SYNOPSIS

DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT SCALE FOR GROCERY RETAIL STORES

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INTRODUCTION

This study is focused on developing a scale to measure service quality for grocery retail stores. It is extremely important in today's scenario due to the high expectation and increasing demand of consumers for quality service in retail. Retailing is the world's largest private sector contributing to 8% of the GDP and it employs one sixth of the labor force. Many countries have developed only due to retailing and presently we see there is a vast change in the retail industry. As far as India is concerned it is ranked as the most attractive emerging market for investment in the retail sector at present. It contributes over 10% of our GDP and it is the second largest sector next to agriculture which provides maximum employment to people. According to a survey conducted by business consultancy- Technopak Advisors, the country's retail market is expected to touch around Rs 37 lakh crores by 2020 at a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of more than 25 per cent. Strong underlying economic growth, population expansion, the increasing wealth of individuals and the rapid construction of organized retail infrastructure are key factors behind the forecast. In the latest global retail development index (GRDI), India was ranked as the most attractive nation for retail investment among 30 emerging markets by US-based global management consulting firm AT Kearney. India is being seen as a potential goldmine for retail investors from over the world and latest research has rated India as the top destination for retailers for an attractive emerging retail market. India's vast middle class and its almost untapped retail industry are key attractions for global retail giants wanting to enter newer markets.

Retailing today, has changed from selling a product or a service to selling a hope, an aspiration and above all an experience that a consumer would like to repeat. For manufacturers and service providers, the emerging opportunities in urban markets seem to lie in capturing and delivering better value to the customers through retail. Also, manufacturers and service providers face an exploding rural market yet only marginally tapped due to difficulties in rural retailing. Only

innovative concepts and models may survive the test of time and investments. However, manufacturers and service providers will also increasingly face a host of specialist retailers, who are characterized by use of modern management techniques, backed with seemingly unlimited financial resources.

The food and grocery retail in India has not completely developed till date. It is largely unorganized. In retail sector, the share of food and grocery retail is almost 80%. It is largely unorganized till date. The share of organized retail in India is almost 5%, but with commencement of big retail chains, it is being organized at a fast pace. The All India food consumption is close to Rs.9000 billion, with the total urban consumption being around Rs.3, 300 billion. This means that aggregate revenues of large food players is currently only 5 per cent of the total Indian market, and around 15-20 per cent of total urban food consumption. Most food is sold in the local 'wet' market, vendors, roadside push cart sellers or tiny kirana stores. According to McKinsey report, the share of an Indian household's spending on food is one of the highest in the world, with 48 per cent of income being spent on food and beverages.

The nature of service differs in different category of services. The influencing factors and the drivers of service quality are different even for consumers in B2B and B2C processes. Different literatures on marketing discuss the concept of service quality, which has led to disagreements on how to measure the service quality (Brady & Cronin, 2001). Service quality is difficult to measure because it is a complex and abstract concept. In grocery retailing, maintaining quality, as per expectation of customer is a very complex task, because it involves frequently used life saving as well as health related products. Today consumers are very conscious for their diet and health. So, they are becoming particular for the quality and durability of products. The perception of service quality is influenced by different factors and specific context.

The main focus of the research is to develop a scale for measuring service quality for grocery retail stores. Different customers can evaluate the service quality of a grocery retail store in different manner. Since grocery store offers a mix of product and services, a need of specific scale to measure the service quality of the stores is felt.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research complements and adds to previous research by expanding the study of Retail Service Quality in Grocery Stores, a sector that has been under-researched. Therefore, this study is very important because it offers a scale to measure service quality that is suitable for a retail grocery store. This is significant in many ways because previous research has been conducted predominately in Western countries and has rarely included Indian market. Second, there is a lack of research in the area of service quality expectations for consumers from different strata and age-group in developing countries like India (Kueh & Voon, 2007). Third, there is a lack of research in this region for the development of specific scales for grocery store retailing. Finally, there are many studies that investigate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, but only a few studies have investigated the effect of service quality dimensions on perception of overall service quality (Jamal & Anastasiadou, 2009).

