

ASSESSING THE EXISTENCE OF RSQS (RETAIL SERVICE QUALITY SCALE) IN THE RETAIL STORE & SUPERMARKETS OPERATING IN KARACHI

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Abstract

This study examines the service quality of retail supermarkets using Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) developed to assess the extent to which the customers are satisfied with the service quality of retail stores. To recognize the factors that affect the perceptions of customers regarding service quality of retail stores located in Karachi, the technique of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used. The technique extracted eight (8) dimensions as the predictors of service quality and confirm the existence of theoretical framework of RSQS. However, five (5) factors out of eight (8) appeared statistically significant. A regression model is fitted using five significant factors extracted from EFA and goodness of fit aspect of the fitted model is examined. The study also identified the aspects pertinent to service quality in which the retail stores need to make improvements in order to make the customers satisfied.

Keywords: Service Quality, RSQS, Retail Service Quality, Exploratory Factor Analysis.

JEL Classification: M390

Introduction

Consumer loyalty pertinent to service quality is an elementary and a critical element for achieving business success. The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (1987) perceives the service quality as the focal point for the award process pertinent to consumer loyalty. Currently, Pakistan is experiencing the emergence of local as well as foreign brands of supermarkets that are opening their outlets. Due to this, Karachi is also experiencing the expansion in retail business.

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Nearby gatherings, for example, Naheed Supermarket, Imtiaz Supermarket, Agha Supermarket, Chase Up, and Carrefour are some brand names that are growing rapidly and these organizations have opened new supermarkets in almost all parts of the city. Having the market potential realized, foreign chains of stores like METRO and Carrefour are operating successfully. Also, local business giant, Lucky Group opened their shopping mall as Lucky One in 2017 and marked its entry in the retail sector.

In the literature pertinent to the service quality, the methodologies of SERVQUAL, SERVPERF scales were initially used to measure perceived service quality, but later on Dabholkar, Thrope and Rentz (1996) developed a scale known as Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) using an argument that existing measures of service quality do not incorporate the perceptions of customers regarding service quality of retail stores appropriately. Therefore, to observe the dimensions relevant to service quality of retail stores, they identified and introduced a factor structure that follows a hierarchy to observe the dimensions which are important for retail customers. The ultimate objective of every business is profit maximization and that can be achieved through an increase in sales volume in the competitive market by improving service quality. The significant effect of service quality on business performance cannot be denied as it lowers costs, enhances customer satisfaction, affect customer loyalty. (Ha et al., 2014). The RSQS model has the following six dimensions that measure the existence of service quality in retail sector.

Physical Aspect: Modern looking equipment, neat and clean environment and attractiveness of shopping materials are included in this dimension. It is the physical layout that has an impact on the expectation and perception of the customer. In case of supermarket the outer and inner layouts' orientation and the clean and order in the placement of the items influences the expectation and perception of the customer.

Convenience: It covers the convenience aspect regarding shopping such as the location of the shopping place is easily accessible, the layout of the shopping mall that makes it convenient for customers to explore the goods they would like to purchase. It also makes it comfortable for them make to move around. The other aspects pertinent to this dimension are the availability of ATM machines and home delivery service.

Reliability: Similar to the dimension included in SERVQUAL model, this dimension has two sub dimensions in which some other variations were introduced. (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1985). Customers usually perceive reliability, as a blend of "keeping promises" and "doing it right". To measure reliability, Dhabolkar, et al. (1995) considered an additional factor "availability of merchandise" and merged it in "doing it right". Contrasting to the SERVQUAL, "problem solving" is linked with "reliability", whereas, Dhabolkar, et al. (1995) introduced problem solving as a distinct factor.

Personal Interaction was considered as a third dimension, which is a combination of two items, namely “service employees, inspiring confidence” and “being courteous/helpful”. Problem Solving was identified as “a fourth dimension, which addresses handling of returns and exchanges as well as complaints”.

Policy dimension covers the policy dimension of service quality as the stores’ policy may have a direct influence on the customers’ perception.

