



Service Quality as an Intervening Variable Between Promotion, Price, and Customer Satisfaction: A Study of the Service Industry



Nyoman Sri Subawa ^a
I Gusti Nyoman Krisna Hadinata ^b
Ni Kadek Winda Yanti ^c

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of promotion and price on customer satisfaction with service quality as a mediating variable at the Service Product in Nusa Dua, Bali. The research sample consisted of 128 respondents selected using an accidental sampling technique. The data analysis method uses Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software to evaluate the relationship between variables. The results showed that promotion has a positive and significant effect on service quality with a coefficient value of 0.381 and a t-statistic of 5.117 ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, price has a significant positive effect on service quality with a coefficient value of 0.550 and a t-statistic of 7.341 ($p < 0.05$). In addition, service quality is proven to have a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction with a coefficient value of 0.215 and a t-statistic of 2.566 ($p < 0.05$). Promotion and price also affect customer satisfaction indirectly through service quality. The t-statistic values for the mediation path are 2.342 and 2.350, respectively ($p < 0.05$). Overall, the service quality variable was able to explain 78.3% of the variability, while the customer satisfaction variable had an R-squared of 80.8%, indicating excellent model strength. This study concludes that service quality plays an important role in mediating the relationship between promotion and price to customer satisfaction. Thus, Wisma Laundry is advised to improve promotion and pricing strategies supported by quality services to increase overall customer satisfaction.

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Corresponding author:

Nyoman Sri Subawa,

Universitas Pendidikan Nasional, Denpasar, Indonesia.

Email address: shribawa@undiknas.ac.id

^a Universitas Pendidikan Nasional, Denpasar, Indonesia

^b Universitas Pendidikan Nasional, Denpasar, Indonesia

^c Universitas Pendidikan Nasional, Denpasar, Indonesia

1 Introduction

In recent decades, the service sector has grown at an unprecedented rate, and customer happiness has become a key factor in determining the viability and success of businesses. In this regard, the laundry service industry is a noteworthy subset of the personal services sector, distinguished by direct client contact and high standards for service quality. It is now more crucial than ever for service providers looking to gain a competitive edge to comprehend how marketing factors affect client satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). In service sectors, a variety of factors, such as pricing policies, advertising techniques, and perceptions of service quality, affect customer happiness. Although prior studies have demonstrated clear correlations between these variables, less focus has been placed on comprehending how service quality functions as a mediator in the transmission of the impacts of price and promotional activities on customer satisfaction. In the laundry service sector, where customer evaluation procedures heavily rely on aspects of service quality like responsiveness, dependability, and tangibles, this disparity is especially noticeable. The SERVQUAL framework and the service-profit chain model provide the theoretical underpinnings for investigating service quality as a mediating variable. These models claim that service quality serves as a link between operational inputs and consumer outcomes. However, there is still a lack of empirical support for this mediating link in certain service contexts, especially in developing market environments where service expectations and evaluation standards may be different from those in developed markets. This study fills a research vacuum by looking into the mediating function of service quality in the interactions between promotion, price, and customer satisfaction at Wisma Laundry, a typical example of the current laundry service business (Brady et al., 2002). The research objectives are threefold: to analyze the direct impacts of promotion and price on customer satisfaction; to investigate the mediating function of service quality in these interactions; and, finally, to provide theoretical and practical insights for service sector managers. Wisma Laundry is a laundry service provider based in Nusa Dua, South Kuta, Badung Regency. According to Central Statistics Agency (BPS) data for 2023, Nusa Dua is located in the South Kuta area, which has a population of up to 118.10 thousand.

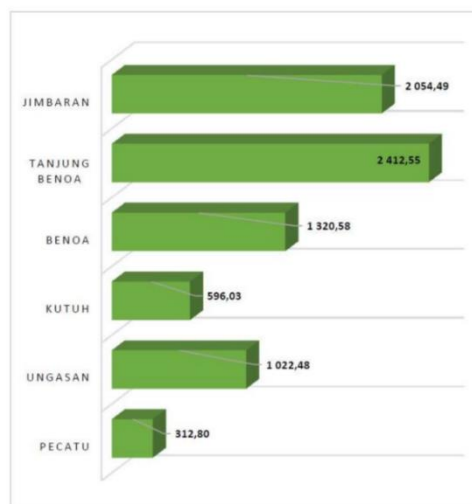


Figure 1. South Kuta Area Population Data
Source: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2023