BACKGROUND OF RETAIL SECTOR

According to CII report, in 2010, the share of services in the US was $63 trillion and World gross domestic product (GDP) was nearly 68 per cent, as in 2001. India's performance in terms of this indicator is not only above that of other emerging developing economies, but also very close to that of the top developed countries. Among the top 12 countries with highest overall GDP in 2010, India ranks 8 and 11 in overall GDP and services GDP respectively. In 2010 compared to 2001, India is the topmost country in terms of increase in its services share in GDP i.e. 7 percentage points. In terms of compound annual growth rate (CAGR) for the period 2001-10, China at 11.3 per cent and India at 9.4 per cent show very high services sector growth. From the last two decades, there has been a steady transformation of the retail landscape and the consumer's shopping behavior. There are consumers with much more money in their hand to spend at their discretion today than ever before. This has encouraged the growth of modern retail chains and malls. This transformation is more visible in big cities and metros mostly.

According to Business Monitor International (BMI) report, the growth in the overall retail market will be driven mostly by the explosion in the organized retail market. BMI forecasts that organized retail sales will reach $99.09 billion by 2014, 12.4% of the total. The Quarter 2, 2012

BMI India Retail Report forecasts that total retail sales will grow from INR 22.53 trillion ($489.80 billion) in 2012 to INR 27.73 trillion ($739.56 billion) by 2016. CII Retail Summit Projects Indian organized retail sector has potential to cross $250 billion by 2020; the sector will drive inclusive, sustainable growth. According to the findings of CBRE's latest report titled "Indian Retail Market view" 2011 India witnessed the addition of more than 15 million sq. ft of organized retail mall space in the country in 2011.

Organized retail is known for facilitating consumerism and not inclusion. It will benefit consumers by making common goods more affordable. According to Mr. Kishore Biyani, CEO, Future Group, only organized retail can fulfill consumer needs and provide employment to a vast majority of the nation. The actual challenge is to become profitable. A major reason for the growth of the economy was the increase in personal consumption in the last few years. This has happened because people earn more and when they believe that the future will be better than today, thus inspiring them to spend, instead of saving. Mr. Patrick Ducasse, Global Consumer and Retail Leader, The Boston Consulting Group, outlined the key drivers to understand the new consumer: from conspicuous to conscious consumption, listening to women, intersecting people's digital pathway and population shifts to emerging cities.

The structure of Indian retail is developing rapidly with shopping malls becoming increasingly common in the large cities and development plans being projected. However, the traditional formats like handcart hawkers, kirana stores, general stores, sweet shops, footwear shops, garments shops, and pavement vendors continue to co-exist with the modern formats of retailing. Modern retailing has helped the companies to increase the consumption of their products. Thus, the way a product is displayed and promoted, influences its sales. If the consumption continues to grow this way it can be said that the local market would go through a metamorphoses of a change and the local stores would soon become the things of the past or restricted to last minute unplanned buying.

Mass Grocery Retail (MGR) sales in India are forecast to undergo enormous growth over the forecast period. BMI predicts that sales through MGR outlets will increase by 155% to reach $11.61 billion in 2014. Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) goods are popularly named as

consumer packaged goods. Items in this category include all consumables (other than groceries/pulses) people buy at regular intervals. These items are meant for daily of frequent consumption and have a high return. The Indian FMCG sector is the fourth largest sector in the economy with a total market size in excess of $13.1 billion. It has a strong MNC presence and is characterized by a well established distribution network, intense competition between the organized and unorganized segments and low operational cost.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To test the applicability of existing scale- RSQS on grocery store's service quality.