Literature Review

Customer Satisfaction

Literature on customer satisfaction highlights its importance. Anderson, et al. (1994) emphasized that the customer satisfaction should be considered as a judgment that is based on their overall experience with a particular service or product that the customers availed or used. The subjective judgment is not independent. The personal bias is the part of customer judgment. Customer satisfaction has been considered as the key factor for the success of a business. Fonseca (2009) identified customer satisfaction as an important construct and stated its significance as “satisfaction is a critical measure for a firm's success”. Sividas and Baker-Prewitt (2000) elaborated the importance of customer satisfaction as the level that is used to influence the customers’ “attitude” and “word of mouth communication”. Whereas Garbarino and Johnson (1999) defined it as a significant determinant of future purchase behavior. Customer needs to purchase same brand or rely on services, is the outcome of his/her belief that certain product or service successfully deliver their promises in past purchases.

Service quality appears to be a permanent feature of customer satisfaction; it is used to assess performance of a business entity. According to Kotler and Keller (2011), Customers’ favorable ratings is a major parameter of a firms’ financial health. To determine the success of a product or service, some researchers such as Anderson and Sullivan (1993) identified it as a criterion to assess business performance as “Many firms use customer satisfaction as a criterion to diagnose product or service performance”. In terms of a business strategy Gomez, et al. (2004), highlighted the significance of customer satisfaction as “retailers recognize that customer satisfaction plays a key role in a successful business strategy” (Gomez et al., 2004).

The Rationale for Service Quality in Retail Stores

Several studies identified the need for determining service quality because of the immense growth in the retail sector. Service quality is identified as the important tool for retail stores to attain the objective of competitive advantage, and it is possible through learning about the customers’ consumption experiences (Alueregowda, 2013; Arun, Manjunath & Shivashankar, 2012). Consumers have more choices of supermarkets, they are becoming more quality-conscious, and it is desired that

the retailers assess their demands in meeting customers' expectations (Das et al., 2010). A mushroom growth of super markets in retail sector has been observed in Pakistan. This offers multiple options for the retail customers. The responsibility of the supermarket managers has been increased in terms of making their business competitive in multiple aspects that shapes their perception and expectations.

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The researchers worked on the service quality of retail stores emphasized on the need for taking competitive advantage using enhanced service quality as a tool. It is evident that the department stores need to sustain their competitive advantage if they wish to remain a dominant player in their respective markets. Rajaram and Sriram (2014) emphasized on retailers to accommodate their customers' perceptions and expectations in their business policies to achieve the objective of sustainability. Establishing a model that links the requirements of customers and their satisfaction level is critical to examine the existence of service quality. Research planning to gather relevant information is the most important component of this process. If the existing model of customer satisfaction is applicable in practice to incorporate the requirements of organizations as well as of its customers, it is very helpful for a researcher to conduct meaningful research.

Service Quality and Customer Loyalty

Backstrom and Johansson (2006) elaborated that the "customers' perceptions" regarding service quality are affected by aspects related to their personal characteristics and situational variables" whereas Amorim and Saghezchi (2014) defined personal characteristics such as values, age and attitude are intrinsic to the consumer that might influence their experiences. Customer 'value perception of the quality' in services would be different, age also play an important role to form perception through experience of shopping from superstores and finally their attitude that is either more favorable or less favorable for a certain supermarket brand.

Maintenance and improvement in service quality pertinent to customer satisfaction is imperative for the success of a business. Ha, et al. (2014) pointed out that a business is perceived successful if the customers feel satisfied with products/services and ultimately they tend to be loyal. To meet global standards, the growing retail sector has to be examined on the criterion of how customers perceive service quality and how they evaluate it (Davy & Sellappan, 2009). They further elaborated that due to the increasing competition, customers' perception regarding a specific retailer is critical to determine customers' satisfaction and loyalty in the growing retail market specifically in Pakistani

business environment.

