

The Relationships Among Service Quality, Emotional Satisfaction and Behavioural Intention In Childcare Provider Choice: Evidence From Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the factors affecting parents' behavioral intention with respect to the service quality of childcare settings. Childcare quality is essential for parents nowadays and relies heavily for accessible, affordable and reasonable quality. Meantime, there are some of the issues arising in the childcare industry when there are many cases of injury, neglect or death in a childcare. Therefore, the study presents the shortfall inputs from the childcare centers' customer on the service factors that require further attention. The primary data of 364 questionnaires were collected from respondents of four regions in Peninsular Malaysia. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 and Partial Least Square Structural Modeling (PLS-SEM) were used for this study's data analysis. Dimensions of service quality with 21 items were observed in this paper. The behavioral intention was measured using seven items. The results confirmed that service quality was the antecedent for behavioral intention. In addition, emotion satisfaction embarked the role of mediation factor between service quality and behavioral intention. All the hypotheses relationships were supported. The originality of study gives valuable comprehension with regard to emotional satisfaction in childcare experience, since it contributes significantly to the prediction of behavioral intention. The implication of the study is further discussed in this paper.

Keywords: service quality, behavioral intention, emotional satisfaction, childcare center

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INTRODUCTION

Service are a continual process of on-going synergy between customers and service providers that encompass intangible activities offered as premium solutions to customers' problems. To provide these services, the physical, financial resources and any other useful elements of the systems are involved (Gronroos, 2004). Quality childcare services are pertinent in providing early education, nurturing positive values, and growing strong family institutions. Such services help to equip a child with lifelong learning skills for him to be able to adapt and embed himself into society. The realisation of the importance of life skills has encouraged parents' intention in seeking assistance from childcare services to nurture their children's motor skills. Malaysia has joined the phase of contemporary reproduction of population.

The characteristic of this phase are low birth rate, low death rate, and low population growth rate due to high involvement of women in the workforce. Women are increasingly given decision-making roles that improve their level of commitment for their careers and promote gender inclusivity at the workplace. Their increasing involvement in the labour force has increased productivity, lessened poverty rate, and increased their family's socio-economic status (Dallakyan & Bakhtavoryan, 2012). As always, there is a need for balance between the responsibilities to work and family. Noticing the importance of optimum childcare, the Malaysian Government introduces safe and quality childcare facilities to support the involvement of women in the workforce.

The number of childcare centres in Malaysia is increasing steadily and is predicted to continue to grow in the forthcoming years. The New Straits Times newspaper reported a statement made by the Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister, who claimed that 38,333 childcare centres are needed to cater to the needs of children under the age of four (Abas & Noor, 2018). In the meantime, cases relating to childcare services in Malaysia are mostly related to the negligence and lack of facilities, proving that improvements are needed in those areas (Mashitah, Nik Salida, & Arasy, 2018; Nabihah, Hayati, & Hejar, 2015). The reason behind this situation is due to the lack of childcare that can be trusted and safer for children. Parents worry about the interests and safety of their children.

This childcare is also often found to have failed to establish a good relationship between childcarer, parents, and children, there are some do not provide proper facilities, improper learning tools that are supposed to grow children ability, particularly in developing the minds of children. If the service render not reaching the require standard by the Government, it would impact to behavioural intention of the parents. The Government further urged for more childcare providers to look upon this matter, ensuring that they will provide better services (Abas & Noor, 2018). Following this observation, the current study presents the shortfall inputs from the childcare centres' customer on the service factors that require further attention. Note that this paper discusses the service quality factor, which examined the five dimensions of service quality that affect the customers' behavioural intention in choosing a childcare centre.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Service Quality

Service quality is one of the most researched topics in the past few decades (Gallifa & Batalle, 2010). Consumers are now concerned with both the delivery and quality of the services they receive. If the quality of the services exceeded the customers' expectations, the service perception will be highlighted. According to the relationship marketing theory, Egan (2011) explained that positive evaluations of service quality lead to customer's satisfaction, which in turn impacts the strength of relationship and profitability. Service quality assists in relationship marketing, impacting customers' satisfaction, and behavioural intention. Most service providers are aware that strategic relationship marketing effort, particularly by evaluating customers' future intention, is essential for their success (Chien, Chia, & Yuan, 2010).

