How Whatsapp Business E-Service Quality and Brand Reputation Influence Purchase Intentions? Empirical Finding Events Demand in Bali

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ABSTRACT

The rapid adoption of digital communication tools, particularly WhatsApp Business, has transformed the event services industry by enhancing e-service quality and customer engagement. Despite its growing popularity, research on how WhatsApp Business influences e-service quality and purchase intention remains limited. This study examines the impact of e-service quality and brand reputation on purchase intentions for event services in Bali, addressing a critical gap in the literature. Using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with PLS algorithm and bootstrapping techniques, data were collected from 100 respondents who had previously purchased event services. The findings reveal a strong, statistically significant relationship between e-service quality and purchase intention (original sample value = 0.751, p-value = 0.000), highlighting the importance of responsiveness, efficiency, and personalization. However, brand reputation's mediating role was weak (original sample value = 0.195, p-value = 0.030), suggesting it does not significantly alter the direct influence of e-service quality. These results underscore the primacy of e-service quality in driving purchase decisions, offering practical insights for event organizers to optimize WhatsApp Business for customer satisfaction and loyalty. The study contributes to the broader understanding of digital service quality in the event industry and provides actionable strategies for leveraging technology to enhance consumer experiences.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, immersive and interactive technologies have significantly impacted various aspects of our daily lives (Kwon et al., 2024). The *event organizer* business has experienced notable growth and transformation, driven by

technological advancements and evolving consumer expectations. With the rise of digital platforms and social media, *event organizers* are now tasked with creating highly engaging and interactive experiences that resonate with diverse audiences. In today's practical era, their role has expanded beyond merely coordinating logistics to integrating innovative technologies—such as virtual events, live streaming, and interactive apps—to enhance attendee engagement. *Event organizers* are also increasingly focused on personalization (Saravana Gokul et al., 2024), offering tailored experiences that align with the preferences and interests of participants.

Consumers' complex and increasingly personal needs require *event organizers* to deliver highly specialized services. *E-services* have emerged as the most effective and preferred method of customer engagement (Mahadevan & Joshi, 2022). These *e-services* encompass a wide range of activities that utilize the Internet as a distribution channel (e.g., *e-tailing*, *e-banking*, *e-travel*), along with newly emerging digital services (Vatolkina et al., 2020).

Consumers increasingly perceive social media marketing as more reliable than traditional promotional methods (Zahara et al., 2021). This shift is largely attributed to the surge of electronic-based activities, which have significantly transformed the online lifestyle of society. Activities like shopping, once limited to physical stores, are now commonly conducted online (Juwaini et al., 2022). As a result, digital communication tools—particularly instant messaging apps like *WhatsApp*—have gained substantial popularity. Digital networks have also become widely used (Jonker, 2016), and while many instant messaging apps are available for mobile devices, *WhatsApp* is considered one of the most preferred mobile-based applications (Cetinkaya, 2017). *WhatsApp Business* allows *event organizers* to provide fast, responsive, and personalized service, thereby increasing customer satisfaction.

The ability of *WhatsApp Business* to deliver such service has proven to be a valuable tool for *event organizers*, enhancing both customer satisfaction and engagement. Various measurement scales have been developed within different *e-service* contexts to assess consumers' perceptions of electronic service quality (*e-SQ*) (Shankar & Datta, 2020). *E-service quality* refers to services delivered to consumers via the Internet. These Internet-based services allow customers to complete transactions more efficiently, saving both time and money (Juwaini et al., 2022).

Moreover, a strong brand reputation plays a vital role in building customer trust (Rivaroli et al., 2022), significantly influencing purchase decisions for event services. Reputation is regarded as an organization's most valuable asset due to its ability to reduce stakeholder uncertainty regarding future performance, foster public trust, and create expectations of quality products and services (Barros et al.,

2020). Customer loyalty to a company's products or services motivates consistent purchasing behavior, even amid competitors' efforts to influence these decisions (Alkhurshan & Rjoub, 2020).

Despite the growing use of *WhatsApp Business* in the *event services* industry, research on its impact on service quality and purchase intention remains limited. As technology continues to evolve, *WhatsApp Business* has become a primary platform for service providers to interact directly and efficiently with clients (Mustafa et al., 2023). However, most existing studies focus separately on technological features or brand reputation, without directly examining how these elements jointly influence purchasing decisions. This reflects a gap in understanding how *WhatsApp Business* can enhance service quality within the context of *event services*.

