

IDENTITY-BASED DRIVERS OF ELECTRIC VEHICLE ADOPTION: EVIDENCE FROM VINFAST IN VIETNAM

Thanh-Sang Nguyen^{1,*}, Trong Tan Nguyen²,
Huynh Gia Linh Nguyen³, Mai Anh Truong⁴, Thi Le Vi Hoang⁵

¹*I-Shou University*

²*Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology*

³*Foreign Trade University*

⁴*Vietnamese-German University*

⁵*High School for the Gifted, VNU-HCM*

*Email: sangnguyenbencat2016@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Despite the accelerating transition towards electric mobility globally, emerging economies see uneven adoption patterns. This study examines the determinants shaping consumers' purchase intention towards domestic electric vehicles (EVs) by incorporating both evaluation-based determinants and identity-based motivations. In particular, by focusing on the case of VinFast, a pioneer in EV production, the study investigates how consumer ethnocentrism, brand nationalism, perceived quality, attitude towards EVs, and environmental concern shape purchase intention. Using survey data collected from 220 Vietnamese consumers, the proposed framework is tested through CB-SEM. The findings reveal that purchase intention is strongly driven by perceived quality, attitude towards EVs, consumer ethnocentrism, and brand nationalism. While the mediating effect of brand nationalism in the link between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention is significant, environmental concern positively strengthens this relationship. The importance of technological evaluations with identity-related motivations is highlighted in explaining EV adoption in emerging markets, providing pragmatic insights for domestic EV manufacturers seeking to promote electric mobility.

Keywords: Electric vehicles, consumer ethnocentrism, brand nationalism, environmental concern, purchase intention, emerging markets.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, transport has been widely regarded as a main contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, making up a substantial portion of carbon emissions worldwide. To curb the rising concerns about global warming and environmental sustainability, electric vehicles (EVs) have increasingly been promoted by governments and industries as a key strategy for cutting down emissions and transitioning towards low-carbon mobility systems [1]. This has driven the global EV market to expand at a fast pace, driven by technological advancements, environmental awareness, and policy incentives designed to bolster sustainable transportation.

In spite of quick global developments, emerging economies still face uneven EV adoption patterns, where market conditions, consumer perceptions, and infrastructural readiness differ

substantially [2], [3]. Prior studies suggest that EV adoption is shaped by psychological and behavioral factors rather than solely economic considerations, including perceptions, knowledge, and symbolic meanings [1]. In emerging markets, consumers' adoption decisions are also driven by social and psychological factors, including personal values, identity, and national pride. Among them, identity-based motivations exert a significant influence on consumer preferences, especially when products are positioned by national identity or domestic industrial development [4].

Vietnam serves as an interesting context for exploring these dynamics. In recent years, the country has witnessed rapid economic growth as well as increasing environmental awareness, fostering green technologies and sustainable transportation solutions [5]. In this context, the emergence of VinFast has drawn considerable attention, which is perceived not only as a technological product but also a symbol of national ambition and industrial capability. As a result, purchase decisions may be influenced not only by perceived product attributes but also by identity-based factors such as consumer ethnocentrism and brand nationalism.

Despite extensive research on technological, economic, and environmental drivers of EV adoption, there are still several important research gaps. First, existing research has primarily discussed attributes such as price, infrastructure, perceived performance, and environmental benefits [1], [6], while identity-based motivations shaping attitudes and behaviors have not been explored, demanding the integration of social and psychological identity factors. Second, despite being studied broadly in international marketing and consumer behavior research [4], [7], the role of consumer ethnocentrism in shaping the relationship between brand nationalism and EV purchase intention remains underexplored. Third, there is limited empirical evidence from emerging markets such as Vietnam, although these markets have the potential to facilitate global transition towards electric mobility [2]. Recent cross-country studies also emphasize that cultural and contextual differences significantly influence EV adoption behavior, reinforcing the need for research in diverse national contexts.

In emerging markets where there are still skeptical views towards new technologies, consumers may switch to identity-related cues as heuristic signals to lower perceived risks. In this case, instead of being treated as an additional predictor, brand nationalism is positioned as a mechanism translating abstract ethnocentric beliefs into concrete behavioral intentions. This perspective sheds light on the interaction between national identity and sustainable consumption decisions in the context of EV adoption.

