

The Effect of Service Quality on Purchase Intention with Mediating Role of Store Image

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Abstract— This study emphasizes to measure the effect of service quality on purchase intention with mediating role of store image. The study majorly focused on paint brands available at stores of Manama, Bahrain. Reliability of data, descriptive analysis and Pearson correlation matrix was calculated by using SPSS. The relationship among study variables is tested through structural equation modeling. Results highlighted that there is significant and positive relation between service quality and purchase intention of private label paint brands. Moreover, it was found that store image mediates the relationship between service quality and purchase intention of private label paint brands. This is the first study which highlighted the paint industry of Bahrain. In future the model of study can be checked by adding variable of electronic word of mouth.

Keywords— Service Quality, Purchase Intention, Store Image, Private Label Brand, Services

1. Introduction

There are mostly two types of retail stores, small and large in every retail market and most of the retail customers are looking for a sentimental experience in retail setting. In last few decades there is considerable change in retail market composition. Numerous retail stores have grasped noteworthy market reputation and existence. They have introduced new purchasing trends. Many small retailers have made themselves successfully effective competitor of new large retailers. There is also increasing trend of shifting retail consumers towards large retail stores. The consumers are selecting large retail stores on diverse basis. Their intention to purchase their products from a specific store depends on numerous factors. Their purchase decision might be influenced by word of mouth, personal experiences, advertising, and references from family and friends [1].

Ref [2] defined the private label brands as the store's special trade mark, being sold in a specific store. With the growth of recent distributor's scale, their negotiation power has also become stronger with the manufacturers. Additionally, it is argued by [3] because of economic slump which has caused a significant decrease in consumer income, retailers have violently made a private label brand (PLB) to enlarge their uniqueness and profits [4]. The producers commit to encourage the brand reputation and shifting the expenditures to the consumers, might be one of the reasons behind such expansion of private label brands. This increases prices and permits the retailers to contribute with lesser prices as compared to the market prices. According to [5] the private label brand's annual sale volume has been advanced near to one trillion USD and these are increasing consistently. Despite of establishing the reputation and uniqueness, a private label brand can be a source of yield rate increment and customer's retention [6]. This increase of consumer perception about brands is regarded as a subject of brand management and marketing communication. According to this concept, positioning of store characteristics, brand and price combination, intend to form messages and dedications for customers with the intention to build required perceptions in customer's mind. This perception build brand image in consumer's mind and with effective marketing strategies it is slightly considered as controllable [7]. This also includes brand remembrance by the consumers for its performance and usage experience and also results in emotional and psychological satisfaction [8; 9]. As of this perception, brand image replicates the brand's ability to satisfy needs of consumers. It also demonstrates brand value and recognition shaped for the consumers. Positive or negative indications and recalls by customers, determined the consumer approach towards brand or product [10]. Negative feelings for a product might occur from poor performance of purchased product that

might cause risk-perception and its high level results in loss of the product or brand's consumer forever.

Paint stores can develop themselves by addition of several products attributes like store environment, sales person's service quality, superior quality and customer satisfaction from their merchandise. Such features increase brand and store value by enhancing retailer individuality and product recognition [11]. This also causes consumer satisfaction, brand repute and consumer constancy [12]. This enables the retailer to build with their customers not only the brand name but also growth of cogent and emotional relationships. Such strong relationships enable the retail store to build a strong brand that distinguishes them from their competitors [9]. In this way the strong private label brands influence the retail store's repute and made them unique in the minds of customers [13]. Retail stores always try to sustain both store and product image with the aim of maintaining obvious strong brand image [14]. Consumer shopping satisfaction usually based upon their perception about store attributes and also on their personal product evaluations being procured from that store [15].