Kumar (2016) described that the customers' perceived quality of products is critical to the success of retail stores and it contributes to the maximization of customer satisfaction. By providing great assortment and a wide range variety of brands, retailers could sustain their competitiveness. Ivanauskienė and Volungėnaitė (2014) indicated that competitiveness, in terms of assortment and brand variety, has an association to customer loyalty.

Customers' perceived quality is an important indicator and a measure of success of businesses, therefore there is a need that retail stores formulate and implement policies that would increase customers' satisfaction using service quality tools. Mistri and Bhatt (2013) considered the performance of a retail store as the key determinant for the customers' perceived service quality and organized Indian retail stores need to introduce customers' centric retail store services.

The relationship between the intention to visit the same store again and the perception of retail stores' service quality perception regarding that store was examined by Singh and Adlakha (2012) and the results supported the argument that by offering quality service to customers, a retail store can retain them. Customer retention is significant as they have multiple options to give up the less effective and choose better one that they believe would meet their expectations of services quality. In terms of cost perspective retaining consumes less capital than attracting the new one (Agolla, Makara & Monametsi, 2018). The purpose of attracting new customer requires supermarket to spend heavily on advertising to create a better image of the brand in the mind of customers. The new customer is more demanding in case of a dissatisfied customer of a competing brand. Retaining the current customer places an emphasis on supermarkets to maintain a network of relationship in order to scan the services dimensions that needs immediate improvements.

Comparative Analysis of Approaches for Service Quality

To characterize the overall service quality in the service sector, Parasuraman, et al. (1985) proposed the SERVQUAL scale. SERVQUAL is a model that measures the extent to which the business units that operate in the service sector, provide service quality to their customers. According to Parasuraman, et al. (1985), service quality was characterized using 10 dimensions named as tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, communication, access, courtesy, competence, reliability, security and understanding or knowing the customer. It was later improved with a model with five dimensions based on 22 items. The five (5) dimensions named as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy were included as the key elements to determine the service quality of a service providing set up. This model has been frequently used in literature to assess service quality.

As an alternative scale to assess service quality based on performance, Cronin and Taylor (1992) developed a model named 'SERVPERF'. The SERVPERF model includes 22 items without

giving any importance to expectations of customers. Therefore, SERVPERF only focuses on perceptions of customers regarding service quality whereas SERVQUAL model operationalizes service quality by linking expectations of customers developed before availing services with the perceptions formulated after experiencing the services.

In the retail sector, service quality varies significantly as compared to other service providing entities. Finn and Lamb (1991) highlighted the difference in measurement scale pertinent to service quality in the retail sector. As the retail service is different in nature, therefore the scale that measures service quality in the retail sector is predominantly different as compared to the conventional service quality measurement.

To eradicate this constraint in the service quality model, another model Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) was developed and introduced by Dhabolkar, Thorpe and Rentz (1995) that measures service quality in the retail setup. Siu and Cheung (2001) conducted a study that recommended a refinement in the RSQS scale for its application in the retail businesses that focuses on the combination of goods and services and also identified the importance of the retail service quality measurement. It emphasized on the need for a survey that has to be conducted on a regular basis to measure the extent of service enhancement and customer satisfaction. Table 1 gives the comparison of three service quality approaches.

Table 1
Comparative Analysis of the Dimensions of Three Approaches

SERVQUAL	SERVPERF	RSQS
Tangibility	Tangibility	Physical aspects
Reliability	Reliability	Reliability
Assurance	Assurance	Policy
Responsiveness	Responsiveness	Personal interaction
Empathy	Empathy	Problem solving

To determine validity of Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS), several studies were conducted. Examining the validity and reliability of RSQS in the Indian retail setting, Manjunath and Prabhu (2011) conducted a study. The results of the study supported the use of this model to assess the service quality. They concluded that RSQS model could be implemented to determine the overall service quality that the retail stores provide and identified the variations in the overall service quality across time. Regarding the Indian customers, Khare (2013) observed the service quality of a retail store and

found that service quality comprises of ambience, layout, and service and relationship dimensions. The rationale for focusing on the Indian context is the socioeconomic and cultural linkage between the Indian and Pakistani Society and the goods that the natives of both the countries consume are somewhat identical.