According to the data, with a population of 118.10 thousand people, South Kuta has a significant market potential, particularly for service industries such as washing. This area's population is diversified, with workers, students, and families all in need of practical and effective services daily. The increase in business activity and community mobility in this area has also resulted in a strong demand for laundry services, particularly those that offer convenience and time efficiency to people who are busy. Wisma Laundry, as one of the service providers in this area, has a fantastic chance to address the community's growing demand for high-quality, fast laundry services. Wisma Laundry, which opened in 2018, managed to survive the COVID-19 pandemic while many other laundry facilities were closed. The rapid rise of housing, both in residential and boarding house areas, has increased the number of potential consumers

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who rely on laundry services for their laundry requirements. Wisma Laundry is affected by changes in consumer behavior, such as a drop in the number of customers and income as a result of stiff competition from other laundry services. To entice customers, Wisma Laundry offers lower prices than competitors. Researchers are interested in the Kiloan laundry company, particularly Wisma Laundry on Jl. Nusa Indah A B C, Benoa, South Kuta, Badung Regency, is strategically positioned and easily accessible.

Currently, laundry services must meet client expectations such as superior laundry quality, fragrance, and punctuality. To avoid problems caused by employee irresponsibility, the laundry must limit issues that arise to continue to please customers. Based on the described occurrences, the author wishes to perform a more in-depth study on the importance of preserving customer satisfaction at Wisma Laundry, as well as to address the existing research gap. Based on this background, the author would like to undertake a study titled "The Role of Service Quality Mediating the Influence of Promotion and Price on Customer Satisfaction at Wisma Laundry". The value of this study stems from its contribution to service marketing theory, which provides empirical evidence for the mediating factors in customer satisfaction formation (Pan & Nguyen, 2015). From a practical standpoint, the findings provide actionable insights for laundry service providers and other service firms looking to improve their marketing strategy and delivery methods.

The theoretical basis for this study is based on numerous well-established theories of service marketing and consumer behavior. The service-profit chain model (Heskett et al., 1994) lays the groundwork for understanding how operational inputs translate into customer outcomes via service quality. According to this approach, internal service quality drives staff satisfaction, which then influences outward service quality and, eventually, customer satisfaction and loyalty. The SERVQUAL model (Parasuraman et al., 1988) provides a complete framework for assessing service quality dimensions such as tangibles, dependability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These factors form the conceptual foundation for measuring service quality as a mediating variable in the link between marketing inputs and customer happiness (Belch & Belch, 2018). Social exchange theory strengthens the theoretical foundation by explaining how customers assess service interactions based on perceived costs and benefits. This viewpoint is especially important for understanding how promotional activities and pricing tactics affect customer perceptions and satisfaction via service quality assessments (Yanti et al., 2025).

Promotion and customer satisfaction. Promotional activities include numerous marketing communications that aim to inform, convince, and remind clients about products or services (Yamim & Borges, 2020). Promotion in the service industry offers more than just information transmission; it also sets expectations, builds relationships, and communicates values (Zeithaml et al., 2018). Service marketing research has consistently shown that promotional activities lead to higher levels of customer satisfaction (Subawa et al., 2023). Kumar & Reinartz (2016) discovered that well-designed promotional efforts improve customer perceptions of value and service quality, resulting in increased satisfaction levels. Similarly, Lovelock & Wirtz (2011) underlined that promotional activities in service sectors must be aligned with real service delivery to avoid expectation-performance gaps that could harm customer satisfaction. However, the mechanism by which promotion increases satisfaction is still a topic of theoretical discussion (Subawa et al., 2024). Some scholars argue for direct effects via cognitive processes, while others believe that promotional activities influence satisfaction indirectly via service quality evaluations and expectations (Grönroos, 2007).

Pricing and Customer Satisfaction. Price is an important component of the service marketing mix, functioning as both a cost factor and a quality indicator to clients (Devi & Yasa, 2021). Price and customer satisfaction in the service industry have a complex relationship that includes both economic and psychological components (Monroe, 2003). Economically speaking, higher prices may lower satisfaction by increasing perceived sacrifice. However, from a psychological aspect, pricing can operate as a quality indication, encouraging customers to generate higher expectations and potentially higher satisfaction when those expectations are realized (Zeithaml, 1988). Recent research has demonstrated that the price-satisfaction link is influenced by a variety of factors, including service quality perceptions, competitive setting, and consumer attributes. Vargo & Lusch (2006) contended that in service-dominant logic, price satisfaction connections are mediated by value judgments, which are inextricably tied to service quality ratings.