The store's service quality is additionally a critical factor affecting the purchase intention of consumers [16]. Many retail store globally enhancing their store and private label brand image by ensuring superior quality, enjoyable substantial service environment, and decent shopping experience [17]. However, a small number of past studies have examined the impact of service quality and store image on purchase intention of private label brands, particularly in context of paint retail stores. This study is an effort to fill this study gap, by investigating the impact of one extraneous variable (service quality) on the purchase intention of private label brand. Furthermore this study will also examine the mediating role and impact of store image between the relationship of service quality and purchase intention. According to [18], customers prefer to purchase a better image brand to lessen the supposed risk and this also influences the customer attitude towards price consciousness. This study investigates the direct effect of retail store service quality and indirect effect mediated by store image for the purchase intention of private label brands. Another contribution of this study is the research population or market which was not previously explored. For this, the researcher

selected paint stores such as Jotun Multicolor, HEMPEL Paints, Sherwin Williams Paints, Al Ala Trading Group, Berger paints, Dulux Paints and Aspire Jotun paint stores which were operating in city of Manama, Bahrain. This study is extension of research done by [42]. Therefore we compliment [42] as we followed their future recommendations in this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Purchase Intention

The attempt to buy any service or product is known as customer purchase intention [19] and it can be influenced by positive attitudes or feelings toward a product/service or private label store [11]. In retail store the purchase intention of customer can change depending upon location, timing and brands which are actually sold there [11]. Moreover, there are some intrinsic factors like customer satisfaction, customer's need fulfilment and placement of customer in better position which can factors which can affect customer purchase intention [20]. In several linkages between purchase intention and store image, purchase intension has been used as an indicator to estimate consumer behaviour [21]. [22] found past purchasing experience (shopping), brand and service (retail environment) to be the three most important drivers in purchase decision making of female customers. Furthermore, they suggested that these drivers must be focused by retailers keenly in order to attract and satisfy customers. Good service quality can increase the purchase intention of private label brands [23]. Here is the hypothesis

H1: Service quality has a positive effect on the purchase intention towards private label brand products.

2.2 Store image

The functional and psychological attributes of retail store are considered its "personality" traits [24]. Retail store's image is represented by a multi-attribute construct in many cases [25]. There is no common definition of store image because of gap between its various forms conceptualization and operation [26]. In domain of store image, much of the literature is available on retail image and its representation as the pioneer study of [27] explained 12 components of retail store image. In strive of

defining “image” many retail formats found different sets of store attributes by focusing on literature [28].

Literature review is discovering the linkage between perceived store image, perceived service quality and private brand labelling. Store image elements are “nice feeling” to the physical attributes of “price”, “quality” and “reputation”. The construction of store image comprises best service quality, suitable price and customer’s satisfactions [29]. The convenience for buyers can be increased by promotion of store arrangement and design. In store, a well-trained salesperson can lead to impulse purchasing behaviour and reduce the problems in consumer buying process [30]. The private label paint brands image in this study is the association consumers add to PLB products, which leads to perceptions of the PLB. The relation between store image and purchase intention is also mainly research area [31]. Here is the Hypothesis

H2: Store image positively and significantly affect purchase intention.

H4: Store image mediates the relationship between service quality and purchase intention of private label brands.

2.3 Service Quality

Service quality is an important differentiator in a competitive business environment measures how well the service delivered matches customer expectations [32]. By enhancing quality in services, businesses can influence customer satisfaction, trust and customer’s retention [33; 34; 35]. Previously the service quality model was introduced by [36], referred as SERVQUAL which includes tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. This model shows that: as the as performance exceeds expectations, quality increases and vice versa [35], applies to general service. Later [37] developed another model E-S-QUAL, focuses on service providers who operate via the internet platform [38]. Researchers [35] identify the four specific service quality dimensions (network quality, customer service, information quality and security and privacy) and their differing influence on customers’ satisfaction and trust.

Previous research on overall service quality is associated with different dimensions of service quality. [39] confirms the importance of network quality dimension for measuring the overall service quality in Chinese telecommunications market.

The appropriate delivery of good and services on retail store can result in to a good store image [40]. Here is the hypothesis

H3: Service quality has a significant and positive relationship with store image.

3. Methodology

3.1 Measure & Measurements

This study is conducted in Manama city, Bahrain and measurement scales have been adapted from past studies which are well thought-out as reliable and valid.