Considering Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) model as an appropriate and extensively used tool to assess service quality, this study is an effort to assess and identify the existence of dimensions of the RSQS model in some of the major supermarkets operating in Karachi, Pakistan.

Methodology

To explore factors that are the determinants of service quality, the method of exploratory factor analysis is used. For the items linked with each dimension, the technique of percentage analysis is used to classify responses into three groups named as Disagree, Neutral and Agree in terms of the percentages of responses to each item. (See Appendix 2).

To identify the determinants that are affecting perception of customers regarding service quality in retail sector, the technique of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is used. (Kaul, 2007; Kim & Stoel, 2004; Das, 2010). To design and use a questionnaire as a research instrument, the methodology of RSQS model, consists of eight (8) dimensions has been followed. The scores of items extracted in each factor are accumulated to create independent variables to represent each factor. Finally, the regression model is fitted to the data and residual analysis is performed to check validity of the fitted regression model as per the methodology adopted in Ahmed and Samreen (2011).

Research Instrument

This is a survey based study. Based on the literature review pertinent to three approaches to assess service quality namely RSQS, SERVQUAL and SERVPERF, a survey questionnaire is developed and used as a research instrument in this study. The target population is the customers who do shopping from prominent retail stores or supermarkets. The survey questionnaire is designed and uploaded to get the online responses of customers. The method of convenience sampling (snowball sampling) was used to receive responses and 275 valid responses were received. Appendix 1 exhibits the details of the items included in this study with reference to other studies that followed RSQS Model.

Data Analysis & Discussion

Reliability Analysis

To check the validity of the application of exploratory factor analysis, internal validity and

reliability of the data is checked. The following table summarizes the results of reliability analysis. The value of Cronbach alpha computed for overall data is 0.919 which is closer to one and it indicates that performing exploratory factor analysis of this data is valid. Factor analysis is performed to check the internal consistency of the items converged in a factor and the Cronbach Alpha coefficients are all greater than the cutoff value of 0.6 except for factor F8.

Table 2
Reliability Analysis

Factors	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items
Overall	0.919	36
F1	0.872	9
F2	0.763	5
F3	0.820	5
F4	0.756	4
F5	0.799	2
F6	0.633	3
F7	0.665	2
F8	0.458	3

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Table 3 summarizes the findings of Exploratory Factor analysis. The technique of Exploratory Factor Analysis extracted eight (8) factors that accounted for 60.558% variation in the response variable. Table 3 gives the factor loadings and variance explained by each factor. Factor F1 explains the highest variance (13.45%) in the data. The items converged in this factor have a factor loading greater than 0.5 except two items. Of all the items converged in Factors F2 and F3, one item in each of the factors, has the factor loading less than 0.5. The least percentage variation is explained by Factor F8 which is 4.404%.

The exploratory factor analysis results also indicate that some of the items that are the part of a specific construct as per the theoretical framework is not converged in that factor but converged in a factor it does not linked with. Ten items are converged in Factor F1, out of which, three belong to Personal Interaction, two are related to Reliability, two are the part of Security and one each from the dimensions of Convenience and General Policy. These items can be considered as a combination of Reliability, Security and Personal Interaction. The second factor F2 has five items from Physical Look and one from convenience. The factor F3 is a mixture of the construct of Product and General Policy. In the fourth factor F4, the items belong to Problem Solving (PS) seems dominant as three out of six items converged in this factor belong to Problem solving whereas the other three items are

related to the constructs of Convenience, Reliability and Personal Interaction. Factor F5 has two items related to Problem Solving, Factor F6 has one item each from Reliability and Convenience, Factor F7 has both items from Reliability and Factor F8 has two items from General Policy.