To address these gaps, this study extends the EV adoption literature by integrating identity-based constructs, particularly consumer ethnocentrism and brand nationalism. In addition, brand nationalism is positioned as a mediator linking consumer ethnocentrism to EV purchase intention, providing useful insights into how national identity influences sustainable consumption behavior. Importantly, in the context of VinFast, the study provides empirical evidence from an emerging economy, enriching the existing global literature on EV adoption and consumer behavior in developing markets.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. EV adoption and evaluation-based determinants

Prior literature on EV adoption has largely studied evaluation-based determinants that reflect consumers' rational assessments of technological performance, economic benefits, and environmental advantages, shaping behavioral intentions [1].

Among these determinants, one of the strongest predictors is customer attitude towards EV technology. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitude reflects individuals' overall evaluation of a behavior, playing a primary role in forming behavioral intentions [8].

When EVs are perceived as innovative, eco-friendly, and cost-effective, customers are likely to favor them.

In addition, perceived product quality has long been seen as a central driver in consumers' evaluation of new technologies. Perceived quality refers to consumers' subjective judgment of the excellence and reliability of a product [9]. As for high-involvement products such as EVs, perceived quality fosters consumer confidence and reduces uncertainty in adopting new technologies.

When consumers perceive EVs as technologically reliable and capable of meeting their performance expectations, adoption intention increases. Therefore, both favorable attitudes towards EVs and high perceived product quality are expected to positively influence consumers' purchase intention.

H1: Consumers' positive attitudes towards EVs positively influence their purchase intention towards VinFast EVs.

H2: Perceived quality of VinFast EVs positively influences consumers' purchase intention.

2.2. Identity-based consumption: consumer ethnocentrism and domestic technology adoption

Apart from evaluation-based determinants, identity-related motivations also exert an impact on consumer decisions. According to identity-based consumption theories, individuals often opt for products reflecting their social identity, group affiliation, or collective values [10].

Among identity-based constructs, consumer ethnocentrism has been widely studied in consumer behavior research. This construct suggests that purchasing domestic products is morally appropriate and beneficial for the national economy [7]. Consumers tend to prioritize domestic products because doing so supports domestic employment, local industries, and national economic development [11].

Prior research has indicated the strong influence of consumer ethnocentrism on consumers' preferences for domestic products across various product categories [11]. Related research has also shown that brand-related perceptions can shape brand preference [12]. Nevertheless, ethnocentrism has not been intensively studied in the adoption of emerging technological products such as EVs.

In emerging economies, domestic EV manufacturers represent essential symbols of national technological capability and industrial development. Therefore, ethnocentric consumers are more likely to endorse domestic EV brands because such products align with their identity-related motivations as well as their desire to contribute to national technological advancement.

H3: Consumer ethnocentrism positively influences consumers' purchase intention towards VinFast EVs.

2.3. Brand nationalism as a mediating mechanism

Despite the direct influence of consumer ethnocentrism on consumers' preference for domestic products, it also operates through brand-level symbolic perceptions. Brand nationalism refers to the extent to which consumers perceive a brand as representing national identity, technological progress, or national achievements [13], [14].

When a domestic brand is associated with national pride and technological advancement, consumers may be more emotionally attached to the brand. In the context of the Vietnamese EV industry, VinFast has emerged as a symbol of Vietnam's ambition to establish a globally competitive automotive industry. Consumers with strong ethnocentric beliefs are believed to interpret the brand as representing national technological progress and economic development, which may subsequently translate into a greater willingness to purchase VinFast EVs.

To be clear, consumer ethnocentrism as mentioned in the previous subsection reflects a general belief system about the preference for domestic products, while brand nationalism represents a more specific, brand-level symbolic attachment. Therefore, brand nationalism is a translation mechanism through which abstract national identity is converted into concrete evaluations of a particular domestic brand. This clear distinction between the two variables theoretically explains why ethnocentric beliefs do not always directly stimulate purchase intention if they are not activated at the brand level.

Accordingly, brand nationalism may serve as a psychological mediator through which consumer ethnocentrism influences consumers' purchase intentions towards domestic EV brands.

H4: Brand nationalism mediates the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and consumers' purchase intention towards VinFast EVs.