Service quality is a dominant feature that leads to satisfaction and intention. With regards to this, the Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL) has attracted considerable attention as an effective tool in measuring behavioural intentions (Aliman & Mohamad, 2013; Li, Huang, & Yang, 2011; Nor Asiah, Nor Khalidah, Dewi, Norzalita, & Muhamad Azrin, 2010). Many studies have shown that the ability to influence customer's perception of service performance is based on what they had encountered before. Moreover, the intention to revisit or choose the best service provider in the future is an indicator of quality service. Following this, service providers should improve their approaches to remain relevant to the current requirements that prefer a larger market share, loyalty, and return of market investment (Coelho & Henseler, 2012). The quality of services provided by childcare centre is the parents' focal point. This idea has been extensively studied for many years (Gupta & Simonsen, 2010; Raj & Raval, 2013). Nonetheless, the service providers are less concerned over the issues of children safety and the needs of parents due to the increasing number of childcare centres in the market.

Behavioural Intention

Oliver (1997) defined behavioural intentions as an affirmed likelihood to engage in a certain behaviour. In view of this interpretation, behavioural intention in this study is related to the likelihood to return and suggest this in future to family, colleagues and others in the future. Behavioural intention is also defined as potential behaviours that are likely to be triggered by service quality and satisfaction (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1996). In addition, Zeithaml et al. (1996) proposed that service quality is related to positive behavioural intention. When behavioural components are positive, customers will positively affirm their tendency to revisit the provider, in addition to relaying positive reviews to others (Jani & Han, 2011).

The concept of behavioural intention attracted the attention of researchers and was applied in many platforms, including hospitality (Ryu, Lee, & Gon Kim, 2012), higher institutions (Park, Nam, & Cha, 2012), and internet banking (Lu, Cao, Wang, & Yang, 2011). It is proven that behavioural intention and customer satisfaction in the service industry is the key to organisational's profitability (Mittal & Gera, 2012; Pandza Bajs, 2013). The study of behavioural puts focus on the

balance between retaining and attracting future prospects (Canny, 2014), and ensuring sustainability in a competitive market (Heung & Gu, 2012). The antecedent of behavioural intention includes word of mouth (Mittal & Gera, 2012), willingness to pay (Namkung & Jang, 2016), complaints (Ing-Long, 2013) and loyalty (Lertwannawit & Gulid, 2011).

Emotional Satisfaction

According to Cronin, Brady, and Hult (2000), satisfaction with a service provider is both an evaluative and an emotion-based response that include of interest, enjoyment, surprise, anger and shame with a service encountered. Oliver (1993) found that there are two component of satisfaction namely cognitive and affective. The importance of affective (emotion) has been disregarded compared to the study focusing on cognitive component (attitude) (Wong, 2004). The set of emotional reactions were generated from the consumption of experiences (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991). Nowadays, the role of emotions is gaining attention in the literature of service quality environment (Ladhari, 2009; Oliver 1997; Wong, 2004). There have been some studies on the effects of emotions on satisfaction with service quality. Recent studies suggest that emotion is a fundamental attribute in satisfaction, and customer satisfaction should include a separate emotional component (Cronin et al., 2000). Substantially discussed in the literature are the relation of emotion and satisfaction involving either emotional construct or emotional judgement (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999; Oliver, 1997). Nyer (1997) discovered that measurement of joy and satisfaction were loaded on one factor as agreed by Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson, and O'Connor (1987). In line with Cronin et al. (2000), satisfaction with the service provider is an emotion based response with the service encountered.

Relationship of service quality and emotional satisfaction

Excellent quality of service and customer satisfaction is the most important challenge being faced by the service industry. Previous studies showed that for today's environment, the true measurement of an organization's success lies in its ability to satisfy customer's needs continually and consistently. The effect of customers' emotional reactions during service is contemplated in service marketing and how it helps to influence behaviour. It also helps service providers to better manage their service offering (Ladhari, Souiden, & Ladhari, 2011; Wong, 2004). Oliver (1997) suggested that emotion during consumption "coexists alongside various cognitive judgments in producing satisfaction". Several studies verified the direct positive relation between service quality level and emotional satisfaction (Ladhari, 2009; Ladhari, Brun, & Morales, 2008). There are also other studies that related to the five dimensions of service quality with satisfaction as discovered by many scholars (Aliman & Mohamad, 2013; Kitapci, Akdogan, & Dortyol, 2014; Yusup, 2019). Therefore, based on the above justifications, the hypotheses of service quality on emotional satisfaction developed as follows:

H1: Service quality has a significant relationship with emotional satisfaction.