Table 3
Extracted Factors, Factor Loadings and Explained Variance

Dimensions	ITEMS	Loadings	Variation Explained (%)
F1	The location is accessible	.559	13.435
	Store performs the services right the first time	.408	
	The store charges the same price mentioned on the shelves	.700	
	Customers feel safe in their transactions	.610	
	Customers are able to trust employees	.658	
	Customers feel safe and secure in the vicinity	.659	
	Employees are knowledgeable to answer	.630	
	Employees give prompt service	.552	
	Employees are polite	.626	
	The store has operating hours convenient for customers	.453	
F2	Modern Looking Equipment	.658	9.103
	Restroom/Trial rooms are visually appealing	.694	
	Clean, attractive & convenient Restrooms	.803	
	Employees are well dressed	.562	
	Materials are visually appealing	.477	
	Store layout makes customers to move around easily	.643	
F3	The store accepts all major credit cards	.472	9.013
	The store offers high quality merchandise	.539	
	Perishable Products are fresh and not expired	.605	
	Products are in good condition	.735	
	The store offers variations in the Products	.716	
F4	The store provides the facility of home delivery	.594	7.986
	The store fulfills its promise to do repairs and alterations	.602	
	Employees treat customers courteously	.563	

(Table Continued...)

F4	The store willingly handles returns & exchanges	.593	
	The store takes sincere interest in Problem solving	.532	
	Employees are able to handle complaints directly and immediately	.550	
F5	The store understands the waiting time as important	.776	6.514
	The store tries to keep waiting time minimum	.793	
F6	The store layout makes shopping easier for customers	.615	5.068
	Merchandises are available timely	.587	
F7	The store maintains error free records	.529	5.036
	The store performs error free purchase transactions with the cards	.710	
F8	The store provides plenty of convenient parking for customers	.505	4.404
	The store offers discounts at different occasions	.612	

The Fitted Model

To predict overall service quality, the scores of individual item are accumulated to compute the values of eight dimensions extracted from EFA and used as independent variables in the regression model. Several models are fitted on the data using different combination of independent variables to select a regression model that follows all the assumptions of CLRM (Classical Regression Model). Table 4 gives the model summary.

Table 4
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
	.689 ^a	0.475	0.464	0.41874

The mean of the items converged in each dimension is computed to create score of independent variables. The scores of independent variables are then used to fit a regression model taking overall ratings of service quality as a response variable. Table 5 summarizes the results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the fitted model.

Table 5
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	MSS	F	Sig.
Regression	40.694	5	8.139	46.418	.000 ^a
Residual	45.062	257	0.175		
Total	85.757	262			

The coefficient of determination (R^2) of the fitted regression model presented in Table 4 is 0.475 and it implies that the fitted model is able to explain 47.5% variation in overall service quality rating due to the variation in the independent variables extracted from Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The regressors F1, F2, F3, F5 and F8 are found statistically significant as predictors of overall service quality. The results of Analysis of variance (ANOVA) presented in Table 5 represents that the model is a good fit on the data as the F statistic is significant ($p = 0.00$).

Table 6
Regression Coefficients Summary

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t		Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	0.597	0.236		2.529	0.012	0.132	1.062
F1	0.275	0.062	0.252	4.420	0.000	0.152	0.397
F2	0.093	0.045	0.104	2.059	0.040	0.004	0.181
F3	0.343	0.061	0.326	5.596	0.000	0.223	0.464
F5	0.086	0.035	0.122	2.476	0.014	0.018	0.155
F8	0.094	0.032	0.146	2.965	0.003	0.031	0.156

a. Dependent Variable: How do you rate the overall quality of this store?

The results of the fitted regression model that includes all independent variables used as predictors are presented in Table 6. All independent variables are found statistically significant with p values closer to zero. A regression equation is formulated as per the results of the fitted regression model. The factor F3 appeared as the strongest factor influencing service quality with coefficient value 0.343 followed by F1 with coefficient value 0.275, while factors F8, F2, and F5 loaded with the coefficient values 0.094, 0.093 and 0.086 respectively.