2.4. Environmental concern as a moderating factor

Environmental concern has long been recognized as a primary determinant of sustainable consumption behavior. It refers to individuals' awareness of environmental issues and their willingness to get involved in environmental protection [15].

Environmentally conscious consumers tend to support eco-friendly technologies and products, including EVs. Prior research has consistently suggested that environmental concern fosters positive consumers' attitudes towards EV adoption [16].

Beyond the direct impact on sustainable consumption behavior, environmental concern also interacts with identity-based motivations. Domestic EV brands are believed to simultaneously represent environmental responsibility and national technological progress. In addition, environmental concern reinforces identity-based motivations by connecting national identity with environmental values. When the support for domestic EV brands is not only about national development but also about environmental protection, consumers' moral justification for adoption becomes stronger. Thus, environmental concern is expected to amplify the impact of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention. Consequently, environmental concern may strengthen the positive effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention towards domestic EVs.

H5: Environmental concern positively moderates the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention towards VinFast's EVs.

2.5. Conceptual framework

As illustrated in Figure 1, the model integrates evaluation-based determinants, identity-based factors, and environmental motivations.

Attitude towards EVs and perceived quality are included as evaluation-based predictors of purchase intention. Consumer ethnocentrism is incorporated as an identity-based determinant directly driving purchase intention. In addition, brand nationalism is positioned as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention.

Environmental concern is introduced as a moderating variable that strengthens the relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention. Finally, several demographic variables, income level, education level, and region of residence are included as control variables to examine potential differences across consumer groups.

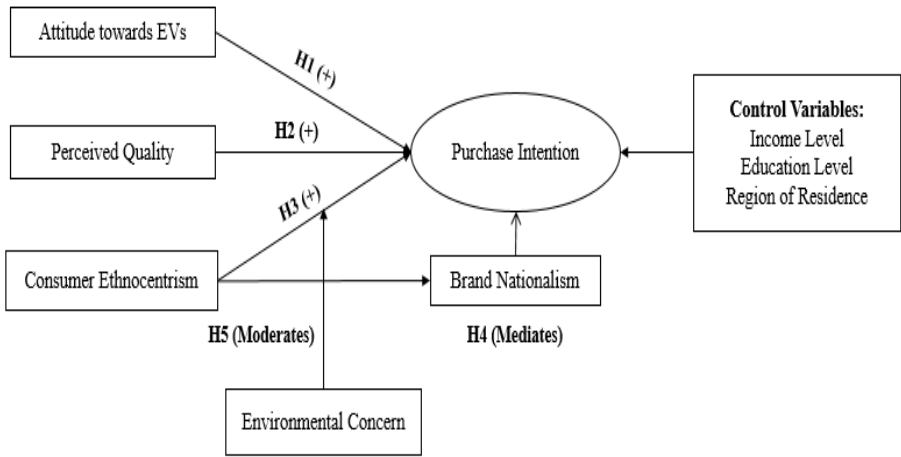


Figure 1. Theoretical framework. Source: own research.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sample and data collection

This study employs a quantitative research design to examine the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention towards VinFast's EVs. Data were collected using a structured online survey distributed to Vietnamese consumers.

The survey was distributed through online platforms and social networks to reach respondents from different regions of Vietnam. A convenience sampling approach was adopted, which is widely practiced in exploratory consumer behavior research, particularly in emerging market contexts. While limiting the generalizability of the findings, this approach enables the capture of initial behavioral patterns and perceptions of potential EV consumers. After removing incomplete and invalid responses from 256 participants, a total of 220 valid respondents were retained for data analysis.

The sample comprised Vietnamese consumers with varying demographic backgrounds. Information regarding respondents' income level, education level, and region of residence was collected to assess differences in purchase intention across consumer groups. Three of these variables were also included as control variables in the analysis.

3.2. Survey instrument

As shown in Table 1, all constructs were measured using multi-item scales based on established studies to ensure content validity. Consumer ethnocentrism was measured using items adapted from [7]. Brand nationalism was measured using items developed based on prior research on consumer patriotism and domestic product preferences [13], [14]. Attitude towards EVs was measured using items reflecting the attitude construct commonly examined in EV adoption research [1], while perceived quality was measured using items adapted from [9]. Environmental concern was measured using items adapted from [15], while purchase intention was measured using items reflecting the behavioral intention construct in the Theory of Planned Behavior [8].