Service quality as construct is defined as high-order construct by [41] and [42]. These authors have further subdivided the service quality into three quality dimensions which are “interaction”, “service environment” and “outcome” quality. This study seeks guidance from these studies and adapted a 6-item scale which was used by [42] to measure the service quality of stores in Manama, Bahrain. Store image as construct adapted from the studies of [43] and [44], which are analogous to study of [42] categorized in five-dimensions, including of product diversity, quality, money value, product price and store environment. This study has utilized 6-item scale to measure the store image. This study adapts the 3-item scale to measure the purchase intention, established by [45]. [46] and [42], also used same type of measurement scale to measure the purchase intention. 5-point Likert scale was used to measure all construct’s items where “5 = strongly agree and “1 = strongly disagree”.

3.2 Research Design

Most of the past research studies which are conducted to investigate the purchase intention of retail consumers were done in hypermarkets [32]. Therefore, this study selects Wall covering Textured/flocked paint stores operating in Manama Bahrain as target population or research industry. Jotun Multicolor, HEMPEL Paints, Sherwin Williams Paints, Al Ala Trading Group, Berger paints, Dulux Paints and Aspire Jotun are the popular paint stores in Manama, Baharain were selected as the research stores. This study uses cross-sectional survey design and self-administrated questionnaires were used to get customer’s responses.

The respondents were mostly retail consumers of the paint brands. Simple random technique was used to collect the data. Every 3rd customer was selected to give questionnaire and get response at the spot. About 350 questionnaires were distributed, of which, 277 effective questionnaires were returned. The sample comprises of a high portion of male customers which were 88% than 12 % of female. A large percentage of educated people (education graduation etc) were included in sample. The sample is also comprises of mostly young people 94%, age range from 20 ~ 40 years.

3.3 Data Analysis

In this study, data reliability, descriptive analysis and Pearson correlation matrix is calculated by using SPSS version 24. The relationship among study variables is tested through structural equation modeling (SEM) by using AMOS 24. The mediation effect is tested by using Hayes & Preacher, (2014) model for statistical mediation analysis.

4. Results and Findings

4.1 Structural equation model (SEM)

Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a dominant and comprehensive statistical method being used to measure the relationship between multiple variables. In measurement model data reliability and validity is measured while in structural measurement model causal relationship between study hypothesis is verified. Hence, we have also adopted the two-staged data analysis process.

4.2 Measurement model

Prior to estimation of structural model, the researcher examined each variable with linked items by making factor analysis. This study follows the factor loading [47] recommendation and items having loading value less than 0.40 will not be considered in data analysis as shown in table 02 and this enables the researcher to refine his model. Table 01 shows factor loading for each construct which is greater than cut-off value of 0.40 (.75 - .88) and T-values are also above the cut-off value of 2.567, which confirms the convergent validity of constructs. The value of average variance extracted (AVE) is also > 0.50 and according to [48], P.777 that value of AVE > 0.50 means that item loading is greater than 0.70 which verifies the discriminant validity. The composite reliability as shown in

table 01 of each variable is well-above cut-off value of 0.70 as suggested by [49]. [50] suggests that the data reliability and validity must be measured before going for SEM. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis are displayed in table 2 which indicate that respondents' reactions are more inclined near agreement side. The results confirm the divergent validity of constructs as the correlation among study variable is less than 0.85 as suggested by [51].

Table 1. Reliability and validity analysis

Latent variables	Observation variables	Factor Loading	T-value	Error term	SMC ^a	CR	AVE
Service Quality	SQ1	0.807	10.673	0.560	0.651	0.91	0.62
	SQ2	0.777	10.537	0.603	0.604		
	SQ3	0.823	10.177	0.438	0.677		
	SQ4	0.812	9.628	0.421	0.659		
	SQ5	0.754	10.156	0.465	0.569		
	SQ6	0.763	10.027	0.387	0.582		
Store Image	SI1	0.824	10.216	0.426	0.680	0.93	0.69
	SI2	0.840	10.054	0.401	0.705		
	SI3	0.849	9.848	0.388	0.720		
	SI4	0.864	9.637	0.332	0.746		
	SI5	0.801	10.436	0.507	0.641		
	SI6	0.793	10.440	0.482	0.629		
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.830	9.687	0.404	0.689	0.89	0.74
	PI2	0.868	8.880	0.327	0.754		
	PI3	0.885	8.346	0.278	0.783		