This research is important to advance understanding of the role of *e-service quality* through *WhatsApp Business* and brand reputation in shaping purchase intention for *event services* in the digital era. By examining the relationship between *e-service quality* and brand reputation, *event organizers* can design more effective marketing strategies to boost customer purchasing decisions.

The *event services* industry has undergone substantial transformation due to the rapid adoption of digital communication tools, with *WhatsApp Business* emerging as a key platform for customer engagement. Despite its widespread use, empirical research examining how *WhatsApp Business* influences *e-service quality* and purchase intention remains scarce, particularly in the context of *event services*. Prior studies have generally addressed technological capabilities or brand reputation in isolation, failing to explore their combined influence on consumer behavior. This oversight highlights the need for a comprehensive investigation into how *e-service quality*, facilitated through *WhatsApp Business*, along with brand reputation, influences purchase decisions. Addressing this gap is essential, especially as *event organizers* increasingly rely on digital platforms to offer personalized and efficient services without a strong evidence base to guide strategy.

The urgency of this research lies in the growing reliance on digital channels for event planning, where customer expectations for seamless and responsive service are higher than ever. By exploring the interaction between *e-service quality* and brand reputation, this study offers new insights into how *WhatsApp Business* can enhance customer trust and increase purchase intention. Unlike previous studies that treat these components separately, this research integrates them into a unified framework, offering a more holistic understanding of their roles in the *event services* sector. The novelty of this study also stems from its specific focus on Bali's dynamic *event* industry—a region characterized by high digital adoption yet limited academic exploration. The results will not only contribute to theoretical development but also equip *event organizers* with practical strategies to improve service delivery and competitiveness in the digital age.

RESEARCH METHOD

The hypotheses of this study and the predictive validity of the model were evaluated using the *PLS* algorithm and bootstrapping techniques, utilizing *Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)* to examine the relationships between *e-service quality* (Taleghani et al., 2022; Zemblytė, 2015), brand reputation (Dachyar & Banjarnahor, 2017), and purchase intention (Kim et al., 2020) in the *event services* industry in Bali.

Data for the study were collected through a survey of 100 respondents who had previously purchased *event services* from *event organizers* in Bali. In most studies, a five-point *Likert* scale is commonly employed as the measurement tool to gather responses (Shankar & Datta, 2020). In this research, all variables were measured using a five-point *Likert* scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). The questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated literature and tailored to fit the specific context of this study (Erkan & Evans, 2018). The final version of the questionnaire consisted of 19 items in total.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research and data analysis are presented in this section. The author distributed online questionnaires between April 2024 and October 2024 in order to collect the data. The data processing outcomes reveal whether or not the hypothesis that was developed is supported.
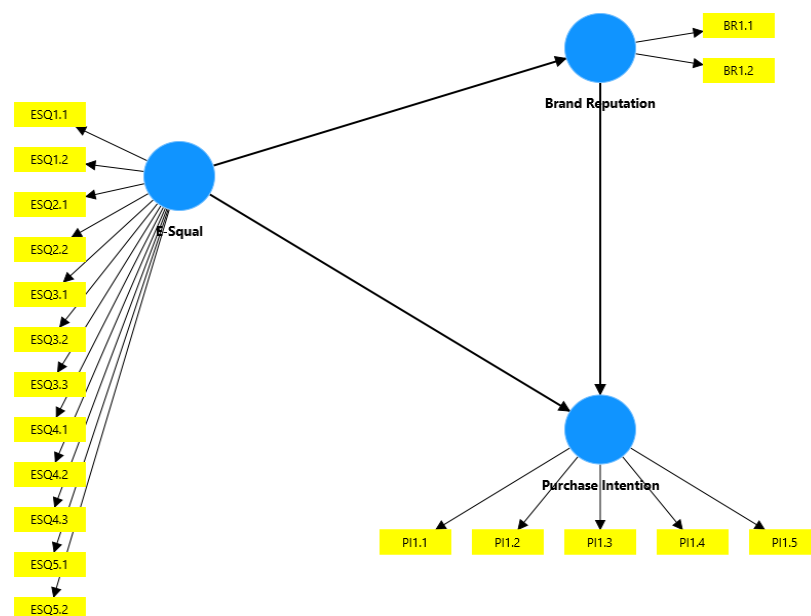