2. To identify/ develop new dimensions and attributes to develop the extended instrument.

3. To develop a scale to measure Service Quality for Grocery Retail Stores.

4. To measure any differences between the Grocery store service quality dimensions by demographic variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the present time, Service quality is considered as the top priority for organization. It not only provides company the competitive advantage, but it is also a very important factor to sustain growth (Ladhari, 2009). Service quality is viewed as either a difference between the expectations and perception of the service or as an attitude based view. The first view was suggested by Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry (1988) who view service quality as a comparison between customer's expectations and perception of service quality. Today consumers expect qualitative service which creates pressure on businesses to have a better understanding and evaluation of service quality (Wisniewski & Wisniewski, 2005). Different researches show that service quality has an impact on company performance, which attracts new customers (Seth, Deshmukh, & Vrat, 2005), and help organisation to earn higher profits. There is a clear connection between improving service quality and higher profit (Johnson, Sivadas, & Garbarino 2008). Service quality in retailing is different from any other product or service environment (Mehta, Lalwani and Han, 2000; Vázquez, Rodriguez, Diaz and Ruiz 2001; Finn, Adam and Kayande, 2004;

Gagliano and Hathcote, 1994). Researches show that one of the most important factors that affect the consumer‘s choice of store for purchasing grocery, is service quality (Swoboda, Haelsig, Morschett, and Schramm-Klein 2007).

Service quality is a critical component of customer perceptions about the service. Customers perceive services in terms of its quality and how satisfied they are overall with their experiences (Zeithaml, 2000). As thus, service quality is defined as customers' perception of how well a service meets or exceeds their expectations (Czepiel, 1990). In the retail context, perceptions of service encounters accumulate over time and a customer's relationship with an organization depends on continuation of exchanges or interactions in present and future (Czepiel, 1990).

As service industry has contributed significantly to global economy in the past few decades, service quality also draws attention of many practitioners and researchers. There was various service quality models proposed and applied in different contexts. In 1980s, in the attempt to define service quality and develop a model of service quality, Parasuraman, ZelthamI, & Berry (1985) conducted an exploratory investigation. The results showed that regardless of the type of service, consumers used basically the similar criteria in evaluating service quality (Parasuraman, ZelthamI, & Berry, 1985). With an argument that Parasurman's gap theory of service quality was supported by little empirical or theoretical evidence, Cronin and Taylor (1992) developed a "performance-based" service quality measurement scale called SERVPERF. The major difference between these two scales is that SERVQUAL operationalise service quality by comparing the perceptions of the service received with expectations, while SERVPERF maintains only the perceptions of service quality. To contextually fit the retail industry, Dabholkar, Thorpe, & Rentz (1996) developed Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS). Based on SERVPERF, RSQS includes 28-item scale, of which 17 items are from SERVPERF and 11 items are developed by qualitative research. It composes of 5 dimensions. RSQS has been used by some researchers in measuring service quality in certain types of retailers such as department stores, supermarkets and discount stores in Western and Eastern countries. Kim and Jin (2001) conducted a study with U.S. and Korean customers of discount stores. The findings showed that customers' perceptions of service quality do not view service quality in as similar manner in U.S. and Korean customers of discount stores. Kaul S. (2005) found that RSQS dimensions were not valid in India. In other words, the

dimensionality of service quality is not universal across industries or across countries (Kim and Jin, 2001).

There is a broad agreement that scales need to be modified to be more suitable for the context of the study (Carrillat, Jaramillo & Mulki, 2007). An instrument that is applied in the West will not fit Asian or other region markets without modifications or checking the validity and reliability of the scale in the specific countries (Cui, Lewis & Park, 2003). The scales that are developed for a specific country or context might not be suitable for another country or context due to economic and social differences (Kumar, Kee & Nanshor, 2009). Since service quality is perceived differently in different cultures and the scale developed in specific market and context, may not be able to measure all the different dimensions that exist in different market context and environment (Imrie, Cadogan & Mcnaughton, 2002; Gaur & Agrawal, 2006), there is need to develop context, country and sector specific scale for measuring service quality.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology in this study includes three phases.

In the first phase, to test the reliability and validity of the RSQS scale, a survey was conducted. The data was collected from the customers of grocery stores in Delhi NCR area. The usable sample found, was 218 out of total 300 responses. Factor analysis was conducted in order to verify the construct validity of the five-factor structure of RSQS scale, using 26 attributes out of the total 28 attributes in the original scale (2 attributes were deleted as not applicable in Indian context) . For testing the reliability of the data, cronbach's alpha test was performed.