All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Table 1. Constructs and measurement items

No	Observed Variables	Code
I. Consumer Ethnocentrism (CE)		CE
1	I feel a sense of pride when I support Vietnamese products.	CE1
2	Supporting local industries helps strengthen our nation.	CE2
3	Purchasing a Vietnamese EV brand shows loyalty to our country.	CE3
4	I believe it is important to support Vietnamese companies in global markets.	CE4
5	I feel a patriotic duty to choose Vietnamese-made products.	CE5
6	Buying Vietnamese products helps protect national identity.	CE6
II. Brand Nationalism (NA)		NA
1	I feel proud when I see others driving VinFast EVs.	NA1
2	VinFast represents the technological progress of Vietnam.	NA2
3	I support VinFast because it is a Vietnamese brand.	NA3
4	I trust VinFast more because it reflects our national values.	NA4
5	VinFast is a symbol of Vietnam's future in global innovation.	NA5
6	I would choose VinFast over foreign brands to support our economy.	NA6
III. Environmental Concern (EN)		
1	Protecting the environment is important to me.	EN1
2	I feel personally responsible for reducing pollution.	EN2
3	I actively seek environmentally friendly alternatives.	EN3
4	Choosing EVs can help reduce climate change.	EN4
5	Environmental protection should be a national priority.	EN5
6	I am willing to change my lifestyle to reduce environmental harm.	EN6 (dropped)
IV. Attitude Towards EVs (ATT)		
1	EVs are better for the environment than gasoline cars.	ATT1
2	EVs are the future of transportation.	ATT2
3	I have a favorable opinion of EVs.	ATT3
4	Driving an EV aligns with my personal values.	ATT4 (dropped)
5	EVs represent progress in sustainable technology.	ATT5
6	I believe EVs are a responsible choice for future generations.	ATT6
V. Perceived Quality (PQ)		
1	VinFast EVs are of high quality	PQ1
2	I believe VinFast uses advanced technology.	PQ2
3	I trust VinFast's performance and safety.	PQ3
4	Compared to others, VinFast offers good value.	PQ4
5	The build quality of VinFast's EVs is excellent.	PQ5
VI. Purchase Intention (PI)		
1	I would likely buy VinFast's EVs.	PI1
2	I intend to consider VinFast if I purchase an EV.	PI2
3	I would recommend VinFast to others.	PI3
4	I would feel confident buying VinFast's EVs.	PI4

Data analysis was conducted using AMOS 26 with covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). Reliability and validity of the measurement scales were first assessed using Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis. Hypotheses regarding direct effects were tested using CB-SEM.

The mediating effect of brand nationalism was examined using mediation analysis, while the moderating role of environmental concern was tested using interaction analysis. In addition, ANOVA was conducted to explore differences in purchase intention across demographic groups.

All predictor variables were mean-centered before creating interaction terms to reduce multicollinearity. Harman's single-factor test was conducted to assess common method bias. The first factor accounted for 32.4% of variance, below the 50% threshold, indicating that common method bias is not a serious concern.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Results

4.1.1. Demographic results

The final sample presents diverse demographic characteristics. The gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 48.6% male and 51.4% female respondents.

Young adults made up the majority of respondents, with 39.5% of them aged 18–24 and 28.6% aged 25–34, followed by 21.8% aged 35–44. In terms of education, nearly half (49.1%) of the sample held a university degree, while postgraduate education accounted for the smallest share of 14.5%.

Table 2. Sample characteristics

Characteristic	Category	Percentage
Gender (%)	Male	48.6
	Female	51.4
Age (%)	18–24	39.5
	25–34	28.6
	35–44	21.8
	45–54	6.4
	≥ 55	3.6
Education (%)	High school	20.0
	Vocational college	16.4
	University	49.1
	Postgraduate	14.5
Monthly income (%)	< 10 million VND	34.5
	10–20 million VND	23.6
	20–30 million VND	20.0
	> 30 million VND	21.8
Region (%)	North	40.5
	Central	24.1
	South	35.5

As for the monthly income, 34.5% of participants earned less than 10 million VND, while other income brackets exhibited a relatively even level. The sample also presented different regions, including the North (40.5%), South (35.5%), and Central region (24.1%).