The assumptions related to classical linear regression model linked with normality and independence of residuals are examined using Normal probability plot and histogram of residuals. Figures 1 (a) and 1 (b) exhibit the results. The normal curve fitted on the histogram of residuals reflects a good fit whereas, the normal probability plot also indicates that the residuals are approximately normally distributed.

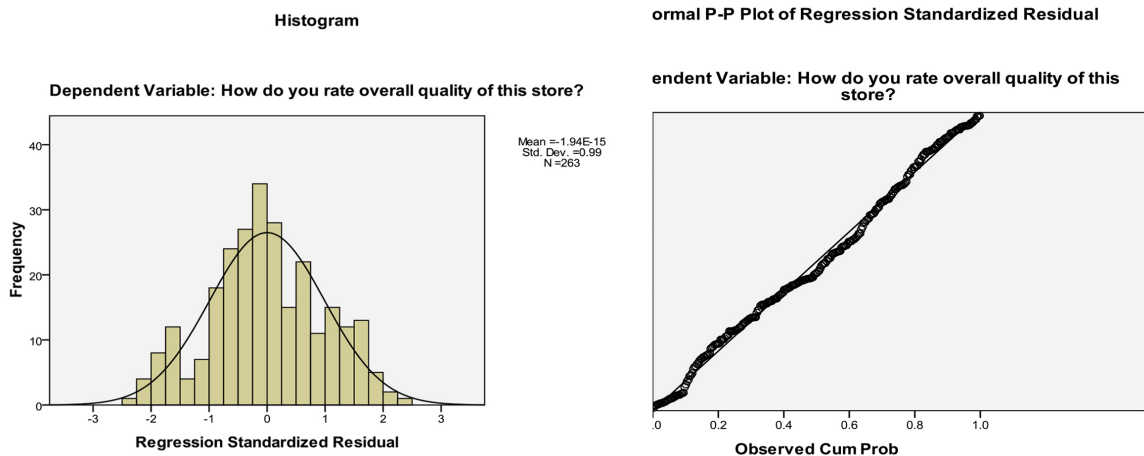


Figure 1a: Histogram & 1 (b) Normal Probability Plot

Conclusion & Recommendations

Data analysis extracted eight (8) factors on the basis of Exploratory Factor Analysis. Some of the items that are converged in a factor are not linked with that construct as per the theoretical framework. Factor 1 is a combination of items linked with the dimensions of Physical Aspects, Security, Personal Interaction, Policy and Reliability. The second factor encompasses some items from the dimension “Physical Aspects”. Factor 3, mainly includes aspects pertinent to Product and Policy. Factor 4 is a mix of Personal Interaction, Problem Solving, Convenience and reliability. The aspect of waiting time is covered in Factor 5. Factor 6 exhibits the Reliability and Convenience, Factor 7 reflects Reliability and Factor 8 covers the items that are included in the dimensions of Convenience and Policy.

Table 7 summarizes the results of the aspects pertinent to the service quality regarding which the customers are satisfied or dissatisfied.

Table 7

Aspects of Service Quality with which respondents are Satisfied or Dissatisfied

Dimensions	The Quality Aspects with which Respondents are:	
	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>
<i>Physical Aspects</i>	This store has modern looking equipment Employees are well dressed Materials are visually appealing The store layout makes shopping easier The store layout makes customers to move around easily The location is accessible	Restrooms are visually appealing Restrooms are clean and Attractive The store provides the facility of home delivery The store has ATM machines
<i>Reliability</i>	The store has always performed error free purchase transactions with the cards Merchandises are available timely The store performs the services right the first time The store charges the same price mentioned on the shelves	The store fulfills its promise to do repairs and alterations The store maintains error free records
<i>Security</i>	Customers feel safe in their transaction Customers are able to trust employees Customers feel safe and secure in the vicinity	
<i>Personal Interaction</i>	Employees are knowledgeable to answer Employees give prompt service Employees are polite	Employees treat customers courteously
<i>Problem solving</i>	The store willingly handles returns and exchanges The store takes sincere interest in problem solving Employees are able to handle complaints directly and immediately Store understands that the waiting time is important	The store tries to keep waiting time minimum
<i>Policy</i>	The store has operating hours convenient for customers The store accepts all major credit cards The store offers high quality merchandise The store offers discounts at different occasions	
<i>Product</i>	Perishable products are fresh and not expired Products are in good condition The store offers variations in the Products	