In the second phase, an extensive Top of the Mind (TOM) survey was conducted for the identification of new variables and attributes. The data was collected in Delhi NCR area. The usable sample found was 177 out of total 200 responses. A structured questionnaire was given to customers to know the prime factors in their mind, when they are choosing a grocery retail store for purchasing grocery for their household.. In addition to TOM survey, the experts from academics and corporate were consulted to know the various important factors leading the customers' purchasing behavior in grocery retail stores. Some other attributes were included

which were referred in research papers of previous researchers in context of grocery retailing. Based on these three surveys, the extended instrument was prepared with overall 58 items under 10 dimensions.

In the third phase of the study, the extended instrument was used for development of Grocery Store Service Quality Scale (GSSQS). The data was collected in Delhi NCR area. The usable sample found was 703 out of total 900 responses. To purify the scale exploratory factor analysis was performed for reduction and grouping of items of the scale. The reliability of the scale was tested using coefficient alpha. The validity of the scale was tested using three types of validity, face validity, criterion validity and construct validity. At the end, hypotheses were tested.

HYPOHTESES

The above methodology has been used to test the following hypotheses:

$H1_0$ -The modified service quality dimensions of GSSQS have no association with overall service quality.

$H1_A$ -The modified service quality dimensions of GSSQS have a positive association with overall service quality.

$H2_0$- There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by demographic variables.

$H2_A$- There is a significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by demographic variables.

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of First Phase

This study tests the applicability of RSQS in context of grocery retail stores like- department stores, discount stores and supermarkets. The geographical area covered is Delhi-NCR which is a limitation of this study.

Factor analysis was conducted in order to verify the construct validity of the five-factor structure of RSQS scale, using 26 attributes out of the total 28 attributes in the original scale (2 attributes were deleted as not applicable in Indian context) . The KMO value for this study is 0.869, which is well above the minimal value of 0.6. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was 0.000 which is significant at 0.01 level, which indicates that factor-analysis, could be performed on this study.

Table: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.869
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2034.217
	df	325
	Sig.	.000

The comparative analysis of five-factor structure of RSQS (original) and seven-factor structure produced in this study shows a significant difference (Refer Table below).

Table: Summary of Comparison for no. of items between RSQS (Original) and RSQS (for grocery store) dimensions

Dimension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
RSQS (Original)	6	5	8 (+1)*	3	4 (+1)*	Nil	Nil
RSQS (as applied for grocery retail)	7	4	3	3	3	4	2

* Statement no. 20, and statement no. 28 of RSQS (refer annexure I) were deleted as not applicable in Indian context.

The analysis of reliability showed that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.4805, which shows that reliability of the scale is low. Thus, the RSQS scale is not suitable for measuring grocery store service quality in Indian context.

Table : Cronbach's Alpha Value of Reliability

Reliability Coefficients	
No, of Cases = 218.0	No. of Items = 26
Alpha = .4805	

Analysis of Second Phase

For identification of new variables and attributes, a detailed Top of the Mind (TOM) survey was conducted to know what the prime factors in the mind of customers are when they are choosing a grocery retail store for purchasing grocery for their household. In addition to TOM survey, the other attributes were included that were referred in research papers of previous researchers and expert opinion in context of grocery retailing. Finally the extended instrument was prepared with overall 58 items under 10 dimensions for the development of Grocery Store Service Quality Scale. Out of these 58 items, 22 items were taken from RSQS, 10 items were added from TOM Survey, 9 items were added from Expert Consultation and 17 items were added from literature review.

Analysis of Third Phase

In this phase, the extended instrument was used to develop the Grocery Store Service Quality Scale (GSSQS). It was felt to first check the strength or correlation between the attributes to weed out the less significant attributes out of the total of 58 attributes. 33 attributes which were not having correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) were considered not fit to be used in the scale for analysis. Thus finally, 25 attributes having correlation significant at the 0.01 level were considered to be analyzed for factor analysis in the next step.

The 25-item scale GSSQS was subjected to principal component using SPSS, which resulted in 6 factors or dimensions. Table below, shows the KMO measure of sampling adequacy for the current study is .909, which is well above the minimal value of 0.6. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was 0.000, which is significant at the 0.01 level, which indicates that factor analysis could be performed on the current study and that the scale is usable.