The sample provides an appropriate representation of potential EV consumers. Detailed demographic characteristics are presented in Table 2.

4.1.2. Measurement model assessment

All constructs demonstrate strong internal reliability, with Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding the standard threshold of 0.70 [17]. Perceived quality ($\alpha = 0.887$) shows the highest level of internal consistency, followed by brand nationalism ($\alpha = 0.880$), consumer ethnocentrism ($\alpha = 0.875$), attitude towards EVs ($\alpha = 0.857$), environmental concern ($\alpha = 0.855$), and purchase intention ($\alpha = 0.850$).

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using principal component analysis with promax rotation. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value was 0.884 and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 3207.69$, $df = 325$, $p < 0.001$), confirming sampling adequacy [17].

Six factors were extracted, explaining 65.16% of the total variance. Retained items loaded above the recommended threshold of 0.50, confirming construct validity. One environmental concern item (EN6) and one attitude item (ATT4) were removed due to low loading and cross-loading. These results indicate that the measurement structure is appropriate for subsequent factor analysis.

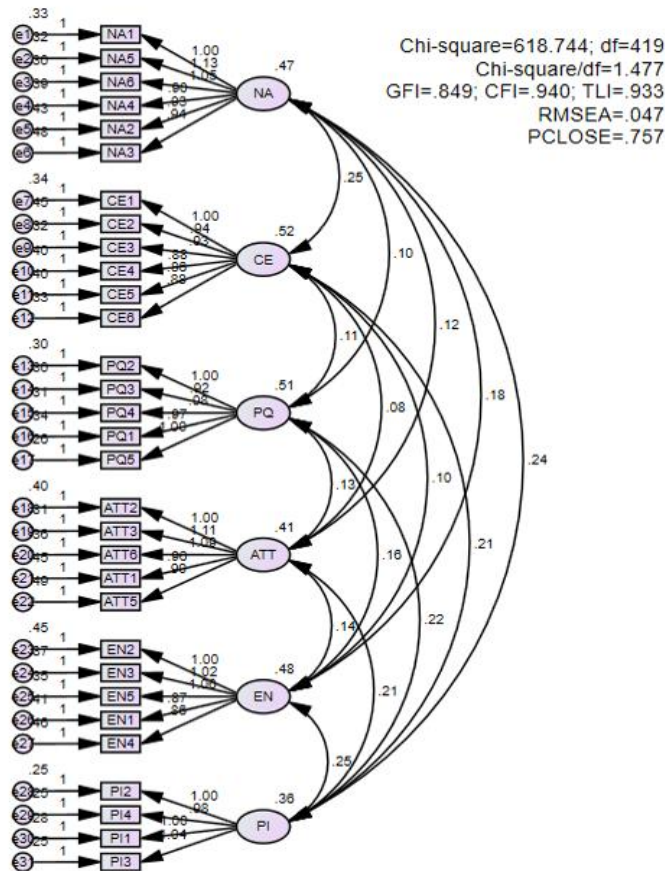


Figure 2. Confirmatory factor analysis results. (Source: own research)

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to assess the measurement model. The results presented in Figure 2 indicate acceptable model fit with $\chi^2 = 618.744$ (df = 419), $\chi^2/\text{df} = 1.477$, CFI = 0.940, TLI = 0.933, and RMSEA = 0.047. Note that the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI = 0.849) is marginally below 0.90, remaining acceptable for complex models.

As shown in Table 3, composite reliability (CR) values exceed 0.70 and average variance extracted (AVE) values are above 0.50, indicating strong convergent validity [18]. Discriminant validity is also supported because the square root of each construct's AVE exceeds the corresponding inter-construct correlations, consistent with the criterion proposed by [19].

Table 3. Composite reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity results

Construct	CR	AVE	MSV	NA	CE	PQ	ATT	EN	PI
NA	0.882	0.555	0.343	0.745					
CE	0.876	0.540	0.256	0.506	0.735				
PQ	0.887	0.612	0.276	0.200	0.218	0.782			
ATT	0.838	0.510	0.298	0.265	0.184	0.284	0.714		
EN	0.843	0.519	0.362	0.385	0.196	0.334	0.316	0.720	
PI	0.850	0.586	0.362	0.586	0.485	0.526	0.546	0.602	0.765

CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted; MSV = maximum shared variance. Diagonal values represent $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$. Discriminant validity is supported ($\sqrt{\text{AVE}} > \text{correlations}$; $\text{MSV} < \text{AVE}$).