SMC^a = Squared Multiple Correlations

Table 2. Descriptive statistics & Correlations

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Store Image	Service Quality	Purchase Intension
Store Image	3.630	1.001	1		
Service Quality	3.705	0.936	.817**	1	
Purchase Intension	3.704	1.041	.820**	.833**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

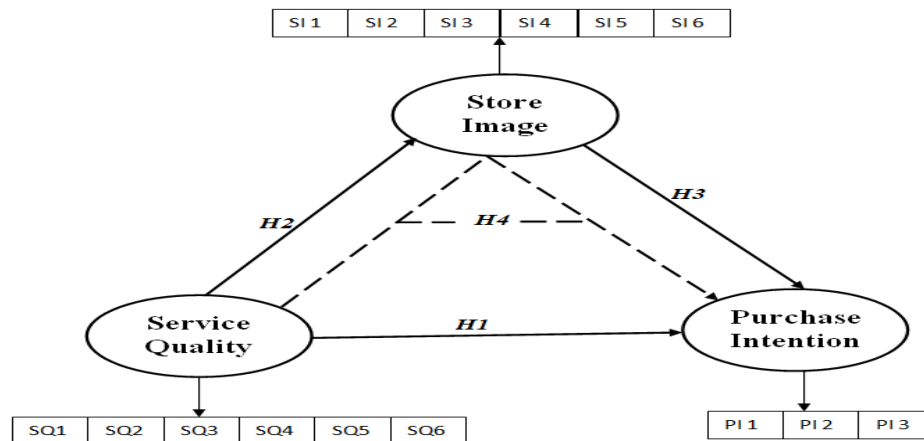


Figure 1. Measurement Model

4.3 Structural Model

The proposed study model has one exogenous variable (service quality), one mediating variable (store image) and one endogenous variable (purchase intention). The expected relationship

among all these variables is acknowledged in the structural model. The correlation among proposed relationships and data patterns depicts good-fit among data and the model. This helps in estimating the proposed model fitness. On the

basis of fit statistics, the decision to adjust or modify the model to enhance model fitness has been made. Absolute fit indices (AFI), Comparative fit indices (CFI), Tucker-Lewis coefficient (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and degree of freedom (X^2) are most commonly used fit statistics [52]. To test the overall model fitness, all latent variables were tested collectively. The model fit results are shown in table 03.

As shown in table 3, the initial model-fit results of AMOS analysis are showing satisfactory model-fit but there was some room to modify the model. After following modification indices, excellent model-fit results are achieved as presented under heading of revised model in table 3. Final structural model is shown in figure 2

Table 3. Comparison of model-fit

Index	Cut-off value	References	Initial Model	Revised Model
$X^2/d.f.$	≤ 3.00	Hayduck, (1987)	3.14	2.65
CFI	≥ 0.95	Hair et al., (2010)	0.948	0.961
TLI	≥ 0.95	Hair et al., (2010)	0.938	0.952
IFI	≥ 0.95	Schumacker & Lomax, (2010)	0.949	0.961
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	Bentler & Hu, (2009)	0.088	0.077

4.4 Test of Hypothesis

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed by using AMOS 24 to test the study hypotheses and results are given in table 4.

The results depict that there is significant effect of service quality ($\beta = .771$, $p < .001$), on purchase intention of private label paint brand. Service

quality also positively and significantly affect the store image/repute ($\beta = .783$, $p < .001$). The results also show that good store image or repute in the minds of consumers can also significantly affect the purchase intention ($\beta = .807$, $p < .001$) as shown in table 4. Hence H1, H2, and H3 are well supported by data analysis results and are accepted.

Table 4. Standardized Coefficients for Structural Paths

No	IV	→	DV	Estimate	S.E	P-Value
H1	Service Quality	→	Purchase Intention	0.771	.087	***
H2	Service Quality	→	Store Image	0.783	.088	***
H3	Store Image	→	Purchase Intention	0.807	.088	***

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .005$, * $p < .01$

The mediating role and impact of store image between service quality and purchase intention is tested by using model of [53] for statistical mediation analysis. The results of mediating effect are shown in table 5 which reveals that the indirect effect of service quality of paint stores in relation between store image and purchase

intention, lie between 0.239 to 0.509. Thus, there is no zero value in the confidence interval of 95%. So it can be concluded that store image mediates the relationship between store service quality and purchase intention of consumers. Therefore, H4 is accepted.