Relationship of emotional satisfaction and behavioural intention

Emotions play an important function in defining experiences and influencing consumer reactions. Emotions have a direct effect on behavioural responses (Prayag, Hosany, & Odeh, 2013). Prior research establishes the impact of consumption emotions on global evaluative measures such as behavioural intentions (Ladhari, 2009; Wong, 2004). The association of emotional satisfaction with the intention is also found to be significant as studied by Sharma and Nayak (2018). Highlighting on this, positive emotions are able to spark positive behavioural responses (Wong, 2004). Hence, it is logical to hypothesize the following:

H2: Emotional satisfaction has a significant relationship with behavioural intention.

Relationship of service quality and behavioural intention

Service quality is one of the important factors affecting consumer decisions. Therefore, there is a connection between service quality and behavioural intention (Brady, Cronin, & Brand, 2002). Better service leads to a positive behavioural intention and increases the purchase intention of the consumers (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Alexandris, Dimitriadis, and Markata (2002) noted that service quality predicts a significant amount of variation in all behavioural intentions. Many studies have also found a direct positive link between service quality and customer behavioural intentions (Aliman & Mohamad, 2013; Ryu et al., 2012). When customers' perception of service quality is high, the behavioural intentions are favourable, which strengthen their relationship with the organization. The following hypothesis reflect the above statement:

H3: Service quality has a significant relationship with behavioural intention.

The mediating effect of emotional satisfaction

Service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intention relationship have received great interests in the marketing literature (Brady & Cronin, 2001; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Lai and Chen (2011) suggested that offering good quality services are prerequisite in obtaining customer satisfaction, which will influence behavioural intention later. In the meantime, Ladhari et al. (2008) contributed to deep understanding of the effect of service quality, emotional satisfaction and thereafter to the effect of behavioural intention. Thus, emotional satisfaction is proposed to be the mediation for the relationship between service quality and behavioural intention (Aliman & Mohamad, 2013; Li et al., 2011).

H4: Emotional satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and behavioural intention.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the respondents consisted of parents who sent their children to childcare centres. These respondents were asked about their perception on the childcare service quality through a questionnaire. Section A of the questionnaire covered the demographic information of the respondents, while Section B inquired about service quality. Each item was measured with the 5-point Likert-Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly

Agree). Prior to the distribution of questionnaires, the purpose of the study was explained to the childcare providers. The service providers agreed to be involved in this fieldwork by asking the parents' consent. A total of 750 questionnaires were administered through drop-off and pick-up methods at the childcare centres in four regions of Peninsular Malaysia. The data were collected within three months. Out of the 750 questionnaires, only 554 were returned, and 168 were found to be unusable. A total of 364 questionnaire responses were valid for subsequent analysis, yielding a response rate of 65.7%. They were analysed using IBM SPSS statistics 23.0 and SmartPLS 3.0.

Development of questionnaire

A 40-item questionnaire was used to measure the service quality, emotional satisfaction and behavioural intention. All scales were adapted from existing measures. Service quality was employed by using 22 items with the 5 dimensional structures. These 5 dimensional are tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The childcare service quality measurement scales were adopted from Kim (2014) which was designed in the childcare viewpoint. Emotional satisfaction was measured using 4 items adapted from Ladhari (2009); . It is an indication of the customer's belief on the probability of positive feeling. Satisfaction was assessed using both evaluative items and emotion-based responses that included interest and enjoyment (Cronin et al., 2000; Oliver & Westbrook, 1993). Behavioural intention was measured using 14 items that was recently used by Zeithaml et al. (1996).

Behavioural intention can be understood based on the individual's willingness or intention to get involved in certain behaviours. Zeithaml et al. (1996) viewed behavioural intention in terms of customer bonding with organisations. It is argued that customers who have positive behavioural intention with a company usually praise the firm, expressing preference for the firm over others, continuing to purchase from it, may escalate the volume of purchases, and agree to pay a premium price. As for this study, the questionnaires comprised of 4 sections. Section A asked the respondent's general information. Section B had 22 questions related to service quality. In section C, queried about emotional satisfaction (4 items). The last section is D, it measured on behavioural intention.