Figure 1. Research Model

It is possible to get the conclusion that the research hypotheses will be based on a number of prior studies as well as the framework research thinking. This study's initial hypothesis is:

H1. E-service quality has a positive and significant effect purchase intention

H2. Brand reputation mediates a positive and significant effect on E-service quality towards purchase intention

Outer Model Testing

A loading factor represents the correlation between an item's score and the indicator construct's score that measures the construct. A loading factor value greater than 0.7 is generally considered valid. However, according to (Hair et al., 2014), an initial loading factor value around 0.3 is considered to meet the minimum requirement, a value around 0.4 is considered better, and a value greater than 0.5 is typically considered significant. In this study, the threshold for the loading factor was set at 0.7.

According to the PLS model's estimation findings in the image above, all indicators have loading factor values greater than 0.5, indicating that the model satisfies the criterion for convergent validity. Table 1 and Figure 2 show the loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE values for each full construct.

Table 1. Outer Model Testing

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Brand Reputation	0,833	0,836	0,923	0,856
E-Squal	0,974	0,974	0,976	0,776
Purchase Intention	0,927	0,929	0,945	0,774

All constructs exhibit composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values greater than 0.7 (> 0.7), according to the reliability test findings in Table 1 above. In summary, every construct satisfies the necessary reliability.

R-Square Testing

Table 2. R-Square Testing

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Brand Reputation	0,797	0,795
Purchase Intention	0,905	0,903

The table 2 displays the R-square and Adjusted R-square values for Brand Reputation. The R-square value of 0.797 indicates that the independent variables in the model explain approximately 79.7% of the variation in Brand Reputation. The Adjusted R-square value of 0.795 is very close to the R-square, which suggests that after accounting for the number of predictors in the model, the model still explains 79.5% of the variance in Brand Reputation. These values demonstrate a strong

model fit, indicating that the independent variables significantly influence Brand Reputation in this context.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted based on the results of the inner model, which includes the R-square output, parameter coefficients, and t-statistics, as outlined by Hair et al (2014). The significance value between constructs, t-statistics, and p-values are analyzed to determine whether a hypothesis should be accepted or rejected. For this study, hypothesis testing was performed using SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares) 3.0 software. The threshold for the t-statistic was set at greater than 1.96, with a significance level of p-value 0.05 (5 percent) and a positive beta coefficient. Table 5 presents the results of the hypothesis evaluation, while Figure 3 displays the findings from the research model. The hypothesis test value is derived from the t-statistic calculated from the PLS output and compared with the t-table value. The PLS output reflects the predicted value of the latent variable, which is the linear aggregate of the indicators. The R-square value and significance test results were obtained using the Bootstrapping method, as shown in Figure 3.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

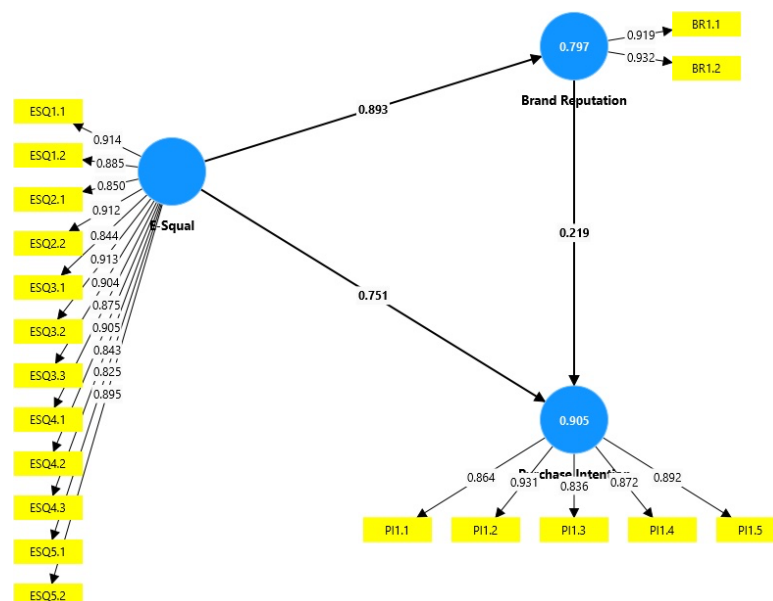| Hypothesis	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	P values	Result
(H1) : E-Squal -> Purchase Intention	0,751	0,758	0,098	0,000	Supported
(H2) : E-Squal -> Brand Reputation -> Purchase Intention	0,195	0,188	0,090	0,030	Not Supported

