The analysis further demonstrates that brand preference acts as a critical bridge to behavioral commitment, significantly influencing repurchase intention with a path coefficient of 0.15. While perceived value has a direct impact on the intent to buy again, its effect is notably mediated by the consumer's preference for the brand. This mediation indicates that providing value is necessary but not entirely sufficient on its own; for long-term retention to occur, that value must be successfully translated into a psychological preference that distinguishes the brand from its competitors.

Overall, the research highlights that in the increasingly sophisticated market of Gujarat, repurchase behavior is driven by a complex interplay of cognitive evaluation and attitudinal formation. The high model fit and R-squared value of 0.54 confirm that this framework effectively explains more than half of the variance in customer repurchase intentions. For marketers, these findings emphasize the importance of not only delivering superior value but also actively managing the brand preference that results from those value perceptions to ensure sustained customer loyalty.

Suggestions and implications

From a theoretical standpoint, this research reinforces the importance of integrating cognitive and attitudinal frameworks to understand consumer behavior. By successfully applying expectancy–value theory and relational exchange perspectives, the study demonstrates that repurchase intention is not merely a transactional outcome but a complex psychological process. The validation of brand preference as a significant mediator provides a more nuanced understanding of how value perceptions are converted into long-term loyalty, particularly in the context of an emerging regional

market like Gujarat.

For marketing practitioners, the high correlation between perceived value and brand preference ($\beta = 0.71$) implies that managers should move beyond simple price-based competition. Instead, firms should focus on delivering a holistic value proposition that encompasses emotional and social dimensions alongside functional quality. Since brand preference was found to be the essential link to repurchase intention, marketing communications should be designed not just to inform customers about product features, but to foster a distinct preference that creates an attitudinal barrier against competitors.

Furthermore, the specific focus on Gujarat suggests that regional strategies are vital for success in diverse markets like India. Managers should recognize that as regional consumers become more brand-conscious, their repurchase decisions are increasingly driven by the relative value they perceive compared to other available options. Therefore, organizations should invest in continuous value-monitoring and brand-strengthening initiatives to ensure they remain the "preferred" choice, which effectively reduces the likelihood of customers switching to competing brands in a market with low switching barriers.

Conclusion

The present study successfully provides an empirical validation of the mechanism through which perceived value influences repurchase intention, specifically highlighting the indispensable role of brand preference as a mediator. By analyzing data from 650 customers in Gujarat, the research demonstrates that while delivering high value—encompassing quality, emotional, and social dimensions—is foundational, its impact on long-term customer retention is significantly amplified when it successfully fosters a psychological preference for the brand. The structural equation model confirmed that these variables collectively explain a substantial 54% of the variance in repurchase intention, underscoring the framework's robustness in a regional emerging market context.

The findings emphasize that in a competitive environment like Gujarat, where consumers are increasingly sophisticated and brand-conscious, simple transactional value is no

longer sufficient to ensure loyalty. Instead, the transition from cognitive evaluation of value to the behavioral intent of repurchasing is bridged by the attitudinal construct of brand preference. This study contributes to the existing body of literature by extending the application of expectancy–value and relational exchange theories to an under-researched regional Indian context. Ultimately, the research suggests that for firms to achieve sustainable growth and high retention rates, they must strategically align their value-creation efforts to not only satisfy the customer but to actively cultivate a distinctive brand preference.

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