Table: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.909
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6625.087
	df	300
	Sig.	.000

Factor analysis resulted the 25 items into six factors / dimensions.

GROCERY STORE SERVICE QUALITY SCALE (GSSQS):

The six dimensions which are the result of factor analysis are named as 'Grocery Services', 'Discounts & Promotions', 'Courteousness', 'Problem Solving', 'Policy' and 'Physical Evidence'.

Finally, the **Grocery Store Service Quality Scale (GSSQS)** was developed which is as under:

Dimension 1: Grocery Services
1. The commodity products in this store have manufacturing and expiry dates on its pack. 2. This store offers quality and customized dairy and farm products. 3. This store provides fresh fruits and vegetables consistently. 4. This store offers one stop shop for all grocery needs. 5. This store provides pre-cleaned & hygienic grocery products.
Dimension 2: Discounts & Promotions
6. This store sells the products on less than MRP. 7. This store offers cash discount on bulk purchase. 8. This store offers regular discount schemes. 9. This store offers maximum promotional schemes due to competition. 10. This store provides many price points to cater to all customer segments.
Dimension 3: Courteousness
11. Employees in this store are consistently courteous with customers. 12. Employees give individual attention to customers in this store. 13. Employees in this store are never too busy to respond to customer's request.
Dimension 4: Problem Solving
14. This store provides quality carry bags for ease of carrying. 15. This store has convenience/utility facilities. 16. This store has air conditioner for comfortable shopping. 17. This store shows sincere interest in solving customer problems. 18. This store has automated billing system to minimize waiting time.
Dimension 5: Policy
19. This store willingly handles return and exchange. 20. This store accepts major credit card/ debit card/ smart card.

21. The working hours of store are convenient for customer. 22. The employees of this store are empowered to take decisions directly. 23. The employees are trained to find out the products for customers.
Dimension 6: Physical Evidence
24. This store provides spacious & handy shopping-carts. 25. This store has necessary equipments like- refrigerator etc.

Thus, GSSQS for measuring service quality in grocery retail stores is developed with 25 attributes under 6 dimensions.

RELIABILITY OF THE GSSQS SCALE

The analysis showed that the reliability of the scale was high, which indicates that the scale is suitable for measuring grocery store service quality. The modified 25 item scale has a high reliability, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.909. The reliability for each of the 25 items under the Cronbach's alpha if the item were deleted is between 0.896 To 0.903, which is below the overall reliability of 0.909, meaning that if the items were deleted the overall reliability of the scale would not increase. The high reliability of the scale is an indication that the scale is suitable for measuring the grocery store's service quality, especially given that all the items on the modified scale ranged between 0.896 and 0.903.

Table : Reliability for Grocery Store Quality Service Scale (GSQSS) dimensions

The Reliability for Dimensions	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**No. of Items**
Grocery Store Service Quality Scale Dimensions	0.909	25
Dimension 1 (Grocery Services)	0.891	5
Dimension 2 (Discounts & Promotions)	0.726	5
Dimension 3 (Courteousness)	0.741	3
Dimension 4 (Problem Solving)	0.723	5
Dimension 5 (Policy)	0.695	5
Dimension 6 (Physical Evidence)	0.379	2

The values for each item in the correlated item-total correlation column range between 0.350 and 0.850 which is well above the minimum value of 0.3. All dimensions have an alpha value higher than the recommended minimal value of 0.7, with an exception of last dimension 'Physical Evidence' with an alpha value of 0.379. But, it is accepted as a dimension for simple reason that it is well accepted by all the researchers in past, and in our case the probable reason for low alpha score may be due to the presence of only two attributes under this dimension. Even after dropping these two attributes the overall reliability coefficient (cronbach's alpha) has very high score of 0.903.

The overall service quality had a mean of 4.11 and a standard deviation of 0.928 which again is an indication that the perceived service quality on the part of grocery retail stores customers is well above average.