The study also summarized the existence of service quality in the retail stores covered in this study. The perspective of service quality is divided into two groups with which either the customers are satisfied or dissatisfied. These groups are formulated using cumulative percentages related to three categories namely disagree (below 3), neutral (at 3) and agree (above 3). (See Appendix 2).

If the cumulative percentage exceeds 50% (below 3 on a scale 1 through 5), it identifies that the customers are not satisfied and if it less than 50 percent at a scale value 3, it exhibits that the respondents are satisfied.

In table 7 the areas of service quality with which the respondents are satisfied or dissatisfied are summarized. The findings of this study identified some physical aspects with which customers have shown their dissatisfaction such as availability of restrooms, home delivery services and ATM machines. Similarly, regarding some aspects of reliability related to alterations and repairs and maintaining error free records need proper attention to improve the image of the supermarket. The responses of the customers have also indicated the need for the employees to be more courteous. The data analysis pertinent to the waiting time also emphasizes on the need for structuring a proper customer load management to get the waiting time reduced.

Limitations

This study has only included the data collected from retail stores and supermarkets located in Karachi. To examine the service quality aspect with greater coverage, future research could focus on the supermarkets located in other regions and metropolitan cities of Pakistan such as Islamabad, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, etc. Inclusion of more cities may broaden the scope of research in this important field. Due to the time limitation, the technique of convenience sampling is used in this study and future research is expected to rely on other sampling techniques including probability sampling.

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Appendix-1

EXPECTATIONS	Dimension	EXPERIENCE	Adopted from
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the <i>physical look</i> of the store on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	The store has modern-looking equipment and fixture (PL1)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	Physical facilities (rest rooms and trial rooms) of the store are visually appealing (PL2)	1 2 3 4 5	Das, Kumar and Saha (2010)
1 2 3 4 5	The store has clean, attractive, and convenient restrooms & fitting rooms. (PL3)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	Employees of this store are well dressed and appear neat. (PL4)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman and Zeithmal and Berry (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	Materials associated with this store's service (such as shopping bags, loyalty cards, and catalogues) are visually appealing (PL5)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the <i>service convenience</i> of the store on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	The store layout at this store makes it easy for customers to find what they need (C1)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	The store layout at this store makes it easy for customers to move around in the store. (C2)	1 2 3 4 5	Xiao & Chernetskaya (2010) Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	The store provides the facility of home delivery (C3)	1 2 3 4 5	Added on our own
1 2 3 4 5	The store has ATM machines (C4)	1 2 3 4 5	Added on our own
1 2 3 4 5	The location of store is accessible (C5)	1 2 3 4 5	Panteloukas,Asopo, Buwag (2012)
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the <i>reliability</i> of the store on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	When this store promises to do repairs or alterations by a certain time, it will do so (R1)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1988)

(Table Continued...)

EXPECTATION	Dimension	EXPERIENCE	
1 2 3 4 5	The store maintains error free records (R2)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	This store always perform error-free purchase transactions with the cards (R3)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	This store has merchandise available when the customers want it (R4)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	The store performs the service right the first time (R5)	1 2 3 4 5	
1 2 3 4 5	The store charges the same price mentioned on the shelves (R6)	1 2 3 4 5	
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the security of the store on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	Customers feel safe in their transactions with the store (S1)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	Customers are able to trust employees of the store (S2)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	Customers feel safe and secure in the vicinity of the store (S3)	1 2 3 4 5	Added on our own
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the personal interaction in the store on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	Employees in the store have the knowledge to answer customers' questions (PI1)	1 2 3 4 5	Xiao & Chernetskaya (2010) Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	Employees in this store give prompt service to customers (PI2)	1 2 3 4 5	Xiao & Chernetskaya (2010)

(Table Continued...)