Table 5. The Mediating effect

<i>NO</i>	<i>I.V</i>	<i>Mediator</i>	<i>D.V</i>	<i>LL(95%CI)</i>	<i>UL(95%CI)</i>
<i>H4</i>	Service Quality	Store Image	Purchase Intention	0.2392	0.5091

LL= lower limit; UL=upper limit; CI = confidence interval

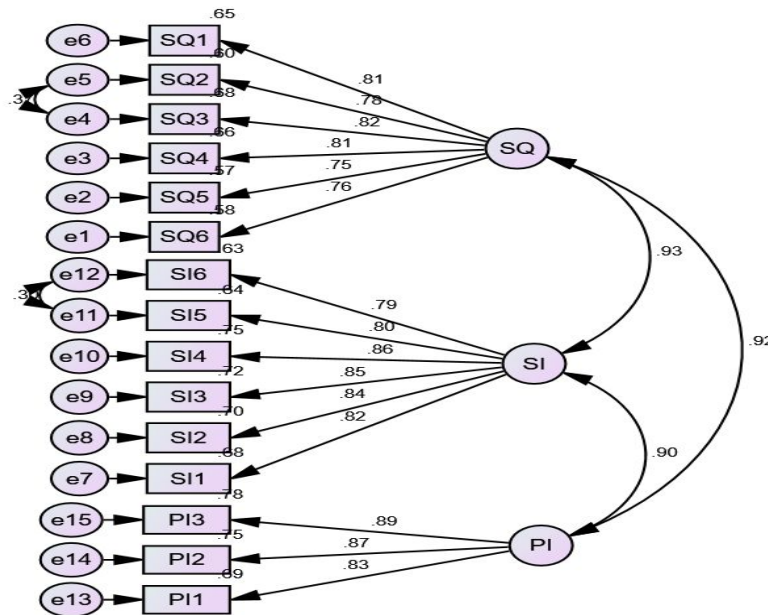


Figure 2. Final structural model

5. Discussion

The present literature advocates that the service quality and image of retail store significantly influence the customers’ intention to purchase private label brands. The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact and influence of service quality on retail store image and intention to purchase private label paint brands in Manama, Bahrain, through comprehensive empirical and theoretical analysis and to fulfil the study purpose maximum efforts will be made to answer the research question. To answer the research question “how significantly service quality effects the store image and consumer’s intention to purchase private label paint brands”, two hypotheses H1 and H2 were formulated. The results of study indicate that service quality has significant and positive impact on retail store image and purchase intention of private label paint brand.

Hence, H1 and H2 are well supported by the study results. To check the impact of store image on purchase intention, hypothesis H3, was developed. The results demonstrate that store image positively influence the purchase intention, hence H3 is also accepted. Though there is direct positive effect of service quality on purchase intention, it is however essential to mediate this impact by improving store image (H4). Additionally, since both service quality and store image positively influence the consumer purchase intention, it means that while consumers are deciding about the purchase of private label paint brands, service quality and image of retail store play extremely significant roles.

6. Conclusion

This is first study which highlighted the rapidly growing paint industry of Bahrain. Moreover, study

found the positive and significant influence of service quality on the purchase intention of private label paint brands. Therefore, customer's perception about these brands should be improved by enhancing the service quality of the retail stores as there is direct and positive relationship between both. Sales staff plays a key role in improvement of service quality of any retail store by enhancing their interaction quality with the consumers and also by aggressive introduction of private label brands. Store service environment quality is also an important factor that influences the consumer purchase intention. Based on results and findings, service environment quality can be improved by providing excellent shopping environment, music, good layout, installation of terminals which enables easy access to the customers, display of most recent and updated brands, complete product information, provision of excellent quality results of private label brands, reduction in customer's wait-time, superior quality and comparatively low prices of private label brands. This study presents strategies for increasing the consumer's purchase intention for private label paint brands. The study results also reveal that store image mediates the relationship between service quality and purchase intention of private label paint brands. Therefore, the concern managers should concentrate on building store image by providing variety of products, good quality, low price, good money-value, good inside decoration, enjoyable atmosphere and positive attitude of sales staff.

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