4.1.3. Structural model results

The structural model demonstrates satisfactory fit with $\chi^2 = 413.347$ (df = 291), resulting in $\chi^2/\text{df} = 1.420$. Additional indices also indicate good model fit (CFI = 0.956; RMSEA = 0.044; PCLOSE = 0.856), while GFI (0.875) remains within the acceptable range.

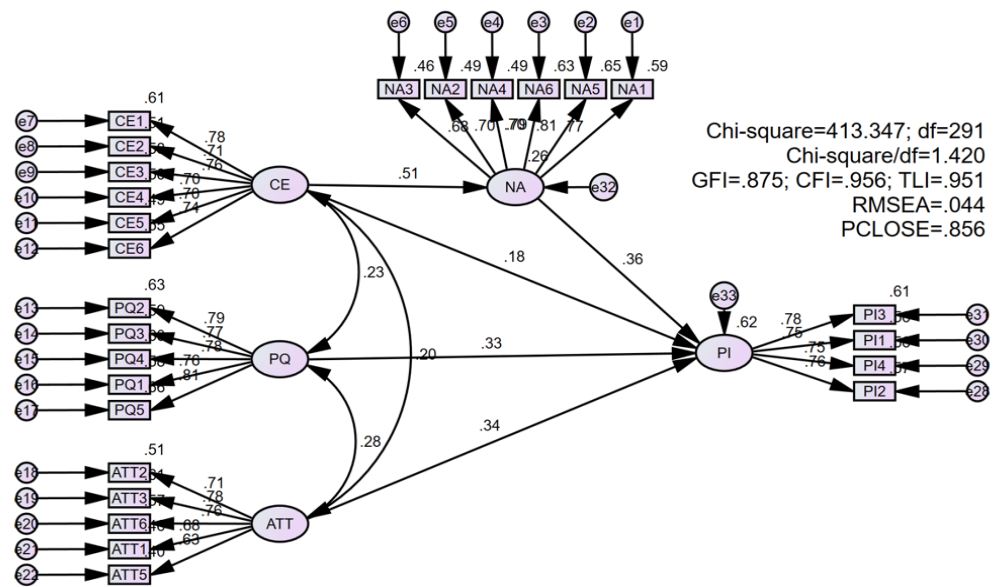


Figure 3. Structural model results. (Source: own research)

As illustrated in Figure 3, the results show that consumer ethnocentrism ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.001$), attitude towards EVs ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.001$), perceived quality ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$), and

brand nationalism ($\beta = 0.36$, $p < 0.001$) all have significant positive effects on purchase intention towards VinFast EVs. Among these predictors, brand nationalism shows the strongest effect, followed by attitude and perceived quality. These findings support H1–H3. The model explains a substantial proportion of variance in purchase intention ($R^2 = 0.624$), indicating strong explanatory power.

The mediating role of brand nationalism was examined using bootstrapping with 2,000 resamples. Consumer ethnocentrism is found to significantly predict brand nationalism ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < 0.001$), and the relationship between brand nationalism and purchase intention is also statistically significant ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$). The direct effect of consumer ethnocentrism remains significant ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$), indicating partial mediation. The indirect effect of consumer ethnocentrism on purchase intention via brand nationalism is statistically significant, supporting H4.

The moderating effect of environmental concern was tested using a mean-centered interaction term ($CE \times EN$). Environmental concern exerts a significant positive direct effect on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$). As indicated in Figure 4, environmental concern strengthens the positive relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < 0.01$), supporting H5.

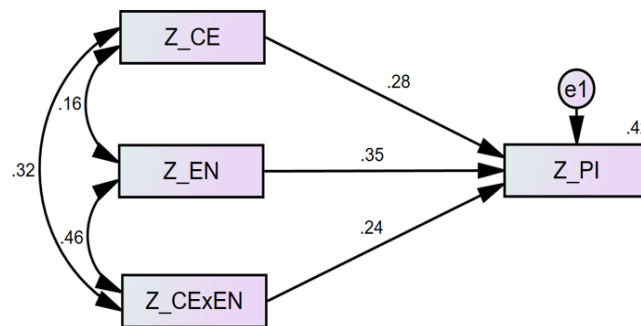


Figure 4. Moderation results. (Source: own research)

4.1.4. Control variables analysis

One-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether income level, education level, and region of residence influenced purchase intention towards VinFast EVs.