RESULT

Respondent Profile

The respondents comprised of parents who sent their children under the age of four to a childcare centre. They were analysed in terms of demographic distribution such as gender, race, age, region, employment background, income level and types of childcare. The respondents' demographics had a significant influence on the results of this study. Table 1 compares the summary of demographic frequency and percentage (%) of the respondents. The results indicate that 67.6% participating in the study were female. A possible reason for the female majority is because females are more particular about their children's environment. Greater percentages of the respondents were Malay. Respondents spanned the range of age categories from 30-39 years with the majority of 52.5%. This highest age groups might be due to the typical societal condition where families tend to start and ready to have a family during the

mentioned age groups. Table 1 shows the profiles of the respondent.

Table 1: Demographic Profiles

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	118	32.4
	Female	246	67.6
Race	Malay	227	62.4
	Chinese	71	19.5
	Indian	57	15.7
	Others	9	2.4
Age	<20 years	2	0.5
	21-29 years old	67	18.4
	30-39 years old	191	52.5
	40-49 years old	96	26.4
	>50 years old	8	2.2
Region	Eastern	65	17.9
	Southern	70	19.2
	Central	165	45.3
	Northern	64	17.6
Employment	Government sector	89	24.5
	Private sector	211	58.0
	Self Employed	48	13.2
	Statutory Body	16	4.3
Income level	Less than RM2000	22	6.0
	RM2001-3999	127	34.9
	RM4005-5999	100	27.5
	RM6000-7999	47	12.9
	RM8000-9999	28	7.7
	More than RM10,000	40	11.0
Types of childcare	Government-owned childcare	31	10.5
	Workplace childcare	38	8.5
	Private childcare	295	81.0

Number of respondents, n= 364

Partial Least Square Structural Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the data in this study. PLS-SEM is a second-generation multivariate technique, which can simultaneously evaluate the measurement model and the structural model with minimal error variance (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017). Figure 1 depicts the research model of study.

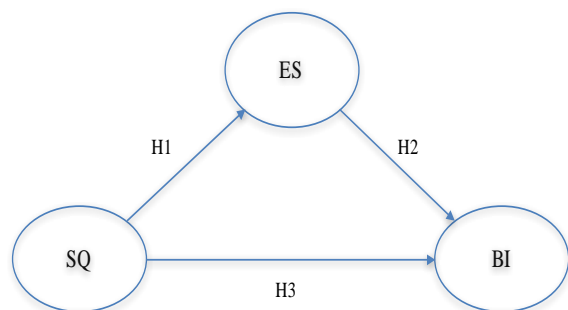


Figure 1: Research Model

Measurement Model

Following the two-step approach, first, the measurement model was examined to verify the reliability and validity of the instrument. Secondly, the structural model was assessed for hypotheses testing. In PLS-SEM, the assessment of a reflective measurement model focused on two types of validity (i.e., convergent validity and discriminant validity). First, the convergent validity of the

measurement model was examined through item loadings, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2017). All loadings and composite reliability were above the threshold value of 0.7, while AVE met the minimum of 0.5 as suggested by Hair et al. (2017) as shown in Table 2. Items with an outer loading below 0.7 might also be considered acceptable if other items had higher score of loading to compliment AVE and CR (Gye-Soo, 2016; Hair et al., 2017). The outer loadings below 0.50 should be removed from the measurement models since it indicates that the indicator had less contribution towards others. The deleted items were TAN3, BI2, BI8, BI10, BI11, BI12, BI13 and BI14.

Table 2: Measurement Model

Constructs	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE		
Service Quality	ASS1	0.734	0.956	0.511		
	ASS2	0.747				
	ASS3	0.786				
	ASS4	0.742				
	EMP1	0.756				
	EMP2	0.774				
	EMP3	0.718				
	EMP4	0.766				
	REL1	0.629				
	REL2	0.623				
	REL3	0.624				
	REL4	0.733				
	RES1	0.695				
	RES2	0.754				
	RES3	0.787				
	RES4	0.739				
	TAN1	0.658				
	TAN2	0.611				
	TAN4	0.696				
TAN5	0.739					
TAN6	0.655					
Emotional Satisfaction	ES1	0.847	0.938	0.793		
	ES2	0.894				
	ES3	0.915				
	ES4	0.905				
Behavioural Intention	BI1	0.728	0.893	0.550		
	BI3	0.718				
	BI4	0.819				
	BI5	0.868				
	BI6	0.829				
	BI7	0.659				
	BI9	0.514				

Note: CR-Composite Reliability; AVE-Average Variance Explained

To assess discriminant validity, the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion was evaluated. As shown in Table 3, the off-diagonal values are the correlations between the latent constructs. The shared values between the constructs are square correlations. The values scores were greater than the off-diagonal entries in the corresponding rows and columns. Thus, this means that these variables are considered fit for subsequent analyses.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity-Fornell Larcker Criterion