Table: Mean and standard deviation for all dimensions of GSSQS Scale

Dimensions	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
Dimension1 (Grocery Services)	3.90	0.908
Dimension 2 (Discounts & Promotions)	4.25	0.644
Dimension 3 (Courteousness)	4.38	0.670
Dimension4 (Problem Solving)	4.37	0.539
Dimension5 (Policy)	4.08	0.626
Dimension 6 (Physical Evidence)	4.06	0.713
Overall Service Quality	4.11	0.928

FINDINGS

The GSSQS was administered to test the influence of the dependent variable, which is overall service quality, on the independent variables, which are courteousness, problem solving, discounts and promotions, policy, physical evidence and grocery services. To ascertain the link between the dependent variable and the independent variables a multiple regression analysis was conducted for the dependent variable – overall service quality.

Table : Regression- Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.848(a)	. 719	.716	.310

a Predictors: (Constant), Dimension 6, Dimension1, Dimension 3, Dimension 5, Dimension 4, Dimension 2

b Dependent Variable: Overall Service Quality

Table: Coefficients

Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	.205	.107		1.920	.055
	Dimension1	.081	.016	.127	5.197	.000
	Dimension 2	.202	.026	.223	7.677	.000
	Dimension 3	.181	.023	.209	7.985	.000
	Dimension 4	.293	.029	.272	9.986	.000
	Dimension 5	.143	.025	.154	5.706	.000
	Dimension 6	.129	.018	.158	7.147	.000

a Dependent Variable: Overall Service Quality

Table: Analysis of Association between Dependent variables and Independent variables.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable
	Overall Service Quality
	Multiple Regression Analysis
Grocery services	Yes
Discount & promotions	Yes
Courteousness	Yes
Problem Solving	Yes
Policy	Yes
Physical Evidence	Yes

A Kruskal-Wallis test was performed to examine the difference in the score values of the GSSQS dimensions by age, marital status and occupation. A Mann-Whitney U test was performed to find the difference in the score values of the GSSQS dimensions by customer gender and type of store.

Table : Summary of Kruskal-Wallis and A Mann-Whitney U analysis for differences on service quality dimensions by demographic variables

	Age	Gender	Marital status	Occupation	Type of store
Dimensions	Kruskal-Wallis	Mann-Whitney-U	Kruskall-Wallis	Kruskall-Wallis	Kruskall-Wallis
Grocery services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Discount & promotions	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Courteousness	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Problem Solving	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Policy	Yes	No	No	No	No
Physical Evidence	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

The high reliability of the scale is an indication that the scale is suitable for measuring the grocery store's service quality. The scale has face, criterion and construct validity; based on the reliability and validity tests, the scale is considered to be suitable for measuring service quality in grocery retail stores.

Below is a summary of the hypotheses findings.

Table: Summary of the hypotheses

Number	Hypotheses	Result
H 1$_0$	**The modified service quality dimensions of GSSQS has no association with overall service quality**	
H1-1$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 1 (Grocery Service) with overall service quality	Rejected
H1-2$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 2 (Discounts & Promotions) with overall service quality.	Rejected
H1-3$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 3 (Courteousness) with overall service quality.	Rejected
H1-4$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 4 (Problem Solving) with overall service quality.	Rejected
H1-5$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 5 (Policy) with overall service quality.	Rejected
H1-6$_0$	There is no association of the dimension 6 (Physical Evidence) with overall service quality.	Rejected
H2$_0$	**There is a no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by demographic information**	
H2-1$_0$	There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by the customer's age groups.	Rejected
H2-2$_0$	There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by customer's gender	Accepted
H2-3$_0$	There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by customer's marital status	Rejected
H2-4$_0$	There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by customer's Occupation.	Rejected
H2-5$_0$	There is no significant difference in GSSQS scale dimensions by market type of markets visited (Hyper-market vs. Super market).	Accepted