The results show that none of the three control variables, including income ($F = 1.742$, $p = 0.159$), education level ($F = 1.405$, $p = 0.242$), and region of residence ($F = 0.475$, $p = 0.623$) had significant effects on purchase intention. These findings suggest that purchase intention remains consistent across demographic groups, indicating that psychological and perceptual factors play a more important role in explaining adoption intention.

4.2. Discussion

This study's findings offer useful insights into the determinants affecting consumers' intention to adopt EVs in Vietnam's emerging EV market. The results resonate with prior research on technology adoption and sustainable consumption, indicating that perceived quality and positive attitudes towards EVs are associated with increased consumers' purchase intentions. These findings consolidate the argument that consumers evaluate EVs not only in terms of environmental benefits but also based on their perceived functional performance and product reliability [1]. In recent literature, consumer perceptions and knowledge about EVs are found to play central roles in shaping adoption behavior [5], [6]. While prior studies carried out in developed markets considered functional attributes, i.e., cost, infrastructure, and

technological performance as primary determinants of EV adoption, this study's findings emphasize the stronger role of identity-based motivations in an emerging economy like Vietnam. This difference can be seen via the higher level of uncertainty associated with new technologies, where consumers tend to depend on symbolic and social cues when forming purchase intentions.

More broadly, the significant role of identity-based factors in shaping EV adoption behavior is highlighted. Particularly, the positive link between consumer ethnocentrism and brand nationalism reflects that ethnocentric consumers tend to support domestic products and hold favorable attitudes towards national brands. This finding aligns with previous research in international marketing, underscoring the strong perceptions of ethnocentric consumers towards domestic products as symbols of national identity and economic progress [4], [7].

Furthermore, the mediating role of brand nationalism reveals interesting insights into how national identity shapes sustainable consumption decisions. Brand nationalism is positioned as a mediator regarding consumers' emotional attachment to domestic brands rather than a direct predictor, thereby increasing the likelihood of adopting domestically produced EVs from manufacturers like VinFast. This mechanism highlights the symbolic dimension of EV adoption, where purchasing domestic technological products reflects environmental awareness and a sense of national pride.

These findings suggest that EV adoption in emerging economies can be explained by a combination of functional evaluations, environmental concerns, and identity-based motivations rather than only by technological or economic considerations. Consistent with recent research, social, cultural, and contextual factors are examined which increasingly drive sustainable mobility adoption across different countries [3]. Integrating these perspectives provides a deeper understanding of the psychological and social drivers underlying EV adoption in developing markets.

Despite positioning VinFast as a representative domestic EV brand, the study's findings are expected to be applicable to similar emerging market contexts where domestic companies have gradually become the center in sustainable technology transitions.

4.2.1. Theoretical implications

This study extends the growing literature on EV adoption and sustainable consumption in several important ways. First, identity-based factors were integrated into the analysis, specifically the importance of consumer ethnocentrism and brand nationalism in shaping consumers' behavioral intentions towards EVs. These constructs broaden the conceptual understanding of EV adoption beyond functional considerations to include symbolic and identity-related motivations.

Next, the study enriches the integration of consumer ethnocentrism regarding its indirect influence on EV purchase intention via brand nationalism. This offers practical insights into the psychological mechanisms, where sustainable consumption behavior is formed by national identity. The empirical evidence from an emerging economy like Vietnam and the specific case of VinFast contributes to the global literature on EV adoption, which has been dominated by research done in developed markets.

Although this study only considered psychological and identity-based drivers, practical factors, i.e., charging infrastructure availability, government incentives, and cost considerations are crucial in forming EV adoption, which may interact with identity-based motivations and impact consumer decision-making. Both structural and psychological determinants could be implemented in future research to offer a more holistic understanding of EV adoption behavior.

4.2.2. Managerial implications

The findings offer several practical implications for VinFast and other domestic EV manufacturers operating in emerging markets.