Constructs	BI	ES	SQ
BI	0.741		
ES	0.598	0.890	
SQ	0.594	0.480	0.714

Note: Diagonals represent the square root of the AVE

while the off diagonals represent the correlations
 In addition, Heterotrait- Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio of correlation was also used to assess the discriminant validity which is considered superior compared to other methods (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). HTMT is recommended as it is able to achieve higher specificity and sensitivity compared to the cross-loading criterion. HTMT values close to 1 indicate a lack of discriminant validity. Some authors suggest a threshold of 0.8 (Kline, 2011), whereas others propose a value of 0.9 (Teo, Srivastava, & Jiang, 2008). If the values of the HTMT is higher than this threshold, there is a lack of discriminant validity. Table 4 shows result of HTMT. All values were lower than the threshold, thus they demonstrated the adequate the discriminant validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Analysis-HTMT Result

Constructs	BI	ES	SQ
BI			
ES	0.667		
SQ	0.642	0.502	

Note: SQ-Service Quality; ES-Emotional Satisfaction; BI-Behavioural Intention

Structural Model

In assessing the structural model, a few steps needed to be taken. Firstly, there was a need to assess the collinearity issues. The variance inflation factor (VIF) for all the two exogenous variables were 1.300 as shown in Table 5, which were less than the suggested value of 5, which indicated that collinearity was not significant in this model (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5: Collinearity Assessment

Construct	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
SQ	1.300
ES	1.300

Note: SQ-Service Quality; ES-Emotional Satisfaction

The next step was to assess the significance and relevance of the structural model relationships. The path estimates and t statistics were estimated for the hypothesized relationships using bootstrapping methodology with resampling of 500. To confirm the significance of relationship, p-value should be less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) and the t-values should exceed 1.96. The result established the findings that service quality had positively related emotional satisfaction ($\beta = 0.480$, $t=9.722$). Subsequently, emotional satisfaction ($\beta= 0.406$, $t=8.792$) was found to positively impact behavioural intention. The path coefficients between service quality and behavioural intention was significantly related ($\beta= 0.399$, $t=8.484$). Hence, H1, H2 and H3 were supported as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Beta	SE	t-value	LL	UL	f ²	R ²	Q ²	Decision
H1: SQ->ES	0.480	0.049	9.722	0.381	0.573	0.300	0.231	0.167	Supported
H2: ES->BI	0.406	0.046	8.792	0.320	0.498	0.244	0.480	0.242	Supported
H3: SQ->BI	0.399	0.047	8.484	0.302	0.482	0.235	0.480	0.242	Supported

Note: SQ-Service Quality; ES-Emotional Satisfaction; BI-Behavioural Intention

The coefficient of determination (R²) value was extensively used in the structural model. This coefficient was a measure of the model's predictive accuracy and was calculated as the squared correlation between a specific endogenous construct's actual and predicted values (Hair et al., 2017). Hair et al. (2017) suggested that in addition to describing the significance of the relationships, researchers should also report the coefficient of determination (R²), effect size (f²) and predictive relevance (Q²). The coefficient of determination (R²) refers to the explanatory power of the independent variable(s) with respect to their corresponding dependent variables.

The value of R², showed that the service quality explained 23.1% of emotional satisfaction (R² = 0.231) and 48% for service quality and emotional respectively towards behavioural intention. The evaluation of effect size (f²) was carried out to assess the relative impact of a predictor construct on an endogenous construct (Cohen, 1988). The cut-off values for measuring effect size, (f²) 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35, indicative of small, medium and large effect sizes, respectively (Cohen, 1988). The results show the effect size for emotional satisfaction (f²) 0.300 and for behavioural intention were 0.244 and 0.235 respectively. This was to show that the (f²) was medium to large effect size in this study. The Q² was a measurement of how well the values were reconstructed by the model (Hair et al., 2017). After running the blindfolding procedure by Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics (2009) with an omission distance D6, the Q² values for this model were 0.167 and 0.242, which were higher than the cut off value which was above zero, indicating the predictive relevance of the PLS path model. Additionally, the result confirmed that the value of confidence for lower and upper limit were not straddled on zero values.