VALIDITY OF THE SCALE

1. Face or content validity- for the development of GSSQS, the same steps were followed as referred in the development of other scales like SERVEQUAL and RSQS. The basic framework and content was obtained from original RSQS scale, the scale used in this study is also considered to have content validity (Caro & Garcia, 2008).
2. Criterion validity- It is assessed by testing the association between the overall service quality and the service quality dimensions. (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Malhotra, 2005; Ladhari, 2009). Since all the dimensions of GSSQS are positively associated with overall service quality and this confirms the scales criterion validity.
3. Construct validity: Since most of the hypotheses of the study were supported, which makes the scale possess construct validity (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Malhotra, 2005; Caro & Garcia, 2007), here the construct validity has been proven.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes with the development of Grocery Store Service Quality Scale (GSSQS) for measuring service quality for grocery retail stores and tested for its reliability and validity, provides a major contribution to the service quality studies. The scale includes 25 attributes under six dimensions. The six dimensions are; Grocery Services', 'Discounts & Promotions', 'Courteousness', 'Problem Solving', 'Policy' and 'Physical Evidence'.

The first dimension - 'Grocery Services' represents the attributes, specifically related to quality of grocery products and its delivery process. The second dimension - 'Discounts & Promotions' represents the attributes related to price discount on MRP and other discounts as well promotional schemes offered to customers. The third dimension - 'Courteousness' represents the attributes related to the behaviour, attentiveness and attitude of employees of the stores, towards the customers. The fourth dimension - 'Problem Solving' represents the attributes related to facilities, comfort and solution to problem for customers, offered by stores. The fifth dimension - 'Policy' represents the attributes related to return/ exchange process, acceptance of credit cards and working hour of the stores. The sixth dimension - 'Physical Evidence' represents the attributes related to shopping-carts, equipments, etc. related to grocery stores.

Hope, this scale will help Grocery Store managers to understand customers' perception of service quality in managing their stores. Ultimately, this study provides a solid foundation to enable further research to be carried out in the field of food and grocery organized retailing, which is a fast growing sector. Undertaking this research was a complex but rewarding experience. The findings of the research could considerably benefit the business managers in general.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although this study is unique in several aspects, such as the development of a scale specifically for grocery retail stores and subsequently testing the relationships between different dimensions and demographic profile of the customers, there are some limitations to this research.

First, the generalization of the study is limited since only Delhi- NCR area has been surveyed; it might not be a complete representation of a country that consists of different categories of market and customer segment.

The researcher examined service quality from the customer's perspective; however, the employees and managers of organized grocery stores may have had a different assessment of service quality.

FUTURE RESEARCH

The Grocery Store Service Quality Scale (GSSQS) is the first scale to measure service quality in grocery retail stores, it thereby serves as a basis for other scales which may be modified or adapted from it. With this taken into account, recommendations for future research are as follow:

- The application of the GSSQS scale should be tested on the grocery retail stores in other parts of the country (India) to see whether the scale produces similar results and bears similar implications.
- Now that there is a scale to measure service quality in grocery stores, further investigation of the relationship between service quality dimensions and cultural differences based on region and other market segments (as semi-urban and rural markets), may be undertaken.
- The scale measured service quality from the customers' perspective; other studies could measure the service quality from employees and managers perspective.

CHAPTER SCHEME

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Retailing: An overview

Chapter 3: Review of Literature

Chapter 4: Research Design & Methodology

Chapter 5: Identification of New Variables for Grocery Retail Service Quality

Chapter 6: Development of Grocery Store Service Quality Scale

Chapter 7: Conclusion

RESEARCH PAPER CONTRIBUTION IN THIS STUDY

1. Singh, S. K. and Singh, N., "A Chronological Study of Service Quality Research on Retail Sector", VSRD International Journal of Business Management Research, vol. 1 (6), pp. 362-369, June 2011.

2. Singh, S. K. and Singh, N., "Applicability and Suitability of RSQS on Grocery Stores", ITM n Ach, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 78-88, April 2012.

3. Presented a paper titled "Service Quality: A Must for Sustainable Retail Growth" in the International conference on Restructuring of the Global Economy "ROGE" at Pune, organized by Academy of Business & Retail Management (ABRM), Journal of Business & Retail management Research (JBRMR) and London College of Management Studies, held on 1st-2nd Feb, 2011.

4. A paper titled "An Empirical Investigation of the association between Demographic Attributes and Grocery Store Service Quality Variable" has been communicated for publication in management journal of J K Padampat Institute of Management and Technology, Gurgaon.

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