Due to the strong influence of brand nationalism, the findings reveal VinFast's current strategy which embeds national identity into its brand positioning to reinforce consumer attachment. Since VinFast shifted its focus to fully electric vehicle manufacturing, it has consistently framed its products as symbols of Vietnam's technological ambition and industrial progress. This requires marketing campaigns to selectively leverage patriotic narratives and national pride, highlighting VinFast not only as a pioneer in EV production but also as a representation of Vietnam's capability to compete in global high-technology industries. This positioning echoes prior research suggesting that brands embedding national identity can effectively strengthen emotional attachment and foster stronger consumer support [13], [14].

With VinFast's rapid expansion of its EV product portfolio, it can further underpin its identity-based positioning. In recent years, multiple EV models have been introduced targeting different consumer segments, ranging from compact urban vehicles, cargo vans, to full-size SUVs. The continuous introduction of new models embodies technological capability and innovation, strengthening consumers' perception of VinFast as a national technological champion. Vietnamese cultural symbolism and narratives of national development incorporated in these product lines are likely to facilitate the brand's national identity associations.

The results indicate that strong product quality and technological reliability could enhance symbolic positioning. National pride may spark first interest before consumers ultimately evaluate EVs based on perceived performance, safety, and battery technology. Therefore, continuous investments in research and development of innovative battery technologies, safety systems, and smart vehicle technologies remain vital for maintaining consumer confidence in domestic EV products [1].

The findings regarding perceived quality resonate with the company's policies, where several strategies have been implemented to lift adoption barriers, including price reductions for certain models and promotional policies such as free charging at VinFast's exclusive charging stations during early market expansion phases. These initiatives can reduce perceived adoption risks and encourage consumers to transition to electric mobility.

In addition, the moderating mechanism of environmental concern suggests that sustainability messaging can further strengthen consumer support for domestic EV brands. Due to environmental benefits of electric mobility, such as lowering emissions, greener urban transportation, and alignment with national sustainability goals, VinFast can grab growing attention among environmentally conscious consumers while reinforcing the narrative that domestic technological innovation contributes to a greener future for Vietnam [16].

By focusing on VinFast, it suggests domestic technological brands are capable of leveraging national identity narratives and sustainability transitions to accelerate the adoption of new mobility technologies. This combination of national innovation branding and sustainability positioning may represent an effective strategy for building legitimacy and consumer trust in emerging economies.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention towards VinFast EVs by considering evaluation-based determinants, consumer ethnocentrism, brand nationalism, and environmental concern. Both rational evaluations and identity-based motivations were found to significantly shape EV adoption intentions.

The findings show that attitude towards EVs and perceived quality are positively associated with purchase intention, underscoring the central role of technological confidence and product evaluation in EV adoption. Consumer ethnocentrism also significantly strengthens consumers' support for domestic EV brands, while brand nationalism further mediates this relationship, indicating that consumers are more likely to perceive VinFast as a symbol of national technological progress rather than a conventional carmaker. Furthermore, environmental concern reinforces the positive relationship between consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intention, suggesting that sustainability awareness can enhance consumer support for domestic EV adoption.

Overall, this study demonstrates that EV adoption in emerging markets like Vietnam is influenced not only by technological evaluation but also by identity-related perceptions and sustainability motivations. The findings shed light on pragmatic approaches for domestic EV manufacturers when promoting green mobility in developing economies.

This study has several limitations that provide opportunities for future research. First, the data were collected from Vietnamese consumers through an online survey using convenience sampling, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other countries or cultural contexts. The sample size is relatively small, which may lower the statistical power. Future studies could examine similar models in other emerging markets to explore potential cross-country differences in EV adoption behavior. Second, the study focuses on consumers' purchase intention rather than actual adoption behavior. Although purchase intention has widely been identified as a proxy for behavioral outcomes, future research could consider actual EV purchase decisions or longitudinal adoption patterns. Third, as a limited set of psychological and perceptual determinants were examined, additional factors such as government incentives, charging infrastructure availability, or perceived economic benefits should be incorporated in future studies. Finally, domestic technological brands in emerging economies could be further explored to build legitimacy and consumer trust in global markets, particularly in the context of evolving EV industries.

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