Mediation Analysis

In order to investigate the multiple indirect effects of emotional satisfaction between service quality and behavioural intention, the bootstrapping procedure (with 500 re-sample) was employed. The bootstrapping analysis has shown that an indirect effect $\beta = 0.195$ is significant with the t-values of 6.313. The indirect effect 95% Boot CI Bias Corrected: (LL= 0.142, UL= 0.258) do not straddle a 0 in between indicating there is mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Thus, the study can conclude that the mediation effect is statically significant. Latest literature on mediation either full or partial has no value and should be abandoned (Hayes, 2013; Hayes & Rockwood, 2016; Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011). Therefore, the summarized result of mediation analysis is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Mediation Analysis

Hypothesis	Beta	SE	t-value	LL	UL	Decision
H4: SQ->ES->BI	0.195	0.031	6.313	0.142	0.258	Supported

Note: SQ-Service Quality; ES-Emotional Satisfaction; BI-Behavioural Intention; UL-Upper Level; LL-Lower Level

DISCUSSION

The role of service quality as an antecedent to behavioural intentions had been explored by many different industries (Lu et al., 2011; Park et al., 2012; Ryu et al., 2012). It is believed that when the service quality is high, the behavioural intentions are favourable. Alsauidi (2016) believes that the quality of education draws the interest of parents' intention for their children's future. Consumers' decisions are greatly affected by service

quality. Therefore, there is a connection between service quality and behavioural intention (Brady et al., 2002). The main prerequisite for successful childcare services is to interpret the needs and expectations of parents and fulfil those expectations. This study assessed the determinant factors affecting behavioural intention of childcare service provider. The main objective of this study was to propose and test the model for service quality, emotional satisfaction and behavioural intention. The result clarifies the finding of previous studies in different disciplines. Several studies proposed that service quality only affects behavioural intention only (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Muslim & Siti Zahora, 2013; Nor Asiah et al., 2010).

However, the studies conducted by other scholars affirmed that service quality has direct or indirect effect through satisfaction on behavioural intention (Brady et al., 2005; Cronin et al., 2000). However the determination of full or partial cannot be reveals as it will restrict the theory development by scholars for full mediation and partial mediation might be viewed as less impressive (Rucker et al., 2011). Thus, the scholars should avoid using the terms full or partial when interpret mediation or develop hypothesis (Hayes, 2013; Hayes & Rockwood, 2016; Rungtusanatham, Miller, & Boyer, 2014). Further justification was agreed by Memon, Cheah, Ramayah, Ting, and Chuah (2018). The result of this study also provides empirical evidence that emotional satisfaction plays an important role in service quality. A study by Alrubaiee and Alkaa'ida (2011) indicated that all dimension of service quality were significantly explained with satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The SERVQUAL appears to be a consistent and reliable scale to measure service quality. The model provides an important tool to evaluate and monitor service quality in various industries. The key aspect of service industries is to fulfil customers' demands at the highest quality. To accomplish this, valuable information from the customers are essential to understand their needs, expectations, and perceptions. The major area of interest of this study was to determine the effect of childcare service quality on parents' behavioural intention. This study aimed to comprehend the perspective of service quality, and to assess the relation of perceived service quality and behavioural intention with the mediation of emotional satisfaction.

The implication from this study reveal that the parents are more satisfied with the approach that childcare providers apply to attract the children. To achieve competitive advantage, both public and private childcare must keep improving their service from time to time to make sure the level of service quality is at the maximum level to gain more parents satisfaction on which have an impact on their future behavioural intention. Therefore, this result indicate that to achieve behavioural intentions, service quality of the childcare centres are entirely mediated by parents' satisfaction. Thus, childcare centres must produce and maintain high service standards as well as parents' satisfaction to build long-term relationships between parents and providers.

The measurement of childcare's service quality must be based on perceived quality because it is intangible and heterogeneous, and its consumption and production occur in tandem. The study provides insights on the views of parents on childcare providers, which

successfully demonstrated that service quality was an important antecedent of behavioural intention, as proven by other studies (Azman, Ilyani, & Nur Afiqah, 2016; Nor Asiah et al., 2010). A study by Aliman and Mohamad (2013), who discovered that the quality of service has a great impact on behavioural intention. It is identified that service quality is supported in the study, whereby it is necessary for a childcare provider to stand on service quality as to fulfils the industry's standard. This could suggest that good service quality enable to satisfies the needs of customers, whereby many other additional services could be offered later on, which could make the childcare centre in become more competitive. Future studies could test on direct or indirect effects depending on the service industries' angles.

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