EXPECTATION	Dimension	EXPERIENCE	
1 2 3 4 5	Employees of this store are able to handle customer complaints directly and immediately (PS3)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996) Zeithmal (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	The store understands that waiting time is important to the customer (waiting time : the whole time spent in the store, including the time waiting for payment) (PS4)	1 2 3 4 5	The store understands that waiting time is important to the customer (waiting time : the whole time spent in the store, including the time waiting for payment)
1 2 3 4 5	The store tries to keep the customers waiting time to a minimum (PS5)	1 2 3 4 5	The store tries to keep the customers waiting time to a minimum.
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the <i>general policy of the store</i> on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	This store has operating hours convenient to all their customers (GP1)	1 2 3 4 5	Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry
1 2 3 4 5	This store accepts all major credit cards (GP2)	1 2 3 4 5	Xiao & Chernetskaya (2010) Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	This store offers high quality merchandise (GP3)	1 2 3 4 5	Xiao & Chernetskaya (2010) Zeithmal (1988)
1 2 3 4 5	This store provides plenty of convenient parking for customers (GP4)	1 2 3 4 5	Dabholkar , Thrope and Rentz (1996)
1 2 3 4 5	The store offers discounts at different occasions and festivals (GP5)	1 2 3 4 5	Added on our own
1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	How do you rate the <i>Products of the store</i> on the following attributes?	1 Strongly Disagree 5 Strongly Agree	
1 2 3 4 5	The groceries (e.g. vegetables, fruits, meat, milk, etc) are always fresh and not expired (P1)	1 2 3 4 5	Panteloukas,Asopo, Buwag (2012)
1 2 3 4 5	The products are always in a good condition (not broken, etc) (P2)	1 2 3 4 5	Panteloukas,Asopo, Buwag (2012)
1 2 3 4 5	The store offers the variations of a product-brand the customer needs(e.g. all flavors, sizes etc.) (P3)	1 2 3 4 5	Panteloukas,Asopo, Buwag (2012)

Other Information

	How do you rate overall service quality of this store? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Added on our own
	How often do you visit the store in average? a. Twice a week b. Once a week c. Monthly d. Occasionally	
	Gender a. Male b. Female	
	What is your age? a. < 20 years b. 20 – 30 years c. 31 - 40 years d. 41 -50 years e. 51 -60 years f. > 60 years	
	Level of education a. Secondary School b. High School c. Undergraduate d. Graduate	
	Area of residence	
	Monthly Expenditures on grocery items	

Appendix-2

Dimensions	The Quality Aspects with which Respondents are:		Outcome
	Description	Cumulative % (Neutral)	
Physical Aspects	This store has modern looking equipment	34.2	Agree
	Employees are well dressed	35.3	Agree
	Restrooms are visually appealing	72.0	Disagree
	Restrooms are clean and Attractive	57.8	Disagree
	Materials are visually appealing	45.1	Agree
Convenience	The store layout makes shopping easier	28.7	Agree
	The store layout makes customers to move around easily	39.6	Agree
	The store provides the facility of home delivery	74.2	Disagree
	The store has ATM machines	55.6	Disagree
	The location is accessible	15.3	Agree
Reliability	The store fulfills its promise to do repairs and alterations	52.7	Disagree
	The store maintains error free records	50.9	Disagree
	The store always perform error free purchase transactions with the cards	43.6	Agree
	Merchandises are available timely	33.1	Agree
	The store performs the services right the first time	37.5	Agree
	The store charges the same price mentioned on the shelves	18.2	Agree
Security	Customers feel safe in their transaction	13.5	Agree
	Customers are able to trust employees	24.4	Agree
	Customers feel safe and secure in the vicinity	23.3	Agree
Personal Interaction	Employees are knowledgeable to answer	28.7	Agree
	Employees give prompt service	32.4	Agree
	Employees are polite	27.6	Agree