Service quality serves as a mediating variable. Service quality has been identified as a crucial factor influencing customer satisfaction in a variety of service businesses (Bullinger et al., 2003). The mediating role of service quality implies that marketing elements such as promotion and price have a primary impact on service quality perceptions. The conceptual logic for service quality mediation is based on the expectation-confirmation paradigm (Oliver, 1980), which holds that promotional activities and pricing strategies influence customer expectations, which are then compared to actual service performance to determine satisfaction levels. Service quality is the mechanism via which this comparison takes place. Empirical evidence for service quality mediation has been discovered in a variety of

service contexts, including hospitality (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000), healthcare (Roh & Park, 2019), finance (Siddiqi, 2011), and tourism (Subawa & Leonita, 2024). However, few studies have looked into this mediating link in the laundry service industry, leaving a large gap in the literature. Based on the literature review and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Promotion has a positive direct effect on customer satisfaction.

H2: Price has a positive direct effect on customer satisfaction.

H3: Promotion has a positive effect on service quality.

H4: Price has a positive effect on service quality.

H5: Service quality has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.

H6: Service quality mediates the relationship between promotion and customer satisfaction.

H7: Service quality mediates the relationship between price and customer satisfaction.

2 Materials and Methods

In this study, the type of research used is a quantitative method, with the variables used in this study being Promotion, Price, Consumer Satisfaction, and Service Quality as mediators. The population in this study was Wisma Laundry consumers and domiciled in South Kuta. The Non-Probability Sampling technique used the accidental method, finding as many as 128 samples or as many as 128 consumers who visited using the services at Wisma Laundry during the research process. This research step involves collecting information from online journal articles. The data collection technique used is by distributing questionnaires in the form of a Google form. The data analysis technique in this study uses the Structural Equation Modeling method supported by the Partial Least Squares (PLS) tool, which is processed with SmartPLS software version 4.0. This research step is equipped with a PLS SEM test in the form of an outer model test, an inner model test, and a mediation role test.

3 Results and Discussions

This study uses the Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis technique. Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a statistical software that aims to test the relationship between variables. Least Partial Squares (PLS) is a component-based or variance equation model (SEM). According to PLS is an alternative approach that moves from a covariance-based SEM approach to a variation-based approach.

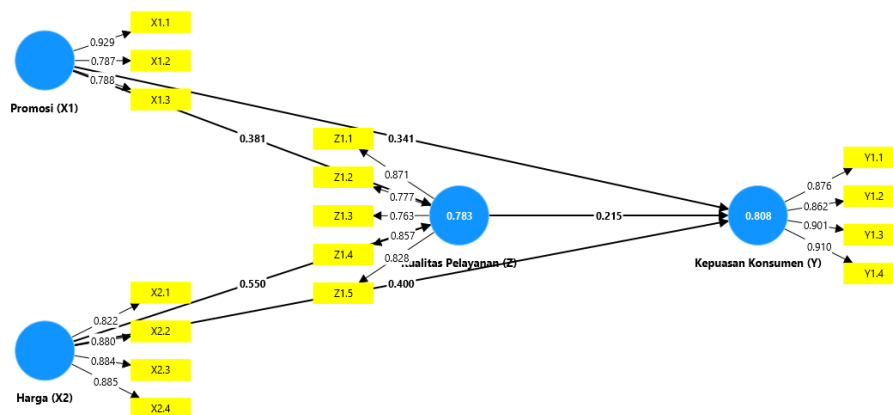


Figure 2. Outer Model Analysis Results of the Role of Service Quality Mediating the Effect of Promotion and Price on Consumer Satisfaction at Wisma Laundry

Convergent Validity Test

In PLS with reflective indicators assessed based on loading factor or outer loading is the correlation between item score/component score with outer loading construct score > 0.7 , the higher the factor loading value, the more important the role of loading in interpreting the factor matrix.

Table 2
Outer Loadings

Indicators	Promotion	Price	Service Quality	Satisfaction
X1.1	0.929			
X1.2	0.787			
X1.3	0.788			
X2.1		0.822		
X2.2		0.880		
X2.3		0.884		
X2.4		0.885		
Y1.1				0.876
Y1.2				0.862
Y1.3				0.901
Y1.4				0.910
Z1.1			0.871	
Z1.2			0.777	
Z1.3			0.763	
Z1.4			0.857	
Z1.5			0.828	

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all outer loading values are more than 0.7, the higher the factor loading value, the more important the role of loading in interpreting the factor matrix. Thus, it can be stated that the data in the study are valid.