Figure 2. Hypothesis Testing

E-service Quality's Impact on Purchase Intention

The influence of e-service quality on purchase intention is shown through a significant relationship, with an original sample value of 0.751 and a p-value of 0.000, highlighting a strong and statistically meaningful effect. This finding supports the hypothesis that e-service quality positively influences purchase intention. The high original sample value suggests that improvements in e-service quality, such as reliability, fulfilment, efficiency, individualized attention and responsiveness to increasing customers' intention to make a purchase. The p-value of 0.000 further confirms the robustness of this relationship, as it is well below the typical significance threshold of 0.05 (Hair et al., 2014). Therefore, the results confirm that e-service quality is critical in shaping customers' purchase intentions, supporting the hypothesis with strong empirical evidence.

WhatsApp Business has emerged as a powerful tool for event organizers to enhance their e-service quality, providing customers with a more efficient and personalized experience. Reliability is the highest scoring sub-variable within e-service quality that significantly impacts customer satisfaction and purchase intention. Specifically, the ability of event organizers (EO) to respond quickly to customer inquiries through WhatsApp Business plays a crucial role in shaping the overall customer experience. Previous studies indicate that customers' assessment of waiting time has a negative impact on their satisfaction (Bielen & Demoulin, 2007). When customers perceive a high value in a product or service, their satisfaction rises, boosting their purchase intention (Prajitmutita et al., 2016).

The second indicator with the highest score in e-service quality is the ability of event organizers to address the needs and concerns of their customers adequately. This aspect is vital in enhancing the overall customer experience, as it demonstrates the event organizer's commitment to providing personalized and attentive service. When customers contact a service organization to address an issue with their account or order, they frequently rely on representatives to help meet their needs (Kevoe-Feldman, 2015). This, in turn, strengthens the relationship between the customer and the event organizer (Io, 2022).

Moreover, the ease of interaction through WhatsApp Business and the ability to address helps foster a stronger connection between the event organizer and the client. Customers who receive fast, relevant, and personalized responses are more inclined to move forward with their purchase decisions. Integrating WhatsApp Business into event planning further ensures customers feel supported throughout their journey, from initial inquiries to final bookings. Thus, the effective use of WhatsApp Business e-services boosts purchase intentions, making it an essential tool for event organizers in today's digital era.

The Effect of Brand Reputation as Mediator of E-Service Quality towards Purchase Intention

The findings suggest that brand reputation, when acting as a mediator between e-service quality and purchase intention, does not significantly affect the relationship between e-service quality and purchase intention. With a p-value of 0.030 and an original sample value of 0.195, the results indicate a weak, statistically significant, but relatively modest, mediating effect. While the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold for significance (Hair et al., 2014), the low original sample value suggests that brand reputation only partially influences how e-service quality impacts purchase intention. This implies that while a strong brand reputation may contribute to customer trust (Han et al., 2015), it does not fully mediate the relationship between high e-service quality and the likelihood of purchasing. Therefore, although brand reputation shapes consumer perceptions (Marquardt et al., 2015), it is not a dominant mediator in the specific context of event services offered through WhatsApp Business, and e-service quality alone remains a more direct driver of purchase intention.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between *e-service quality*, brand reputation, and purchase intention in the context of *event services* provided via *WhatsApp Business*. The first hypothesis, which posits that *e-service quality* positively affects purchase intention, is strongly supported, with a high original sample value of 0.751 and a *p*-value of 0.000. This indicates that *e-service quality* plays a crucial role in driving customers' purchase intentions, emphasizing the importance of responsive, efficient, and personalized service in the *event* industry.

However, the second hypothesis, which suggests that brand reputation mediates the relationship between *e-service quality* and purchase intention, is only partially supported. While the relationship between *e-service quality* and purchase intention remains significant, the mediating effect of brand reputation is relatively weak, with an original sample value of 0.195 and a *p*-value of 0.030. This suggests that although brand reputation has some influence, it does not significantly alter the direct impact of *e-service quality* on purchase intention in this context. Therefore, while brand reputation is important for building customer trust, *e-service quality* itself remains the more influential factor in driving purchase decisions in the *event services* sector.

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