Discriminant Validity Test

The assessment of the discriminant validity test is by the cross-loading measured by its construct. The discriminant validity figure is above 0.5, so the latent variable has become a good comparison for the model as follows.

Table 3
Crossloadings

Indicators	Promotion	Price	Service Quality	Satisfaction
X1.1	0.929	0.725	0.776	0.751
X1.2	0.787	0.651	0.645	0.709
X1.3	0.788	0.624	0.630	0.637
X2.1	0.662	0.822	0.632	0.778
X2.2	0.602	0.880	0.672	0.682
X2.3	0.736	0.884	0.813	0.715
X2.4	0.755	0.885	0.829	0.791
Y1.1	0.710	0.683	0.652	0.876
Y1.2	0.635	0.710	0.674	0.862
Y1.3	0.746	0.821	0.746	0.901
Y1.4	0.857	0.811	0.874	0.910
Z1.1	0.775	0.835	0.871	0.745
Z1.2	0.550	0.704	0.777	0.598
Z1.3	0.612	0.605	0.763	0.655

Indicators	Promotion	Price	Service Quality	Satisfaction
Z1.4	0.706	0.690	0.857	0.713
Z1.5	0.700	0.654	0.828	0.711

Based on the table above, it can be seen that a correlation among promotion, price, service quality, and customer satisfaction variables. The correlation of promotion variables is higher than price, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the correlation of price variables is higher than promotion, service quality, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the correlation of service quality variables is higher than promotion, price, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the correlation of service quality variables is higher than promotion, price, and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, the correlation of consumer satisfaction variables is higher than promotion, price, and service quality. So, it can be explained that all indicators in each variable are valid. In PLS, two methods can be used, namely composite reliability to determine the actual score of the reliability of a construct, and to determine the lower limit of the reliability figure of a construct using Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability figure above 0.7, and the Cronbach's alpha score exceeding 0.6 as follows.

Table 4
Construct Reliability & Validity

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Promotion	0.783	0.796	0.875	0.701
Price	0.891	0.895	0.924	0.753
Service Quality	0.878	0.884	0.911	0.673
Satisfaction	0.910	0.918	0.937	0.788

Based on the table above, it can be seen that all Cronbach's alpha and Composite Reliability values measure the actual value of the reliability of a construct. The Cronbach alpha value is greater than 0.6. And the composite reliability value is above 0.70. Thus, it can be stated that the data in the study are reliable.

Structural Model (Inner Model)

The structural model (inner model) is a model to predict causal relationships between variables. In PLS, it is evaluated using the R-Square model for the dependent construct, the path coefficient value, or P-values, for each path for the significance test between constructs in the structural model. The R-Square value means the better the prediction model of the proposed research model. Then the next is the path coefficient estimate, which is the estimated value for the path relationship in the structural model obtained by the bootstrapping procedure, with a value that is considered significant if the t-statistic value is greater than 1.96 (significance level 5%) for each path relationship as follows.

Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Price -> Satisfaction	0.400	0.414	0.107	3.752	0.000
Service Quality -> Consumer Satisfaction	0.215	0.211	0.084	2.566	0.010

Based on the above values, the influence of the promotion variable on service quality is 0.381, so the direction of the relationship is positive, then the influence of the promotion variable on consumer satisfaction has a value of 0.341, so the direction of the relationship is positive, then the influence of the Price variable on service quality has a value of 0.550, so the direction of the relationship is positive, then the Price variable on consumer satisfaction has a value of 0.400, so the direction of the relationship is positive, then the service quality variable on consumer satisfaction has a value of 0.215, so the relationship between these variables is positive.

Table 8
Specific Indirect Effect

Effect	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Promotion -> Service Quality -> Satisfaction	0.082	0.080	0.035	2.342	0.019
Price -> Service Quality -> Satisfaction	0.118	0.116	0.050	2.350	0.019

Table 8 shows that the t-statistic value of promotion on consumer satisfaction through service quality is $2.342 > 1.96$ with a p-value of $0.019 < 0.05$. And the t-statistic of price on consumer satisfaction through service quality is $2.350 > 1.96$ with a p-value of $0.019 < 0.05$.

The results of the descriptive analysis test on the research variables are relatively the same for all research variables where there are results that tend to be good from the respondents' perceptions of Consumer Satisfaction, Promotion, Price, and Service Quality.

1) *The Influence of Promotion on Service Quality*

Based on the results of the analysis of the t-statistic value of the variable of the influence of price on consumer satisfaction, which is 5.117, greater than the t-table of 1.96. Original Sample (O) of 0.381 and P Values ($0.000 < 0.05$), it can be concluded that promotion has a positive and significant effect on service quality. The better the promotional strategy carried out by Wisma Laundry, the greater its influence on the quality of service felt by consumers.

2) *The Influence of Price on Service Quality*

Based on the results of the analysis of the t-statistic value of the variable of the influence of price on consumer satisfaction, which is 7.341, greater than the t-table of 1.96. Original Sample (O) of 0.550 and P Values ($0.000 < 0.05$), it can be concluded that price has a positive and significant effect on service quality. The better the pricing strategy carried out by Wisma Laundry, the greater its influence on the quality of service felt by consumers.

3) *The Influence of Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction.*

Based on the results of the analysis of the t-statistic value of the variable of the influence of promotion on consumer satisfaction, which is 3.820, it is greater than the t-table of 1.96 ($3.658 > 1.96$). Original Sample (O) of 0.423 and P Values ($0.000 < 0.05$), it can be concluded that the influence of promotion has a positive and significant effect on consumer satisfaction.

4) *The Influence of Price on Consumer Satisfaction*

Based on the results of the analysis of the t-statistic value of the variable of the influence of price on consumer satisfaction, which is 4.943, greater than the t-table of 1.96. Original Sample (O) of 0.518 and P Values ($0.000 < 0.05$), it can be concluded that price has a positive and significant effect on consumer satisfaction.

5) *The Influence of Service Quality on Consumer Satisfaction*

Based on the results of the analysis of the t-statistic value of the variable of the influence of price on consumer satisfaction, which is 2.566, is greater than the t-table of 1.96. Original Sample (O) of 0.215 and P Values (0.010 <0.05), it can be concluded that service quality has a positive and significant effect on consumer satisfaction.

6) *The Role of Service Quality in Mediating the Effect of Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction.*

The results of the analysis of this study indicate that the role of service quality in mediating the effect of promotion on consumer satisfaction is indicated by the value of the indirect effect coefficient of 0.092 and the t-statistic value = 2,342 > 1.96 with a p-value of 0.019 <0.05. These results indicate that promotion mediated by service quality has a positive and significant relationship to consumer satisfaction.

7) *The Role of Service Quality in Mediating the Effect of Promotion on Consumer Satisfaction.*

The results of the analysis of this study indicate that the role of service quality in mediating the effect of price on consumer satisfaction is indicated by the value of the indirect effect coefficient of 0.118 and the t-statistic value = 2.350 > 1.96 with a p-value of 0.019 <0.05. These results indicate that price mediated by service quality has a positive and significant relationship to consumer satisfaction.

4 Conclusion

This study successfully demonstrates that service quality serves as a significant mediating variable in the relationships between promotion, price, and customer satisfaction within the laundry service industry. The findings reveal that while promotional activities and pricing strategies have direct effects on customer satisfaction, these effects are substantially enhanced through service quality improvements. The research contributes to service marketing theory by providing empirical evidence for the mediating mechanisms in customer satisfaction formation and offers practical guidance for service providers seeking to optimize their marketing strategies. The substantial explanatory power of the model underscores the importance of the identified relationships for both theoretical understanding and practical application. For service industry practitioners, the results emphasize the critical importance of service quality as both a direct determinant of customer satisfaction and a mechanism through which marketing investments can be maximized. The integration of promotional activities, pricing strategies, and service quality enhancement efforts represents a strategic approach to sustainable competitive advantage in the service sector (Widhiasthini et al., 2025). The study's findings support the continued relevance of the SERVQUAL framework and service-profit chain model in contemporary service industry contexts, while extending these theories through empirical validation of mediating mechanisms. As the service industry continues to evolve, understanding these relationships becomes increasingly important for both academic research and practical management applications.

Limitation

The research has limitations in terms of the variables studied, scope, objects, and other limitations. Therefore, it needs to be studied further by expanding the scope of the research.

Conflict of interest statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests.

Statement of authorship

The authors have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The authors have approved the final article.

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